

Dear Community Members,

Fire is a fact of life in California. But for those of us who live, work and recreate in California's fire dependent wildlands, fire can be a source of fear and a significant drain on the public and private cost of living.

Whether it's the governmental costs of preventing or combating wildfires, or the private cost of insurance, fire-safe building standards, or, occasionally and tragically, the cost of rebuilding a life devastated by fire, none of us goes untouched.

After the 2007 fires, I asked Jim Courter, President of CERT to find and organize members and businesses in the community to work with the Valley Center Fire Protection District and CALFIRE to form The Greater Valley Center Fire Safe Council ("GVCFSC"). The GVCFSC is a non-profit coalition of public and private sector organizations that share a common, vested interest in wildfire prevention and loss mitigation. The Council's goal is to mobilize the people of Greater Valley Center to protect their homes, communities and environment from wildfires through prevention, planning and education.

So far the GVCFSC has achieved great success and in only a few months accomplished the following complicated organizational hurdles:

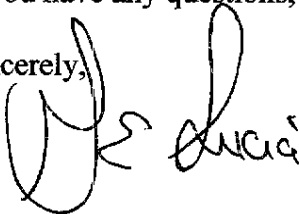
1. Incorporated with the CA Secretary of State as The Greater Valley Center Fire Safe Council;
2. Formed a Board of Directors, led by President Robert Fink and Vice-President Jim Courter;
3. Wrote and adopted By-Laws and filed for 501 c3 non-profit status;
4. Raised approximately \$3,000 from private donations;
5. Prepared and submitted a Community Wildfire Protection Plan ("CWPP") to the County;
6. Drafted long and short term goals, designed to protect the community of Valley Center.

The next fire safe project will be in conjunction with CERT at the upcoming "Living with Wild Fire Class" presented by Anne Fege, Phd. We expect a large turnout of community members and businesses to gather at Saint Stephens Church to attend a day long expose of classes, presentations and demonstrations. Stay tuned for the exact date. The goal is to teach the community how to make your home, businesses and property fire safe and knowing what to do in times of emergency.

This is especially vital to your readership because of the increasing spread of Valley Center's population into wildland areas where homes and businesses are at substantially greater risk, and where the resources needed to safeguard them are far greater and more costly.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to call me at 760-751-7600.

Sincerely,



George Lucia, Fire Marshal
Valley Center Fire Protection District