



Don't wait for another fire, get to work now

August 22, 2007

Creating defensible space around our homes and fuel breaks around our communities has been the topic of the summer. After the Angora fire devoured 254 homes and 3,100 acres, our awareness of this vital subject grew.

Once we saw a report that homes caught other homes on fire in the Angora fire, we could see the need for a community and region-wide response. Through Friday's Lake Tahoe Forum our elected officials emphasized their concern.

The exclamation point was placed Saturday, as five homes burned on Lake Tahoe's west shore. Here, a forest fuels break kept that human-caused wildfire from potentially burning a great number of homes. East of here, a 4,200-acre fire seven miles west of Carlin closed Interstate 80 for about four hours Sunday afternoon.

All three of these fires were caused by humans. We can't look to the heavens for answers, we must look at each other.

We must take care not to start fires in the first place. And take care to be ready in case of someone else's carelessness.

It takes sweat to create defensible space. And some elbow grease. And sometimes some cash. But it's nothing compared to the sweat our firefighters willingly give or the cash we as taxpayers, insurance payers, will dole out after the fact.

To learn more about protecting your home from the threat of wildfire, visit www.livingwithfire.info or contact Ed Smith, natural resources specialist, University of Nevada Cooperative Extension, 782-9960 or smithe@unce.unr.edu. Living With Fire is an interagency program coordinated by University of Nevada Cooperative Extension.

What are we waiting for? Will we wait to clear our yards until someone is seriously injured, or dies? Will we have enough guts to rally around the firefighter's family when we haven't cleared our own defensible space?

[BACK](#) 