



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
Oct. 3, 2018

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REALTORS® JOIN FORCES WITH INSURANCE AND WILDFIRE SAFETY ORGANIZATIONS TO OFFER PREPAREDNESS GUIDE FOR RESIDENTS

ENGLEWOOD, Colo. – With one of the most destructive wildfire seasons in state history burning homes and endangering communities, the Colorado Association of REALTORS® (CAR) has teamed up with the Rocky Mountain Insurance Information Association (RMIIA) and other state wildfire prevention and insurance stakeholders to create a consumer-focused Colorado Property and Insurance Wildfire Preparedness Guide.

Digital and hard copy guides featuring best practices in wildfire mitigation, safety and insurance preparation for property owners, frequently asked questions, as well as direct links to a wide range of local community resources for residents are available through the program’s website: ColoradoProjectWildfire.com.

“Working in partnership with RMIIA, Colorado State Forest Service, Colorado Division of Insurance, Colorado State Fire Chiefs, Firewise USA, the Colorado Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management, RealFire, Wildfire Partners and other Colorado stakeholder organizations, our Project Wildfire team has created a unique, comprehensive resource guide with key wildfire and insurance recommendations for Colorado homeowners,” said CAR Project Wildfire Chair Mike Budd, a Vail REALTOR® who has been instrumental in driving access and information about programs and resources in Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) communities throughout the state.

As Fire Prevention Week approaches (Oct. 7-13) there is still significant risk of further property loss as dry conditions continue statewide. The 2018 Colorado wildfire season is already the second most destructive on record (2002) with approximately 500,000 acres of forest and grassland destroyed and hundreds of homes lost or damaged, according to the Rocky Mountain Coordination Center.

“Unfortunately, Colorado ranks third in the Nation for homes located in areas with high wildfire risk,” said RMIIA Executive Director, Carole Walker. “As an industry, we understand the importance of insurability of these properties and are working with residents and other stakeholders to be a part of the solution to reduce that risk

– a solution that we believe is founded in education, awareness and mitigation efforts by individual property owners and communities alike.”

Wildfire officials and organizations across Colorado recommend taking steps to reduce wildfire risk and credit homeowner mitigation efforts with saving homes and structures over the past several years.

“Every homeowner should be aware of their wildfire risk and the associated responsibility to reduce that risk, not only to protect their property, but also to improve the safety of first responders,” said Dan Beveridge, wildfire mitigation specialist for the Colorado State Forest Service. “There are numerous examples from the 2018 fire season and seasons past showing that proactive wildfire mitigation efforts are effective, and taking risk-reduction actions can also improve insurability and support community adaptation to wildfire.”

“While it’s always so difficult to see the impact that wildfires have on our state and our fellow Coloradans, we’ve been encouraged by the news that mitigation efforts have helped alleviate possible damage and destruction of homes and help prevent loss of lives,” said Tyrone Adams, CEO of the Colorado Association of REALTORS®. “We will continue to be proactive in helping educate not only our members but the tens of thousands of Colorado homeowners that are living in these WUI areas, about the vast resources that are available in their local communities that can help them mitigate their properties and be prepared for the growing risk wildfires present.”

Production of the Colorado Property & Insurance Wildfire Preparedness Guide was funded through a generous grant from the Colorado Association of REALTORS® Foundation.

The Colorado Association of REALTORS® launched *Colorado Project Wildfire* in 2015 to help raise awareness of the increasing danger of wildfires in our state, to activate the Association’s network of 26,000 REALTORS® in providing information and support to homeowners living in high risk areas, and to advocate for incentives for homeowners who take concrete steps to make their properties less at risk. Since its launch, *Colorado Project Wildfire* has established partnerships with like-minded fire-prevention organizations and assisted local REALTOR® associations throughout the state with complimentary programs to activate their members in promoting awareness and mitigation.

RMIIA's full-time job is to help consumers, the news media and community partners understand how insurance works and to share safety awareness and loss prevention tips. RMIIA is a non-profit insurance communications organization that represents property and casualty insurers in Colorado, New Mexico, Utah and Wyoming.

For more information visit ColoradoProjectWildfire.com.

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