

# NEVADA APPEAL

Man's property becoming fire safety showcase

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Squirrels scurried across County Line Road as workers put dry juniper pieces through a loud wood chipper.

While peace was temporarily broken by the whir of the motor, the northwest Carson City homeowner will have a little more peace of mind.

The contraption was being used in the yard of a hillside residence owned by Adrian Buoncristiani, a retired teacher who has lived in Lakeview for 25 years.

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Chad Lundquist/Nevada Appeal Keith Jermalowicz an arborist for Healthy Trees Professional Tree Care, puts juniper trees through a wood chipper at home off of County Line Road on Tuesday. The



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resident sought to have the home made more fire safe in exchange for allowing University of Reno Cooperative Extension and the Nevada Fire Safe Council to host occasional tours of his property to show people how to make their homes more fire resistant.

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He was among a group of Carson City residents vying to have their yards made more fire safe in exchange for allowing occasional tours of his property.

The purpose of the project - done at no cost to Buoncristiani - is to show how homes can be made safer through planning, planting and upkeep in areas where fire dangers lurk.

Chad Lundquist/Nevada Appeal Nick Soorholtz, arborist for Healthy Trees Professional Tree Care, clears juniper bushes around a home on County Line Road on Tuesday.

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"It's going to be a fun project," said Meri McEneny, a fire-grant assistant with University of Reno Cooperative Extension who works with the six local chapters of the Nevada Fire Safe Council.

Buoncristiani's nearly 3-acres had many trees and plants that could burn if a wildland fire comes roaring into the area.

A powerful mower McEneny called "the masticator" was used to remove highly flammable cheatgrass growing in many sections of the property.

Virtually all of the flammable junipers interspersed among a variety of other trees were removed and other dry vegetation is being yanked up.

Conceiving plans for new, colorful and more fire-resistant plants, shrubs and trees are cooperative extension experts who know how to create gardens and landscaping or, in Buoncristiani's case, adapt his existing design, so the potential for fire damage is minimized.

"They want to compromise," Buoncristiani said. "Anything they take out they'll replace. And sometimes they just trimmed things."

McEneny walked through the front yard and pointed at some shrubs. One shrub was growing up against a wood fence; some others had grown close together. In many cases experts would simply remove plants, but here there are exceptions.

The fence ends far away from the home so keeping it there is less risky than if the fence ended just a few feet from the structure. And because Buoncristiani would like to keep the group of shrubs together as a privacy barrier, other plants will be removed around them to create an island, McEneny said.

"I'm very thankful, grateful," Buoncristiani said of the work being done on his land. "Hopefully, it will convince other people to do it too."

The sign in front of his home advertising the program isn't an invitation to come on

Buoncristiani's property and look around - at least on the spur of the moment.

The first tour is expected to be held this fall, McEneny said.

For details about upcoming tours, call 887-2252, or visit [www.livingwithfire.info](http://www.livingwithfire.info).

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