

Results of the 2014 Westhills Fire Safe Council Neighborhood Survey 12-3-14



www.westhills91307.org



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Westhills is an unincorporated community in Los Angeles County with 175 homes nestled between Bell Canyon and Hidden Hills. We're in the mountains above West Hills next to Knapp Ranch Park, near Calabasas Commons, Topanga Plaza and Warner Center.

Our community is represented by the **Westhills Homeowners Association**, incorporated as a non-profit organization in 1978. WHA maintains an active website at <http://www.westhills91307.org> with extensive information for our homeowners. Our homeowners association sponsors annual meetings, picnics and garage sales.

The Westhills Fire Safe Council (WFSC) was founded in 2009 under the aegis of the Westhills Home Owners Association. As a five year follow up to our 2009 Westhills Fire Safe Council Neighborhood Survey, the Westhills Fire Safe Council asked our community of Westhills to reassess the fire safety of our homes and our preparedness for fire emergencies.

The WFSC recent activities include having Los Angeles Fire Department and California Fire Safe Council members speak at our annual homeowners and answer fire safety questions to our homeowners at our picnic. We provide fire safety and drought/fire safe landscaping brochures including the Los Angeles County Emergency Survival Guide to our neighbors.

The Westhills Fire Safe Council worked with following groups to develop the questions for our survey—Westhills Homeowners Association, the California Fire Safe Council, LA County Fire Department, Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky's Calabasas office, Las Virgenes Municipal Water District, Los Angeles Department of Public Works and the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA). We received and analyzed 41 surveys – almost a quarter of the households in our community.

We are pleased to announce that **Paul Iyer on Welby Way** is our 2015 Survey Drawing winner who will receive a \$50 gift certificate from Marmalade Café in the Calabasas Commons. We thank Marmalade Café for their continuing support of Westhills.

The following were responses to our survey:

- 89% shared contact with information with their neighbor
- 85% removed dead leaves and needles from roofs and gutters
- 85% maintained plants by regularly watering and pruning dead branches
- 83% know how to correctly use fire extinguishers
- 74% all family members know who to contact after an emergency

During the survey, many people became aware that they weren't doing the following tasks to improve their fire safety by:

Checking our fire extinguishers once a year
Checking and replacing batteries in our smoke and carbon monoxide detectors
Removing flammable vegetation next to our homes and roofs
Incorporating California friendly drought tolerant plants into our landscaping
Learning to use fire extinguishers and to store flammable material

Based on the survey, our neighbors would like us to provide the following:

- Learn about drought tolerant and fire resistant landscaping 67%
- Monthly fire safety and landscaping educational emails 56%
- More WFSC webpage links at www.westhills91307.org 56%
- Training for our neighborhood on how to use fire extinguishers 52%
- Safely storing and disposing of combustibile material 41%

The WFSC members and advisors include Rhoda Novak (President), Arlene Bernholtz, Dolores E. Blumenfeld, Shannon Cooke, Sue Jennings (Founding President), John Novak, Tom Roe, Geraldine Rothenberg, Thelma Gutierrez, Yelena Shpilshaya and Igor Shpilskiy,

We appreciate the significant support of Katie Martel of the California Fire Safe Council, and Assistant Fire Chief J. Lopez and Forester David Whitney of Los Angeles County to our community.

We're proud to live in Westhills. We wish to thank our neighbors for their participation in our survey.