



Press Release

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CITY OF CHINO HILLS ADDRESSES CALFIRE'S UPDATED FIRE HAZARD MAPS

Chino Hills, CA – The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) has released updated Fire Hazard Severity Zone (FHSZ) maps for Local Responsibility Areas (LRA) throughout the state, which includes Chino Hills. As required by the State Fire Marshal, the updated maps identify areas based on the severity of fire hazards, with zones categorized as moderate, high, and very high risk. In Chino Hills, Chino Valley Fire District (CVFD) is responsible for providing fire services and is making the updated maps available to the public for review and input.

The updated maps classify over 24,000 acres in the City of Chino Hills to be under some threat from wildfires and included in one of the three zones. Of that amount, just over 20,000 acres are designated as very high risk including nearly 10,000 acres of designated open space – over 7,300 acres in the Chino Hills State Park, and 1,750 acres in Tres Hermanos Ranch.

Many residents who were not previously in a high fire risk zone may now find their properties included in the updated hazard zones. According to CAL FIRE, all homeowners in a very high fire hazard zone must comply with defensible space regulations by clearing flammable materials to create an "Ember Resistant Zone," which helps prevent ember ignition and enhances wildfire safety. Home or property owners looking to sell their property are required to provide a disclosure that the property is located within a high or very high fire hazard zone. New construction will also be required to comply with stricter building codes once CVFD adopts the updated map.

The City understands that homeowners may be concerned about how this impacts their fire insurance rates, especially as many in Chino Hills have already faced rising premiums or cancelled policies. CAL Fire's FHSZ maps were last updated in 2007, and according to the California Department of Insurance, insurance companies have already been using alternate wildfire risk tools to determine coverage and rates. Insurance carriers may also require homeowners to implement and verify wildfire risk mitigation actions at their own request to maintain coverage or qualify for discounts. These actions may include defensible space improvements, home hardening measures, and other fire-resistant upgrades.

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The City is committed to ensuring that residents are informed and prepared. In response to the new maps, the City will be updating its local planning documents to incorporate them including the General Plan and Safety Element, Local Hazard Mitigation Plan, and Fire Hazard Overlay District in the City's Development Code. The City will also continue to collaborate with CVFD to provide wildfire mitigation resources and to help homeowners understand their own responsibilities. CVFD's "Ready, Set, Go!" program offers additional guidance available on the homepage of its website.

Chino Hills residents are encouraged to review the updated FHSZ maps available through CVFD online at chinovalleyfire.org/Fire-Hazard-Severity-Zone-Map and provide input from April 1-30. While CVFD has the discretion to include additional areas in higher severity zones, it cannot assign a lower fire hazard severity rating than what has been designated by the State Fire Marshal. CVFD officials will provide a presentation on the updated FHSZ maps at the April 8 Chino Hill City Council Meeting. For more information, please contact the Chino Valley Fire District at (909) 902-5260.

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