

Time to think about 'defensible space'

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With fire season fast approaching, the Nevada Fire Safe Council is encouraging all homeowners to request a defensible space inspection and clean up dead, dry debris on their property.

The evaluations let homeowners know what they can do to reduce the risk of a fire spreading to their property. Contact your fire department for a free inspection.

Officials encourage neighborhoods to band together in creating fire safe areas, because doing work on just one property may not make a difference.

"Any individual that does not take responsible action not only increases the risk to their property, but forces a higher level of risk on their neighbors and the entire community," said council spokeswoman Candace Lowery in a statement. "All residents have an obligation to participate in and support the pre-fire-planning activities that will not only help ensure the survivability of their home, but the homes of their neighbors, and the entire community."

The Skyland community on the East Shore came together this week to coordinate defensible space projects. By Wednesday, there were piles of bagged pine needles tens of feet high lining some streets.

The needles will be recycled by Heavenly Mountain Resort to aid in erosion control projects.

Fire departments and the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency have agreed on recommendations for how to manage pine needles. The TRPA encourages homeowners to leave pine needles where they cover bare soil to prevent erosion.

Pine needles should be removed when they are within five feet of a structure and if they are more than three inches thick, according to TRPA spokeswoman Julie Regan and Fire Safe Council Tahoe coordinator Jennifer Arrowsmith.

Jim Grant /
Tahoe Daily Tribune /
Waiting for pick up, bags of pine needles are stacked in front of a home in Skyland.



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All pine needles should be removed from roofs and decks for fire safety.

You may remove pine needles if you have a lawn or landscaped yard.

The Fire Safe Council serves all of the Lake Tahoe Basin, including California communities. To learn more, go to www.LivingWithFire.com.

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