

The Sleepy Hollow Fire Protection District has a number of projects under way this summer to help protect against wildfire in our community. As many of you have undoubtedly noticed, the goats are back. There are currently three herds of 400 animals each working in the Ross Valley. One of the herds has a mixture of sheep and goats. The goats prefer brushy material and leaves while the sheep do a better job grazing on the grass. A good example of what the terrain looks like after a mixed herd has grazed can be found at the San Domenico School. The campus is closed right now, but when it reopens you will see how the terrain has been transformed over the last three years into a more park like setting. It looks great aesthetically and is much more fire resistant. Herd 1 is finishing work along the Terra Linda / Sleepy Hollow Ridge, Herd 2 is on the Triple C Ranch and moving towards Fairfax, and the third herd is finishing up around Red Hill in San Anselmo.

We have had two successful chipper events in Sleepy Hollow. The next curbside pickup will be held on July 20-21. We are adding an extra curbside pickup on Monday, September 21. This event will be funded by the new Marin Wildfire Protection Authority (MWPA) that was created by Measure C. Our final event of the year will be a drop off on October 5 at the end of Butterfield Road to coincide with the annual Creek cleanup.

The SHFPD has received funding from the MWPA for several local programs. The first will be a resumption of the defensible space inspections to be conducted by Marin County Fire's newly hired fire mitigation specialists. The California Fire Code and Public Resources Code grant the authority for authorized Fire Code Officials to conduct inspections for compliance with the various applicable codes. The inspectors do not enter a property without permission. They are trained to walk up to a front door (through an unlocked front gate at the street, if present, under rules of curtilage), and knock to introduce themselves. If no adult is present, they have two options: 1) inspect the property as visible from the front door or public areas such as from the front pathway or roadway, or 2) come back later. Under no circumstances do the inspectors enter locked or gated areas of a property without permission of a resident or landowner, and they don't "peek" over fences. They only inspect areas that are plainly visible from a common area unless an adult resident gives permission to gated areas.

The SHFPD is using its "local share" of MWPA funds for three new projects. First, we are participating in a county wide effort to create evacuation maps for each community. When completed, the maps will be mailed to each residence. We expect the project to be completed later this summer. Second, each member of the Ross Valley Fire Department Joint Powers Authority is contributing towards the hiring of a part time Neighborhood Response Group coordinator. The Neighborhood Response Program aims to establish citizen-led disaster response teams in neighborhoods for the purpose of preparing to take care of themselves following a disaster. The program is motivated by "neighbor helping neighbor," the well-proven idea that we are all willing and able to help if we are provided a method and the means. This program will complement and enhance our own block captain program.

Finally, we have authorized the creation of a Hazardous Vegetation Removal Grant Program using a match of Measure C and SHFPD funds. The purpose of this grant program is to encourage Sleepy Hollow residents to create and maintain defensible space around their homes and the perimeter of their properties and take actions to make their homes more fire resistant through the provisions of grant funds to help offset the cost of this undertaking. The District will reimburse up to \$3000 for the removal of the following targeted hazardous species: Juniper, Cypress, Arborvitae, Bamboo and Pampas Grass. Grants will be awarded on a first come, first serve basis. A total of \$78,000 is available for this pilot program. Details and applications will be posted on our website starting on July 10. Applications will be accepted starting on Monday, July 20.

Our District has successfully tested the NOAA weather radios which were distributed to our block captains. These radios can receive Alert Marin warnings even if you have no cell phone coverage of the power is shut off. As shelter in place orders are lifted, we will begin distribution of the radios to each residence through our block captains. It is necessary to provide some information about

programming and proper use, so we cannot simply drop off the radios. Our block captains will keep you updated about the program schedule.

FIRESafe MARIN is launching a new online educational series starting on Tuesday, July 28. The zoom format will be more like a television show with guest speakers, educational videos, and an opportunity for participants who have logged on to ask questions of the speakers. Check out the FIRESafe MARIN website for details and subscribe to their newsletter. Please go to the FIRESafe MARIN channel on Youtube to view their latest educational videos on “Fire-Smart Landscaping,” “Defensible Space - Zone 0,” “Bio-Diversity and Pollinators in a Fire-Smart Garden,” and “Vulnerability of Attached Decks to Wildfire.”