



Northwest Austin Civic Assoc.

NWACA Annual Neighborhood Meeting - May 11, 2023



- Chris Vetromile
Senior Wildfire Mitigation Specialist

Austin Fire Department's Wildfire Division



Created in 2012, the Division works to identify wildfire risk and also proactively reduce this risk, both through prevention and mitigation.

Strategic Plan

- **Vision:** Resilient communities prepared for wildfire.
- **Mission:** Create a safer, resilient fire adapted communities through wildfire mitigation, preparedness and response.

FIRE ADAPTED COMMUNITIES



Wildfire Risk: Overview

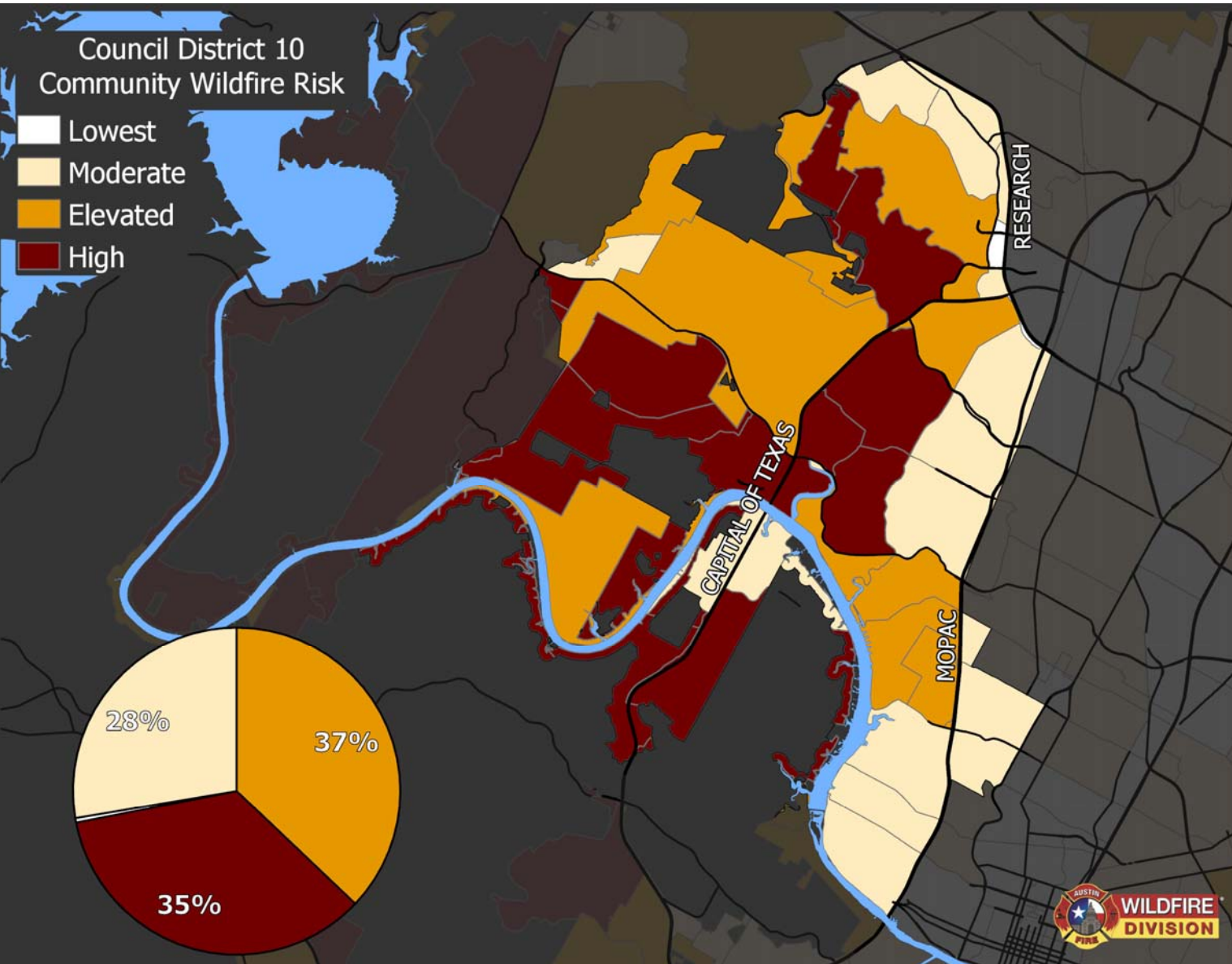


Wildfire risk is the environmental & landscape conditions necessary for the potential of wildfire ignition, spread, and destruction.



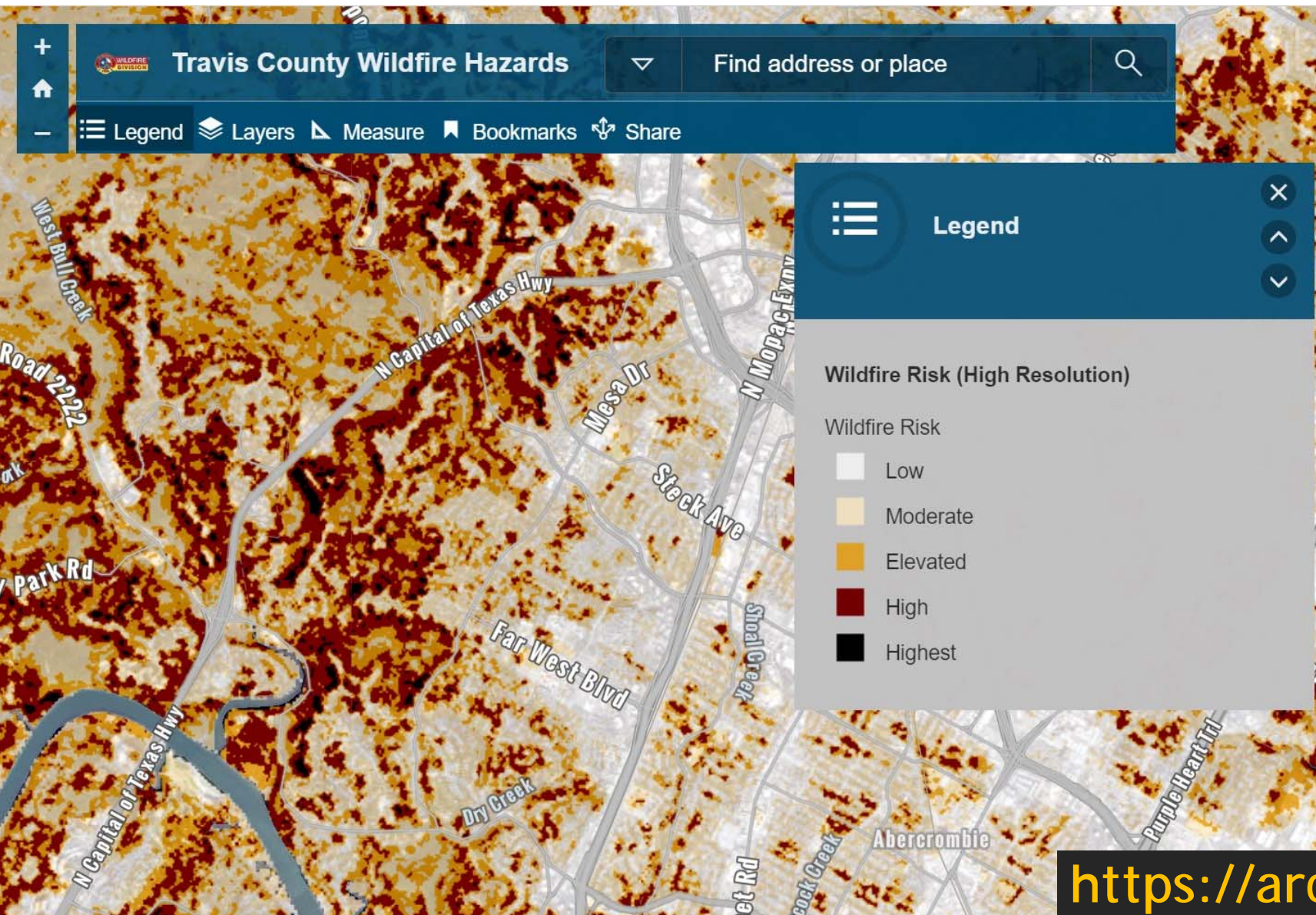
- Probability -Likelihood
 - Frequency of Ignitions
 - Susceptibility of fuels
- Intensity
 - Fire behavior
 - Response complexity
- Exposure - Susceptibility
 - Interface
 - Vulnerability



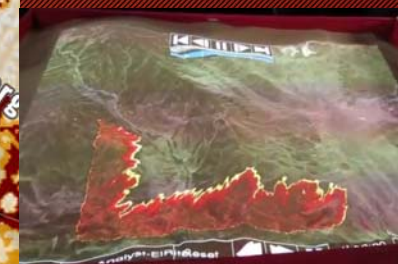


District 10 Wildfire Risk

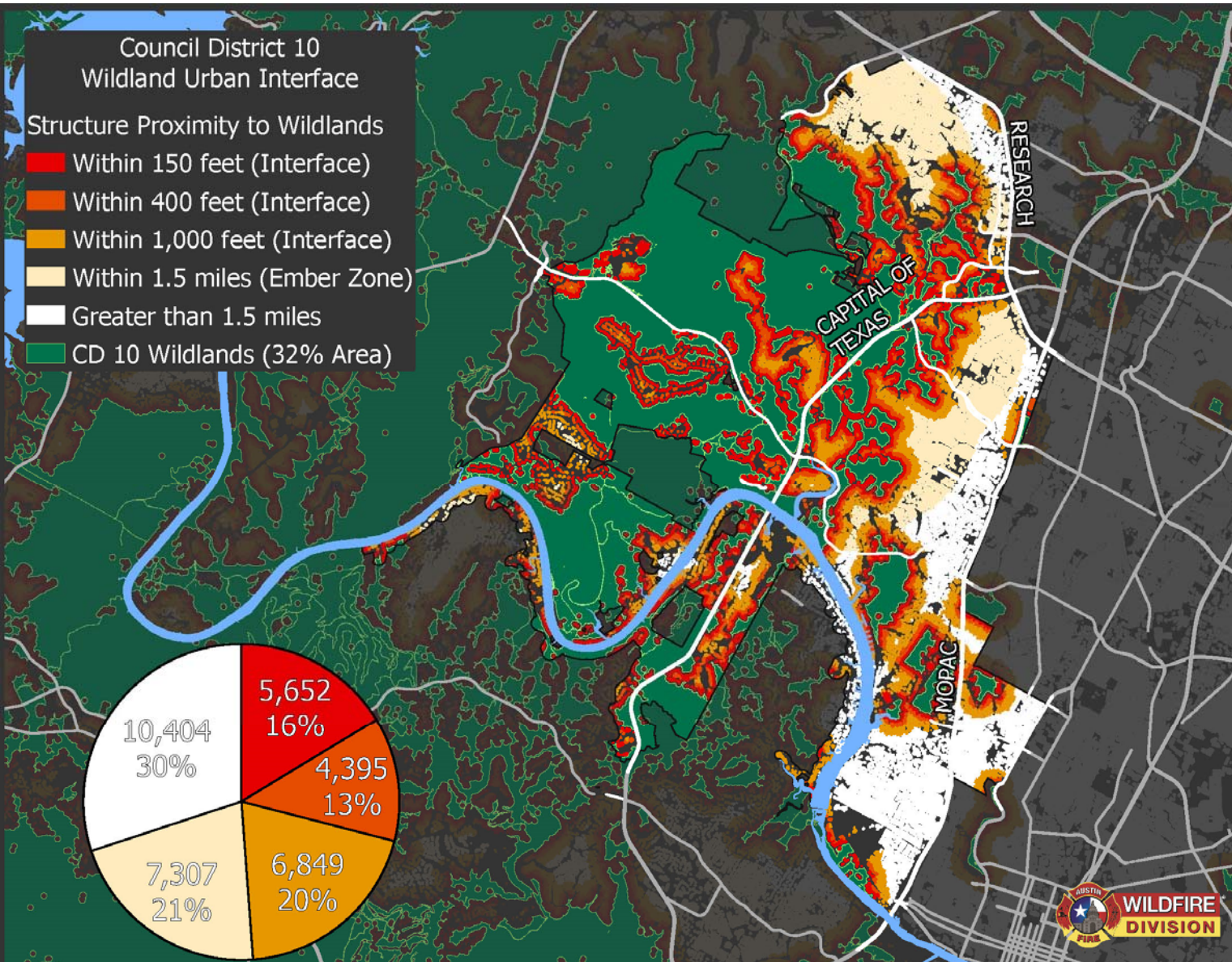
- 72% Elevated or High
- 2nd highest risk among districts



We will see examples of wildfire behavior from Nate on the Simtable.

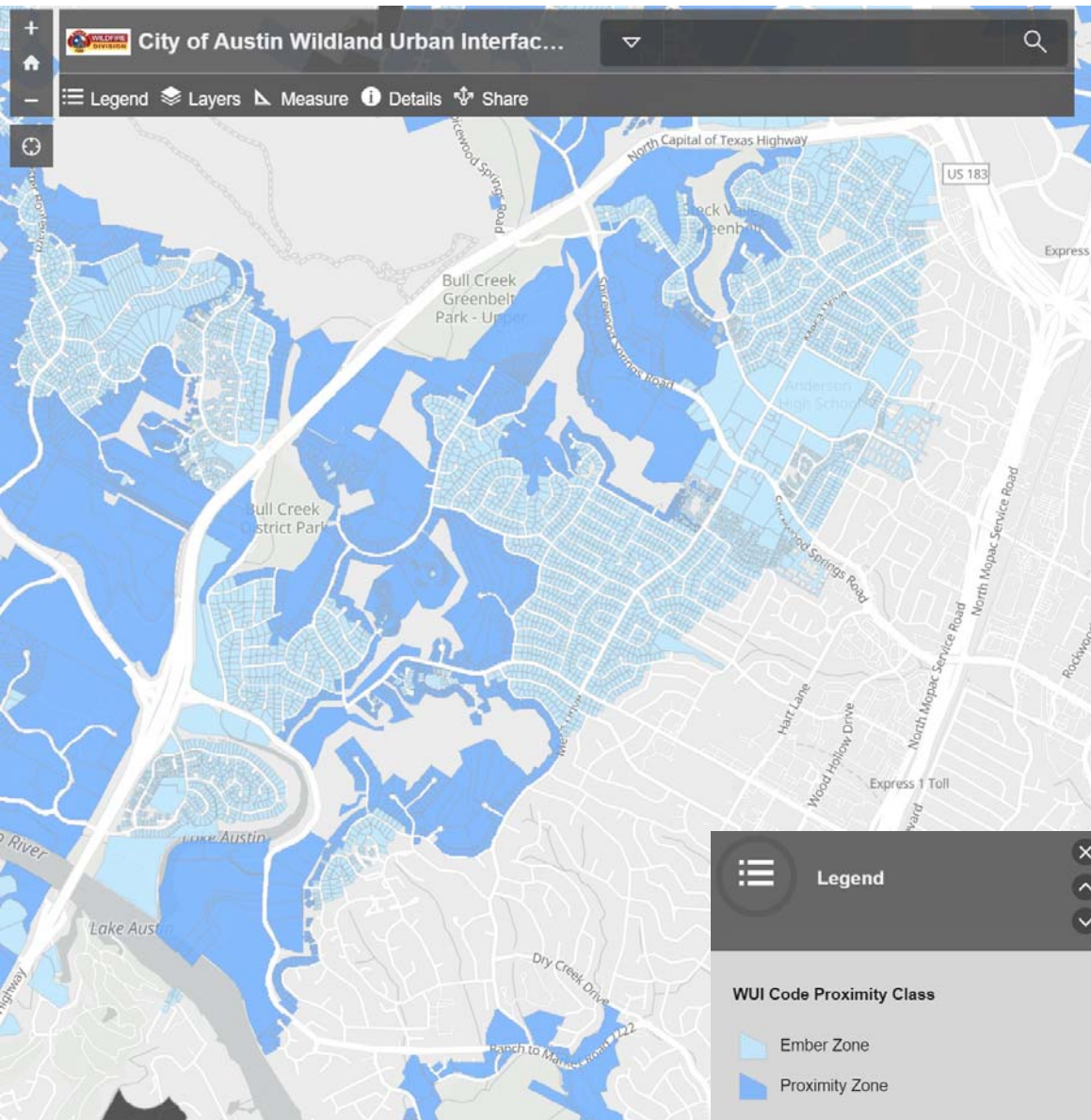


<https://arcg.is/0f9PCq>



District 10 Wildland Urban Interface (WUI = "Woo-Eee")

- Where wildlands & human development meet or intermix
- 129.1 Miles



WUI Code



- The City of Austin adopted effective January 1, 2021.
- WUI code areas are displayed in blue and cover 40% of Austin.
- NWACA
 - Dark Blue = Proximity Zone
 - Light Blue = Ember Zone

<https://arcg.is/0GnHCS>

Wildfire Risk: Ember Attacks



- **Embers (aka Firebrands) [Our Main Focus]**
 - Most home losses in a wildfire are from embers, not by direct contact with flames.
- Embers are burning pieces of airborne wood and/or vegetation.
- Can be carried up to a mile and a half through the wind.
- Embers can cause spot fires and ignite homes, debris, and other objects.

2. Create Fire Adapted Communities



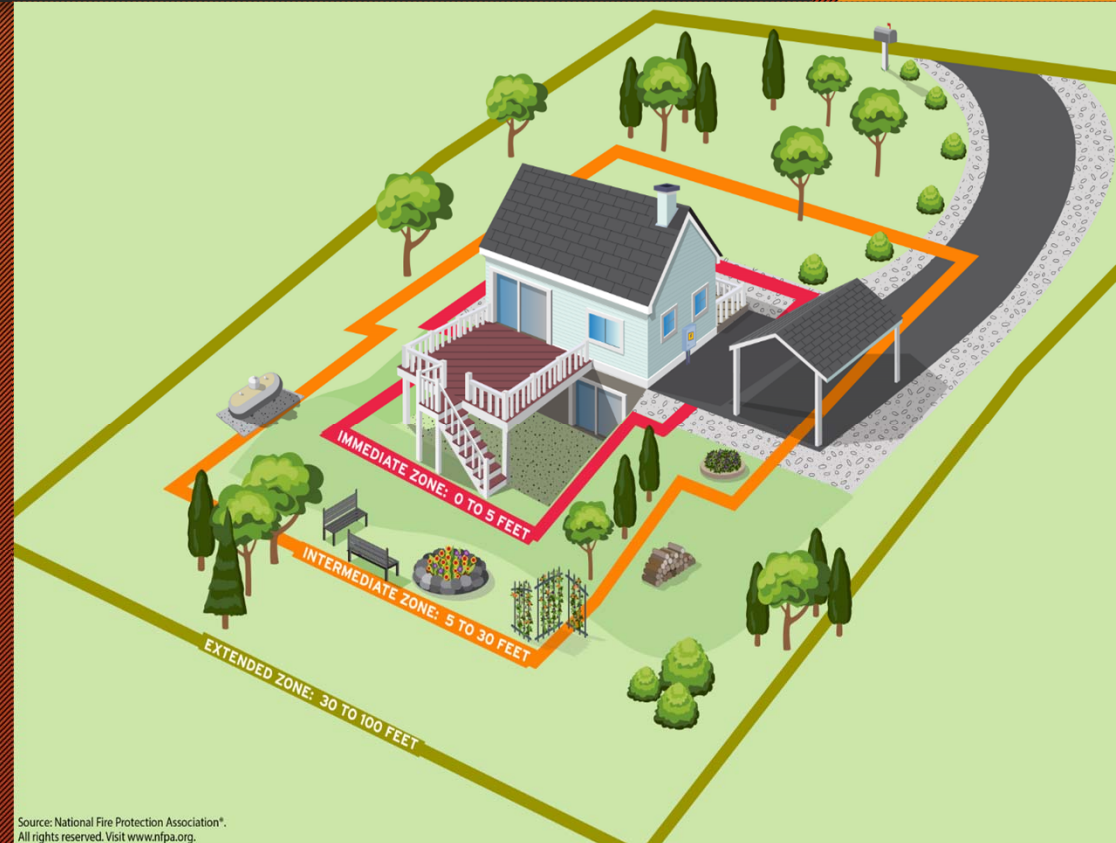
Firewise USA® Home Hardening & Defensible Space



Home Ignition Zone (HIZ)

The home in relation to its surroundings within 100 to 200 feet

- **Immediate Zone: 0 to 5 feet**
aka Non-Combustible Zone
 - Remove all flammable materials
 - Clean roofs and gutters of dead leaves, debris
 - Cover vents with 1/8" metal mesh screening
- **Intermediate Zone: 5 to 30 feet**
 - Low-flammability plants, landscaping materials
 - Create fuel islands by separating plants
 - Prune limbs 6-8 ft. from ground
 - Mow to 4" and water regularly
- **Extended Zone: 30 to 100 Feet**
 - Dispose of heavy ground litter/debris.
 - Remove dead plant and tree material.



Source: National Fire Protection Association*.
All rights reserved. Visit www.nfpa.org.

2. Create Fire Adapted Communities

Home Ignition Zone Evaluation



- The Home Igniting Zone is divided into three zones
 - Immediate- including structure, Intermediate, and Extended.
- A team will evaluate each zone of your home
 - Recommendations of methods to prepare best for home survival.
- Preparation of your home after an evaluation:
 - For withstanding an ember attack
 - Minimize flames or surface fire touching the home
- *Schedule a "HIZ Evaluation"*
 - *NWACA provides free of charge*
 - *Visit Steve Kline at the Wildfire Prevention Committee table*



2. Create Fire Adapted Communities

HIZ Evaluation – Why we do it!

Balch Springs Subdivision - Winds were gusting between 15 to 20 mph.



July 25, 2022: Dallas, TX

- Grass fire spread across a field and reached densely-packed houses, eventually destroying 9 and another 26 homes were affected by smoke, fire, or water.



2. Create Fire Adapted Communities

WarnCentralTexas.org



- An emergency notification system to residents of Central Texas.
- Registering with WarnCentralTexas allows local officials to contact their communities by phone, email and text during times of disasters or public safety events.

Sign up for free to get official emergency alerts for your neighborhood by text, email, or phone.



3. Safe and Effective Wildfire Response

Austin Fire Department Wildfire Division



- Effective Fire Fighting
 - All are NWCG FFT2
 - All will be IAFF RIT trained
- Assists Operations
 - Continued training
 - Proper equipment
 - Quick initial response

austintexas.gov

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Wildfire

www.ATXWildfire.com

Chris Vetromile - Senior Wildfire Mitigation Specialist

Chris.Vetromile@AustinTexas.gov (512) 974-0111

