

# TakeAction

## Teens for Wildfire Safe Communities

### Video Series

#### Part 1

#### Okanogan County, Washington

#### One Year After a Wildfire

Dear Educator,

More than 8 million U.S. students in grades 6-12 live in a community with wildfire risks. In order to encourage these young adults to participate in protecting their homes and natural resources, the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) worked with Young Minds Inspired (YMI) to develop a standards-based program that will help teens understand the dangers of wildfires and their own role in protecting where they live. We hope you enjoy—and share—these valuable materials, so your students can **TakeAction**.

Sincerely,



Dr. Dominic Kinsley  
Editor in Chief  
Young Minds Inspired

#### About This Guide

Created as part of NFPA's **TakeAction: Teens for Wildfire Safe Communities**, this program comprises a 3-part video series and these accompanying lesson plans. In each video, classes will learn about a major U.S. fire and learn from experts how the people and land have recovered over time. Overall, the materials aim to teach students about the short- and long-term impact of wildfires; introduce key terms and concepts; and empower students to get involved in protecting their homes, neighborhoods, and natural resources and to participate in awareness-raising community projects. Designed for use with students in grades 6-8 who live in or near areas at risk for wildfire, the materials align with Common Core standards for Language Arts and may also be appropriate for science, social studies, or health and safety educators.

#### About This Video

**Okanogan County, Washington: One Year After a Wildfire** addresses the immediate impact of wildfire, with footage from a wildfire in Okanogan County, Washington. Homeowners Peggy and Noble Kelly explain how Firewise landscaping and design principles helped their home survive this wildfire.



**NATIONAL FIRE PROTECTION ASSOCIATION**

The leading information and knowledge resource on fire, electrical and related hazards

## Part 1: Okanogon County, Washington - One Year After a Wildfire

### Teacher's Guide

Show the video to your class, or assign them to watch it at home. Lead a class discussion using the questions below and the discussion points in italics. The follow-up activity extensions are ideas to launch a more in-depth study of the relevant topics.

### Discussion Questions:

1. The video opens with 9-1-1 calls, audio, and images from one of the largest wildfires in Washington history. What are some of the things that you see and hear in the video? How did this footage make you feel? The point of this video is to show just how intense the fire was, the thick column of smoke, and how quickly the fire was spreading into the valley.
2. Homeowner Peggy Kelly tells us that the Okanogon County fire was spreading at a rate of 100 yards per second. What does this mean? What are some factors that determine how a fire spreads? Help students understand that homeowners had very little time to evacuate or protect their properties — whatever wasn't already done wasn't going to get done. Use this fact to introduce the importance of mitigation by eliminating fuel sources on your property such as too many trees growing close together, thick low-lying vegetation, and keeping vegetation away from homes. Students should also recognize that environmental factors such as high winds, drought and dry conditions, and temperature changes influence how a wildfire spreads.
3. How does Peggy Kelly define "Firewise?" After viewing this video, what do you think Firewise means? Firewise design is based on reducing fuel sources for a spreading wildfire to create a protective zone around your home and property.
4. The Kellys describe some of the Firewise design choices they made in designing their home and maintaining their landscaping. What are some of the steps they took to make their property Firewise?
5. Based on the steps taken by the Kellys to protect their property, what do you think you can do to help make your home Firewise?

### Extension Activities:

- Ask students to research wildfires that have happened in Okanogon County or another large wildfire that happened in your region and bring in articles to share with their classmates. Articles should detail how far and wide the fires spread, how much land or how many homes were affected, and the recovery in progress.
- Students can hold a family meeting and create a plan to make their property Firewise, assigning each family member specific responsibilities such as trimming dead branches, sweeping porches, and checking roof vents.

### Resources:

- <http://firewise.org/wildfire-preparedness/be-firewise/home-and-landscape.aspx?sso=0>
- <http://www.nfpa.org/public-education/campaigns/takeaction/wildfire-risk-reduction-community-service-projects>
- <https://www.nps.gov/fire/wildland-fire/learning-center/fire-in-depth/fire-spread.cfm>
- <http://science.howstuffworks.com/nature/natural-disasters/wildfire2.htm>
- <http://activefiremaps.fs.fed.us>

**Find out how you can TakeAction to help prepare your community for a wildfire at [www.nfpa.org/takeaction](http://www.nfpa.org/takeaction).**



**NATIONAL FIRE PROTECTION ASSOCIATION**

The leading information and knowledge resource on fire, electrical and related hazards

### **Common Core Standards for English Language Arts**

This lesson plan aligns with the following standards for grades 6-8

SL.7.1/8.1 Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade-appropriate topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

SL.7.2 Analyze the main ideas and supporting details presented in diverse media and formats.

SL.8.2 Analyze the purpose of information presented in diverse media and formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) and evaluate the motives (e.g., social, commercial, political) behind its presentation.

SL.7.3/8.3 Delineate a speaker's argument and specific claims, evaluating the soundness of the reasoning and the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence.

SL.7.4 Present claims and findings, emphasizing salient points in a focused, coherent manner with pertinent descriptions, facts, details, and examples; use appropriate eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation.

W.8.7 Conduct short research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question), drawing on several sources and generating additional related, focused questions that allow for multiple avenues of exploration.

W.8.8 Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, using search terms effectively; assess the credibility and accuracy of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.

