

Starting a Council: The Second Meeting

Review and approval of the application for chapter affiliation

Review all the documents to be presented to the State Council to gain chapter status with the Nevada Fire Safe Council.

Develop a Mission Statement

A mission statement is a statement of purpose and the ideal or basic reason for the existence of the organization. It should be broad in scope and define the organization's philosophy. In addition, it should be short and easy to understand. Based on your discussion of what everyone wanted to accomplish with the Fire Safe Chapter, create a draft mission statement and present it at the second meeting. Once you or another Chapter member has proposed a mission statement, the Council should review and finalize it.

Consider reviewing mission statements from other Fire Safe Chapters. Here is the mission statement for the statewide Fire Safe Council:

"The mission of the Fire Safe Council is to preserve Nevada's natural and manmade resources by mobilizing all Nevadans to make their homes, neighborhoods and communities fire safe."

Determine Overall Objectives

After establishing a mission statement, Chapter members should think about how the Chapter will fulfill the mission. Objectives state what will have occurred if the mission is successfully achieved. When determining objectives, make sure they relate to the mission and that they are measurable, achievable and results-oriented.

Consider reviewing the objectives from other Fire Safe Chapters. Here are the objectives for the statewide Fire Safe Council:

- Unite Council members to speak with one voice on fire safety
- Empower grass roots organizations and individuals to create fire safe communities
- Unite Council members to increase community awareness, enhance understanding, and create a fire safe community.
- Promote and support government action at all levels to reduce the threat of wildfire and increase community protection.

Revisit Projects and Determine Feasibility

Persuade Chapter members to examine their resources and determine how each member can contribute to a project's success. Many new Chapters choose to begin with small projects and work their way up to larger undertakings. Small projects will yield faster results and gratification, which will build momentum for the group.

Assign Responsibility for Projects

Ask for volunteers and be encouraging, as some members may be shy or hesitant because this is a new area of knowledge for them. Some Chapter members may have a special interest in specific projects, or may be able to commit certain resources. Make sure that

all projects undertaken by the Chapter have been assigned to an individual or group of individuals to ensure that the project gets done.

Target Future Members

Fire safety involves the whole community and the health of your council depends upon constant efforts to involve more people. Enlist volunteers to focus on membership recruitment. Remember, it may take several months to convince certain partners to participate in your Council. In fact, some partners may not join the Council until a fire threatens. This fire will create a window of opportunity. During this period of heightened awareness and concern, your Council can attract new members and advance fire safe programs.