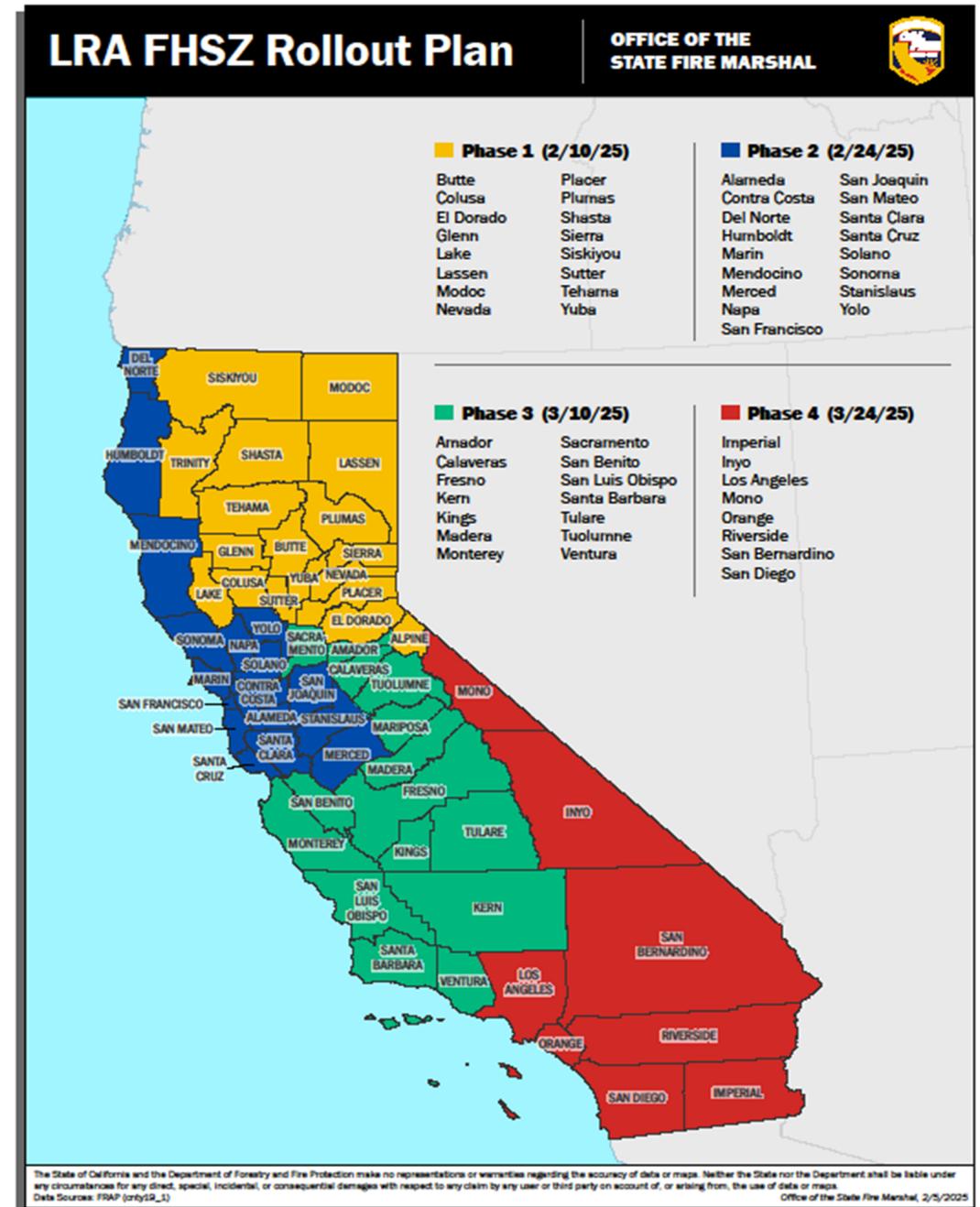


Fire Hazard Severity Zones (FHSZ) & Local Responsibility Areas (LRA) Updates



Legislation

📄 **Assembly Bill 337 (1992)** – Originally mandated the identification of **Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones** following destructive wildfires. **Panorama Fire in San Bernardino and Tunnel Fire in Oakland Hills.**

📄 **Senate Bill 63 (2021)** – Amended Government Code Section 51178 to expand fire hazard oversight to include **Moderate** and **High** zones in addition to **Very High** FHSZ classifications with the LRA. **Expanded the responsibility to the local agency, imposing a state-mandate.**

📄 **Assembly Bill 211 (2022)** – Requires local agencies to **adopt Moderate, High, and Very High FHSZ designations** within **120 days** of OSFM recommendations. Local governments **cannot** downgrade state-designated hazard levels but may increase them if justified.

The recent updates to Fire Hazard Severity Zones (FHSZ) in California provide a more precise assessment of wildfire risks using modern climate data and advanced fire modeling. These updates impact Local Responsibility Areas (LRA), influencing fire prevention measures. Including defensible space, building codes, and real estate disclosure requirements.

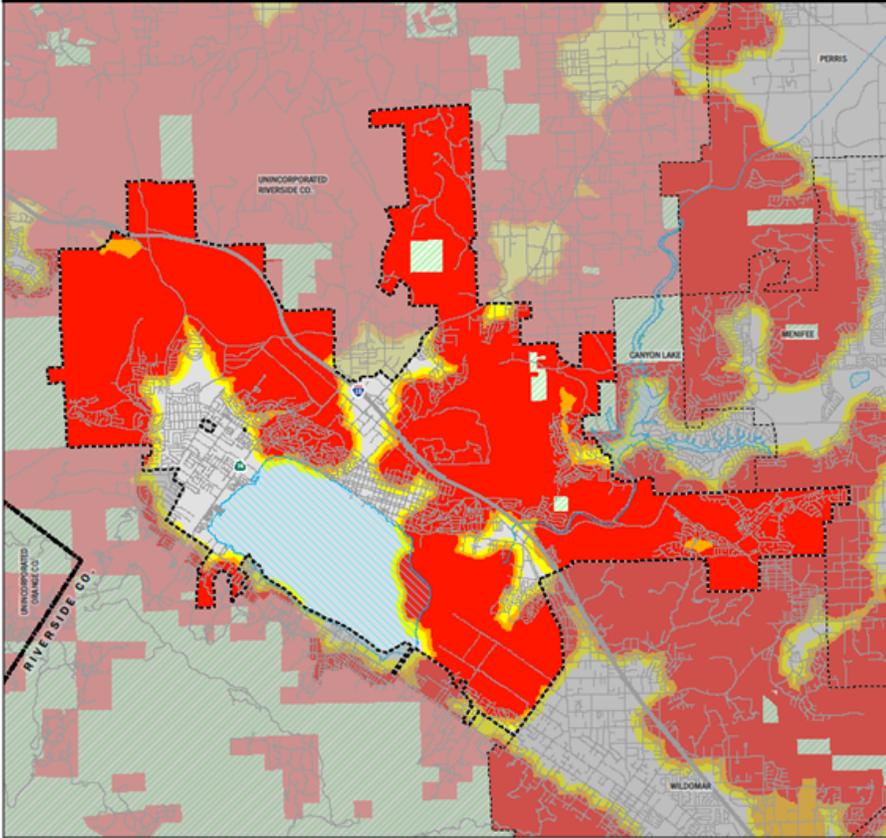
Local Responsibility Areas (LRA) – 2025 FHSZ Updates

On March 24, 2025, OSFM issued the 2025 Recommended Local Responsibility Area (LRA) FHSZ maps for Riverside County.



Local Responsibility Area Fire Hazard Severity Zones

As Identified by the
State Fire Marshal
March 24, 2025

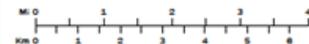


Fire Hazard Severity Zones (FHSZ) in Local Responsibility Area (LRA), as Identified by the State Fire Marshal

Very High High Moderate

Fire Hazard Severity Zones in State Responsibility Area (SRA), Effective April 1, 2024

Very High High Moderate



Projection: NAD 83 California Teale Albers
Scale: 1:10,000 at 11" x 17"

- Incorporated City
- Waterbody
- Unzoned LRA
- Federal Responsibility Area (FRA)

Government Code section 51376 requires the State Fire Marshal to identify areas in the state as moderate, high, and very high fire hazard severity zones based on consistent

statewide criteria and based on the severity of fire hazard that is expected to prevail in those areas. Moderate, high, and very high fire hazard severity zones shall be based on fuel loading, slope, fire weather,

and other relevant factors including areas where winds have been identified by the Office of the State Fire Marshal as a major cause of wildfire spread.

The State of California and the Department of Forestry and Fire Protection make no representations or warranties regarding the accuracy of data or maps. Neither the State nor the Department shall be liable under any circumstances for any direct, special, incidental, or consequential damages with respect to any claim by any user or third party on account of, or arising from, the use of data or maps.

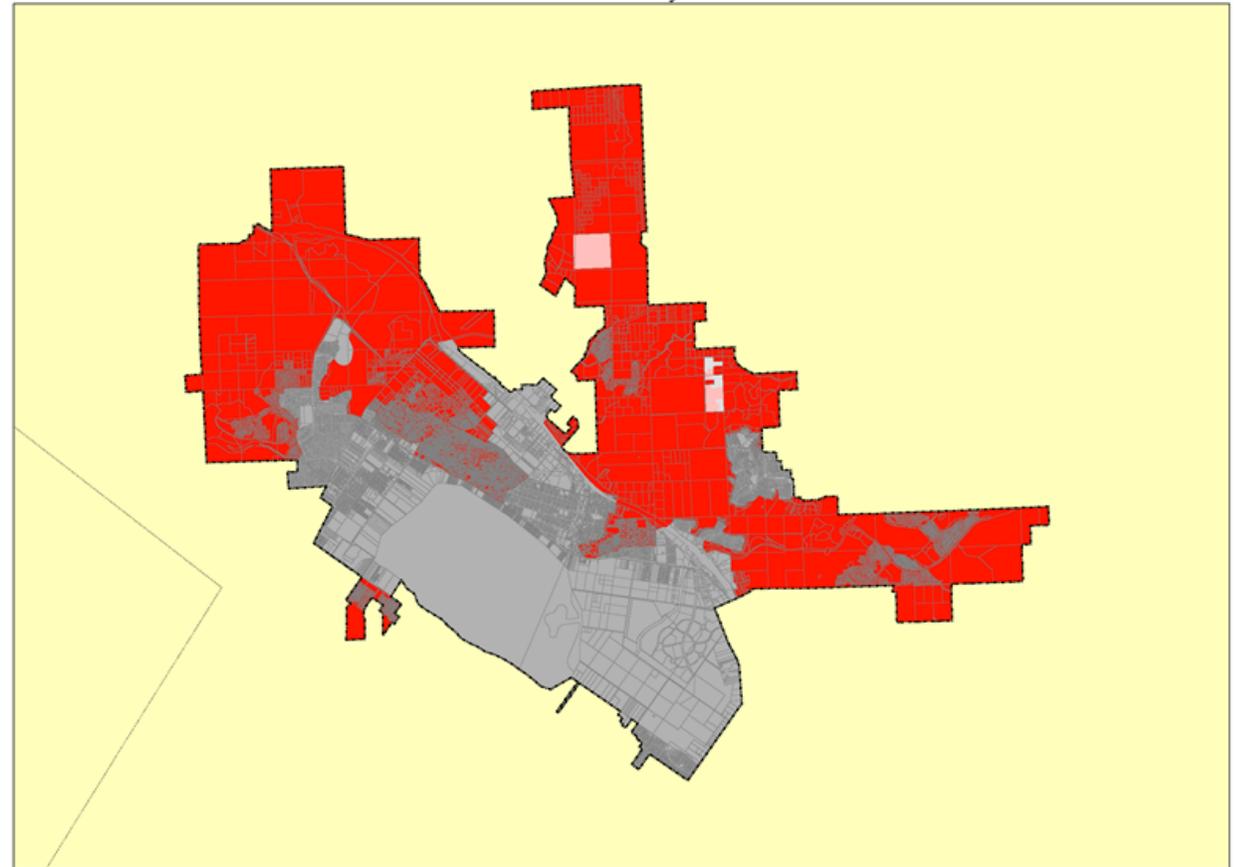
Gavin Newsom, Governor, State of California
Wade Crowfoot, Secretary for Natural Resources, CA Natural Resources Agency
Joe Tyler, Director/Fire Chief, CA Department of Forestry and Fire Protection
Daniel Barakat, State Fire Marshal, CA Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

Data Sources:
CAL FIRE Fire Hazard Severity Zones (FHSZRA13_3, FHSZLRA_25_1)
CAL FIRE State Responsibility Areas (SRA25_1)
City and County boundaries as of 10/22/24 (CA Board of Equalization)



Lake Elsinore

Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones in LRA As Recommended by CAL FIRE



- Fire Hazard Severity Zones**
- Very High
 - High
 - Moderate
 - Unzoned LRA

This map was developed using data products such as parcel and city boundaries provided by local government agencies. In certain cases, this includes copyrighted geographic information. The maps are for display purposes only. Questions and requests related to parcel or city boundary data should be directed to the appropriate local government entity.

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Arvind Sahasrabudhe, Governor, State of California
Mike Crowfoot, Secretary for Natural Resources, The Natural Resources Agency
Joe Tyler, Director/Fire Chief, CA Department of Forestry and Fire Protection
Daniel Barakat, State Fire Marshal, CA Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

MAP ID: FHSZ_03_LakeElsinore
DATA SOURCES: CAL FIRE Fire Hazard Severity Zones (FHSZ) 10/24

LRA 2025 FHSZ Map Changes

According to Government Code Section 51179 (b)(3):

- Local agencies **shall not** decrease the FHSZ level recommended by OSFM.
- Local agencies **may** add to or increase the recommended FHSZ level, but **Riverside County Fire Department is not proposing any additions or increases** during this adoption process.

2025 LRA FHSZ Adoption

Per state law, the Local Responsibility Area Fire Hazard Severity Zone Recommendations must be made available for public viewing within 30 days of receipt and county/city must adopt the OSFM-recommended LRA FHSZ maps, by ordinance, within 120 days of their release.

FIRE HAZARD SEVERITY ZONES WITHIN LOCAL RESPONSIBILITY AREAS

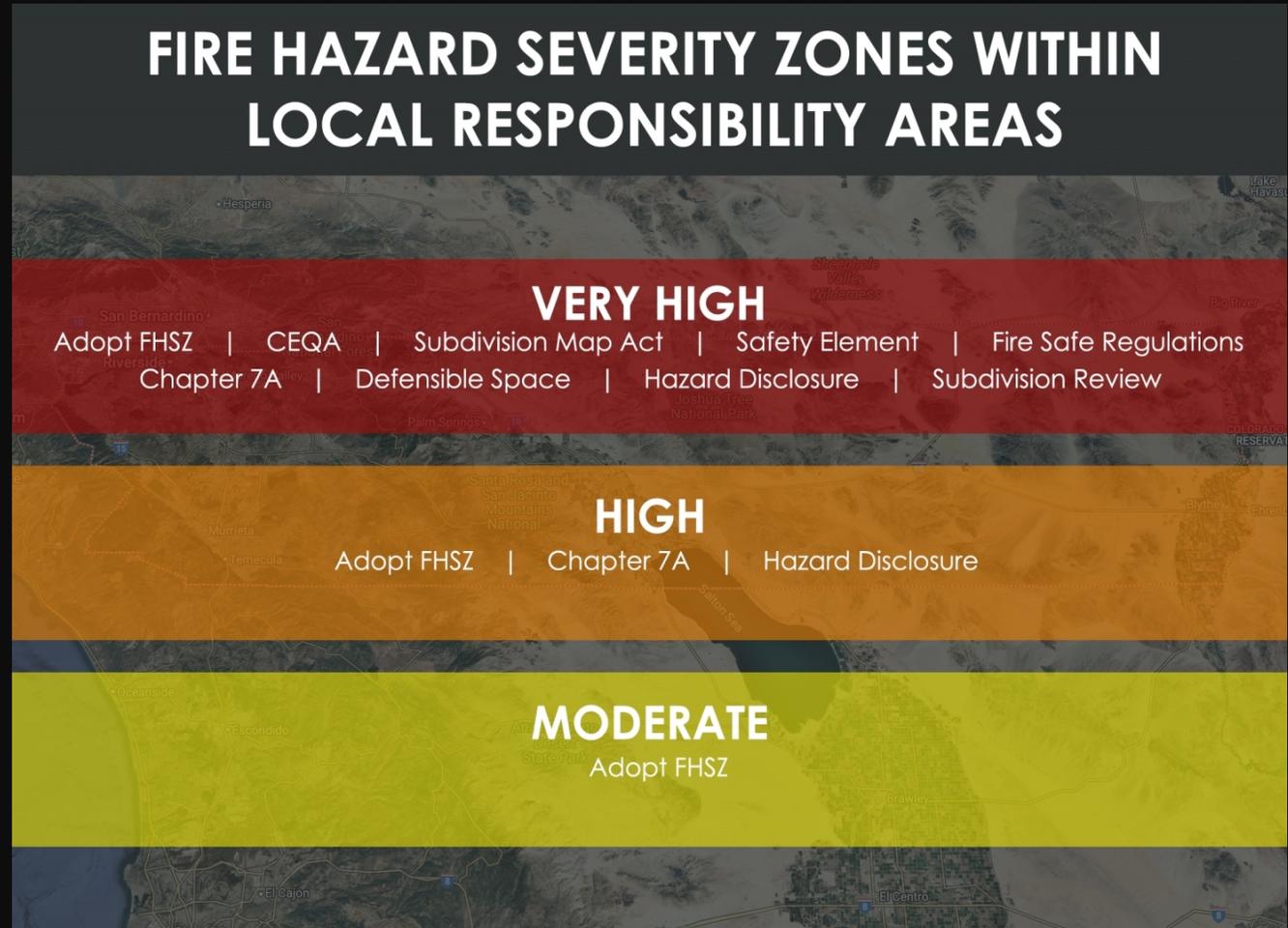
FHSZ Classification

Properties are designated as **Moderate, High, or Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones** based on:

- Terrain and topography
- Vegetation and fuel conditions
- Fire history and frequency
- Climate and weather patterns

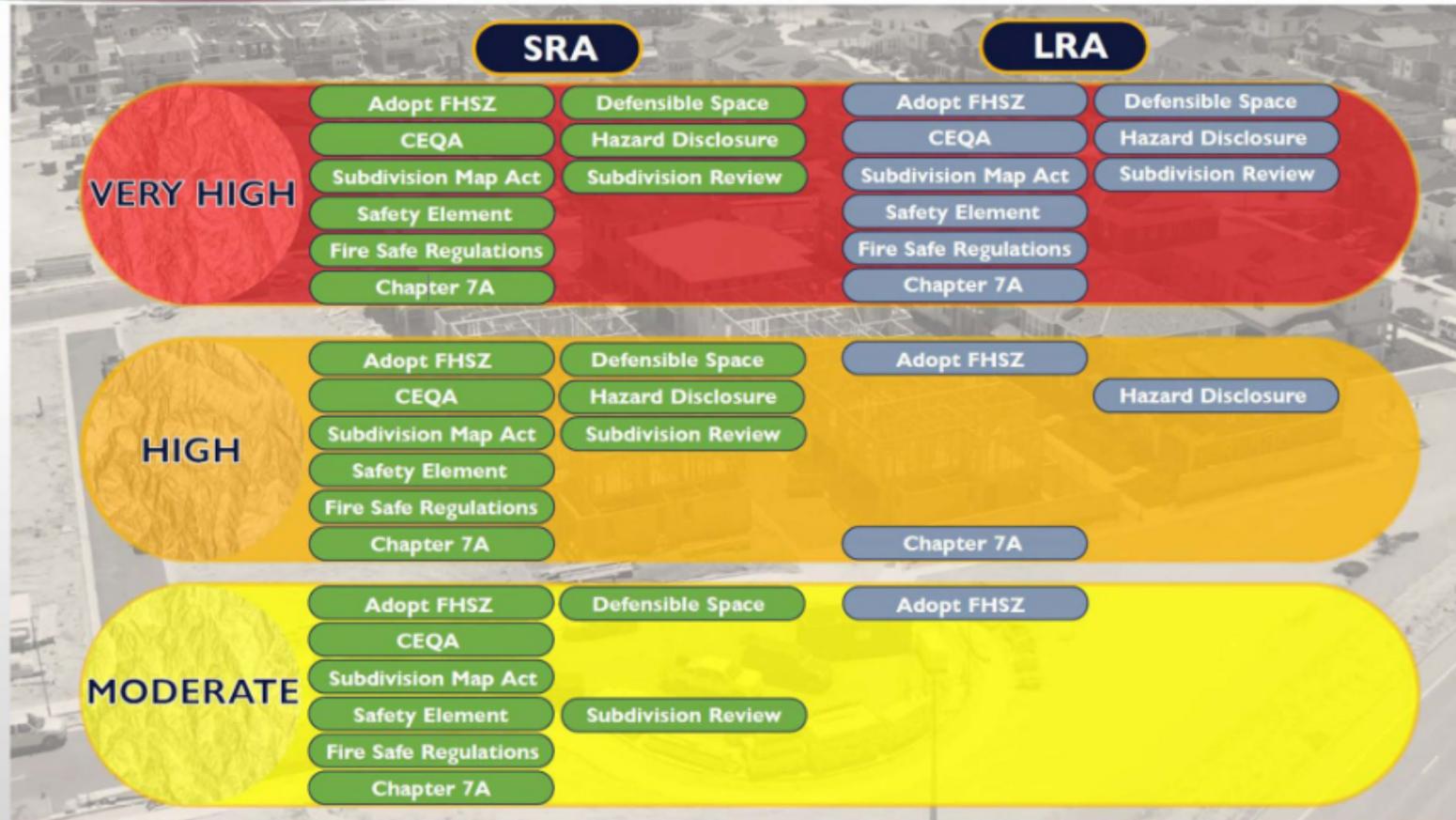
Fire Hazard vs. Fire Risk

FHSZ maps identify the **hazard potential**, not the immediate risk. They do not factor in mitigation efforts such as defensible space, fire-resistant construction, or local firefighting capabilities.



Impact on Property Owners

Fire Hazard Severity Zones (FHSZ)



Homeowners in Very High FHSZ must:

- Maintain 100 feet of defensible space around structures.
- Comply with **home hardening** requirements to reduce ignition risks.
- Ensure new construction and renovations adhere to **Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI) building codes**.
- Disclose **FHSZ designation** when selling property.

Homeowners in High FHSZ must:

- Comply with **home hardening** requirements to reduce ignition risks.
- Ensure new construction and renovations adhere to **Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI) building codes**.
- Disclose **FHSZ designation** when selling



What are the WUI and the WUI Code?

The WUI, or Wildland-Urban Interface, is the area where human development and wildland vegetation meet or intermingle, increasing the risk of wildfires and their impact on communities and homes.

Houses in the WUI are located close to wildland vegetation that can fuel fires, increasing the risk to these homes when wildfires occur.

What does the WUI Code do?

- Establishes regulations to safeguard life and property from the intrusion of wildland fire and to prevent structure fires from spreading to wildland fuels.
- Regulates defensible space and provides ignition-resistant construction requirements to protect against fire exposure and resist ignition by burning ember cast.
- Provides standards for emergency access, water supply and fire protection.
- Provides requirements for automatic fire suppression and safe storage practices.

Steps to Reduce Wildfire Susceptibility

Defensible Space

- Maintain a 30 “Lean, Clean, and Green” zone.
 - Remove and reduce all dead and dry foliage within 30’ of your home.
 - Keep roofs and gutters clear of debris
 - Trim branches encroaching on your home
 - Consider native plants or xeriscape
- 100’ zone
 - Thin and space vegetation
 - Create fuel breaks
 - Incorporate hardscape
- *Zone zero*

Home Hardening

- Create defensible space by clearing and reducing vegetation
- Maintaining vegetation so it does not become dry or dead.
- Opt for fire resistant construction materials such as tile roofs, noncombustible siding and gutters, and noncombustible decking.
- Seal entry points under eaves by boxing
- Install proper vent mesh to prevent embers from entering attics
- Cover chimney and stovepipe openings with the proper mesh to prevent embers

Contact MySafeRiverside.org, for information on how to form FireWise communities.

Question: What is “LRA” ?

Answer: Local Responsibility Areas are areas where the local government is responsible for wildfire protection.

Question: When will the maps go into effect?

Answer: The maps must be adopted, by ordinance, within 120 days of their release.

Question: Will existing homes/buildings be subject to upgrades or mitigations if their Hazard Severity Zone is now more restrictive?

Answer: Some remodels, additions or improvements may be subject to upgraded construction. State law will require all homes in Very High to create defensible space and manage vegetation. And if you're selling a home you will need to disclose whether it is in a fire hazard zone.

Question: What zone is enforced where a property falls into two or more zones?

Answer: We have taken the position that the requirements of most restrictive zone will apply based on dialogue with the state and the fact that the real estate disclosures will always reference the highest zone.

Question: Can Cities and Counties decide not to adopt the new LRA maps?

Answer: Cities and Counties are required to adopt the maps, as mandated by AB211. Cities and Counties may make maps more restrictive, but not less restrictive, per GC51179.

Question: Why does a portion of the lake have a Fire Hazard Severity Zone Classification?

Answer: In the 2023 FHSZ model they have added a buffer of FHSZ from the surrounding wildland into water bodies to account for potential threat of embers to buildings on docks and house boats, as well as variation in reservoir height that occurs with drought. (i.e., the levy)

Additional information

- www.lake-elsinore.org – search: Fire Hazard Severity Zones
- www.rvcfire.org – Our department > Administrative Support > Office of the County Fire Marshal > Fire Hazard Severity Zone