



# Horizons Village Firewise Newsletter

*Saving lives and property  
from wildfire*

Volume 1, Issue 1 - June 2015

**H**ello neighbors! This is the first issue of the Horizons Village Firewise Newsletter. We plan to bring you important information about community events as well as simple things you can do to protect both your own property and that of others within our community. Living in a forest requires close and constant attention to our own activities and impact on the natural beauty around us. We will help you understand how to keep that beautiful surrounding there for our enjoyment and preserve it for generations to come. You choose to live in a forest for very understandable reasons. Keeping ourselves and our surroundings safe is a part of what we need to do to ensure that our community and those surrounding us remain as beautiful and natural as we found them. If you have ideas or want to write something for this newsletter please feel free to write us at [gwstrong@gmail.com](mailto:gwstrong@gmail.com) or [lorrie.bennett00@gmail.com](mailto:lorrie.bennett00@gmail.com).

## Smokey

**Y**ou've no doubt seen this sign at the front of Horizons Village Road at Route 151. While we hope it doesn't ever display "Extreme" as in this photo, we have agreed to post it at our entrance. Horizons Village was approached by Curtis Sheets, Chief of Wintergreen Fire and Rescue, to post the VA Department of Forestry Fire Danger sign at the HV entrance as a public service. Chief Sheets was in need of a high traffic, high visibility location; and he also sought reliable volunteers to monitor the State's fire danger status on a daily basis to maintain the timeliness of the threat level. He believed our location and our Firewise Committee was a great fit. Raising wildfire awareness to our community is a high priority for Chief Sheets.

The Firewise committee and Wintergreen Fire and Rescue believe that, if people were aware of the risk of wildfire that they would take even greater precautions. One of us will be checking the Department of Forestry website daily to see how they rate the risk of wildfire and change the sign accordingly. Take a look each time you pass the sign and, remember, *"Only you can prevent wildfires!"*



## 911 House Signs



**L**arry Herring, HV's resident Wintergreen Fire and Rescue volunteer EMT and ambulance driver, knows all too well how poorly marked or unmarked house numbers potentially contribute to serious time delays for emergency first responders. At the 2012 Annual Meeting the suggestion was made to look into the feasibility of 911 house signage for HV. A 911 sign trial was planned, materials were procured and paid for by HVPOA, and six OTP homes received the initial signs. The plan was to add additional signs as the budget allowed. In December 2013 HV was admitted to the Firewise program, with free 911 signs as part of the deal. The 911 sign pictured on the left is an example of our new DOF signage, with installation planned in three phases over the Summer. Please note: once construction begins on a home, Nelson County will issue you a permanent house number, when you are given a number please forward that information to David Bennett.

We are asked to erect these signs at the entrances of our driveways so that emergency vehicles entering our community can find the property that they are looking for. This applies to both fire equipment and ambulances! These signs are easily visible at night and are erected so that they clearly reflect toward incoming traffic. Although we are erecting these in stages, eventually, we hope to have one in front of every house in the community. When your house is next, we will place a small yellow flag where we think your sign should be, then we will ask you to either approve it or move it. In fact, if you are interested, you can help us when Randy Whiting and the rest of the Firewise crew are "planting" signs. Just let us know at [gstrong@gmail.com](mailto:gstrong@gmail.com).

## Fire Vaults

**P**ictured on the right is the exposed piping of an underground water vault and it contains 2500 gallons of water for use in case of a fire in our community. While this one has been in place for a couple of years, Horizons Village has now been given a \$4900 grant from the Virginia Department of Forestry to install another one! We are now getting quotes from contractors and trying to decide on a location, but the new one will likely be placed either in the circle at the end of Mountain Field Trail or, if that is too difficult to dig, then somewhere else that will benefit those living on Mountain Field Trail and Horizons Village Road. Such water vaults are extremely important to fire departments since they otherwise have to truck in the water needed to fight a fire in our community. Such water vaults allow fire departments to continue to fight fire while tanker trucks are off premises loading up with water from nearby rivers or creeks. We will keep you posted on the decision process of where to place our new water vault and when this year it will be placed so you can come watch!



**“I** can think of no more stirring symbol of man’s humanity to man than a fire engine.”

~Kurt Vonnegut



## Firewise Workday

**O**n June 13, several of us gathered along Horizons Village Road to clear the roadsides of tinder and other brush. Part of the reason we are asked to do this by the Department of Forestry is so that it preserves a firebreak in the case of a wildfire. Another reason is so that firetrucks are able to travel on our roads safely in the case of a fire in our community. The guidelines that we follow are to clear at least 6 feet from the edge of the roadway and at least 13 feet above the roadway. When we encounter a pine tree along the way, we try to remove them. Pine trees are known by a four-letter word in the Department of Forestry. They call them “fuel”. We usually have a workday such as this one several times a year. After cutting branches and trees accordingly, we schedule a contractor to come in and chip up what we’ve collected. Homeowners are strongly encouraged to take these opportunities to clear the brush from around their homes and put it in piles next to one of our roads. Then, the next time the chipper comes through, he can remove the pile and chip it up. Horizons Village received a \$5,000 grant last year to pay for the chipping and another grant this year of \$3500. This should help pay for at least 2, if not three chipping days. We will announce those days in this newsletter and in other specific emails as they are scheduled.

### Horizons Village Firewise Committee

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