



Cleanup of Kings Canyon to help ward off wildfire

Cory McConnell
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With temperatures heating up and hillsides drying out, city and state agencies, along with local residents, will be gathering downed limbs, dead trees and remnants of burned shrubs from the yards of Kings Canyon homes. The cleanup will help ward off a repeat of the wildfire that last year burned nearly 8,800 acres and 18 homes.

Kings Canyon burned in last summer's Waterfall fire, but officials say the area still has piles of debris ready to burn.

The North Lake Tahoe Fire Protection District and the Nevada Division of Forestry will have chippers on hand Saturday, going from home to home to chip what residents have gathered and hauled to the curb. It will then be up to the homeowner to spread the chips however they see fit.

"Of course, we'd be happy to show them where they should put it," said University of Nevada, Reno Cooperative Extension Educator Joanne Skelly.

Land management agencies often use chippers in fire fuel reduction projects to slice up harvested wood and spray it back onto the forest floor. Although the process doesn't remove fuel from the forest, it changes the fuel's dynamics so it's harder to catch on fire and will burn cooler and quicker, reducing its ability to spread the flames, if it does.

Without chipping, the dead wood, or "slash," is generally stacked haphazardly on the ground "with air in between the pieces. Like you would build a fire in a fireplace," Skelly said.

Skelly has been advising Carson City's residents on how to make their homes safer since last year's fire, while working with various agencies and neighborhood chapters of the Nevada Fire Safe Council to come up with fire safety projects. This weekend's event is a combined effort between the state, UNR, Incline Village fire officials and Carson City.

Kings Canyon residents who want their dead wood chipped should have it piled near their curbs or property edges by 9:30 a.m. Saturday.

Skelly said volunteers to help homeowners would be welcomed.

For information on wildfire safety, contact Cooperative Extension at 887-2252, or check out a new Web site dedicated to the cause: www.livingwithfire.info.

n Contact reporter Cory McConnell at cmcconnell@nevadaappeal.com or 881-1217.

Fire safe council

Carson City residents are encouraged to attend meetings of their neighborhood Nevada Fire Safe Council chapters.

The next meetings are scheduled for:

- Kings Canyon, 7 p.m. today at the University of Nevada Cooperative Extension Carson City office, 2621 Northgate Lane, Suite 12.
- Mexican Dam/Piñon Hills, 6:30 p.m. on Monday at the BLM office, 5665 Morgan Mill Road.
- Timberline, 7 p.m. on June 29 at the Cooperative Extension Carson City office, 2621 Northgate Lane, Suite 12.

On the Net

Fire safety officials have also set up a Web site with information about wildfire preparedness: www.livingwithfire.com

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