

## Tips for Wildfire Resiliency

Our abundant forests are what makes living in the Arrowhead region of Minnesota so great, but did you know those forests are at HIGH risk for wildfire? In 2017, the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (MN DNR) alone spent over \$25 million dollars fighting wildfires in Minnesota. As residents in the Arrowhead, we have a tremendous responsibility to take charge of lowering our wildfire risk and better our chances of surviving a wildfire event. As your St. Louis Firewise Coordinator, supported by your local fire departments, we want to help you identify actions you can take to improve your chances of surviving a wildfire. These actions will help fire fighters better protect the community and themselves in a wildfire situation.

The number one concern I hear from our local fire fighters and emergency personnel is visibility of your property address sign and access to your property, which is critical when they are trying to respond to emergency situations. If you live in a **rural area**, please make sure you have a new, two sided reflective 911 address sign and that it is installed perpendicular to the road. If you do not have that type of sign, it is easy to order one for \$35. In St. Louis County, contact Holly Olson at 218-726-2921 or email:

[addressing@stlouiscountymn.gov](mailto:addressing@stlouiscountymn.gov). When installing , the sign post should be placed within 10 feet of your driveway access and between 4 and 10 feet high from the edge of the road surface. Make sure all brush is cleared around the sign for easy visibility, which can be worsened by smoke or nighttime conditions. A new sign is a small price to pay to protect you and your property. If you live in a **municipal area**, contact your city clerk for instructions on obtaining an address sign, if you don't have one, and regulations regarding the posting of your house number.

The second major concern for fire fighters and emergency personnel is obstructive access to your property. Fire trucks and other emergency vehicles are large, expensive pieces of equipment. But, the lives and safety of our fire fighters and emergency personnel is even more important. Every second counts in an emergency situation, and if these emergency vehicles are unable to get down your driveway or maneuver a turn-around, it places them in danger. If you live in a rural area make sure your driveways are cleared of trees and over hanging branches, creating an egress of at least 14 feet wide and 14 feet tall. Make sure there is plenty of clearance for fire trucks or ambulances to turn around and exit your property quickly. To learn more visit : <https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/firewise> , for other valuable tools to help you, your property and your community become more wildfire resilient.

Are you interested in being notified regarding an emergency situation in your county? Register online for notifications that come straight to your phone. All information is strictly confidential.

Register For St. Louis County at Northlandalert.com:

<https://member.everbridge.net/453003085616005/login>

Register for Lake County Emergency notifications

<https://member.everbridge.net/453003085619442/login>

Information provided by the St. Louis County Firewise Coordinator, Gloria Erickson.

Contact information [gloria@dovetailinc.org](mailto:gloria@dovetailinc.org) or by phone at (218) 365-0878