





### ***Engaging in the Dialogue, Regardless of Organization Size***

They may be called brush fires, grass fires, field fires, railroad fires, outdoor fires, or forest fires, but no matter the name, the risk to residents and resources remains the same. Your organization may already have existing outreach efforts or you may be engaging with residents on this issue for the first time. Any leader considering how their organization can better connect with the residents they serve with wildland fire preparedness messaging can benefit from the RSG! Program and its implementation steps:

#### **Steps to Consider in Your Department:**

- |                                                    |                                                     |
|----------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|
| 1. The RSG Champion's                              | 5. Identifying and Accessing State and Local Assets |
| 2. Scaling the Program to Your Organization's Size | 6. Identifying and Accessing Federal Assets         |
| 3. Internal Communication                          | 7. Planning for Special Needs Populations           |
| 4. External Communication                          | 8. Keeping Up Momentum                              |

#### ***Step 1: The RSG Champion's***

As with any project an organization takes on, the champion's primary role in the RSG! Program is to set the tone for the rest of the organization. Make it a priority. Appoint a Ready, Set, Go! coordinator to help oversee all of the organization's outreach and internal communications. Appoint one or two people who have a passion for this issue and have their enthusiasm drive the project.

#### ***Step 2: Scaling the Program to Your Organization's Size***

Identify your service area's risk to wildland fire and your organization's ability to spread the message. This becomes your communication plan to best engage your residents with your organization members. The RSG! Program is not one-size-fits-all. Rather, each organization can tailor it to your available resources. You might already have an outreach system in place to teach residents about other fire prevention activities, and the RSG! Program can augment that educational process. Consider starting small – with just one neighborhood or area – and focus your awareness efforts going forward. In addition, the RSG! Program provides action guide booklets, outreach tools, templates to localize the message, and other resources free of charge. Organizations simply need to join the program.

### ***Step 3: Internal Communication***

An understanding of the wildland fire threat in your service area may already exist with your organization. Others, though, may need to create a culture within the organization that supports and understands WUI mitigation efforts. Make it a priority for your personnel to become familiar with the WUI threat in your area; the residents in your areas that are affected; and existing preparedness tools to mitigate the challenge. Your personnel are ambassadors in your community for fire safety. The RSG! Program Website, [www.wildlandfireRSG.org](http://www.wildlandfireRSG.org), contains many educational tools on the resources page for organizations to better understand preparedness techniques; talking with the public; and wildland fire activity.

### ***Step 4: External Communication***

Identify the local events, neighborhood, and trusted voices in the community that can help you deliver the wildland fire preparedness message to help create a fire-adapted community. You will need to meet with them to convey the urgency of the challenge and how they can become partners with you in prevention. Possible stakeholders in the target audience and those who can provide assistance include: individual residents and Homeowner Associations; local fire departments; law enforcement; Fire Corps; CERT teams; local elected officials; Firewise or other preparedness plan coordinators; local media, Rotary Clubs and business bureaus; local philanthropy groups; churches and schools; insurance agents; and developers to name a few. To learn about smart practices for engagement and dialogue, visit [www.wildlandfireRSG.org](http://www.wildlandfireRSG.org).

### ***Step 5: Identifying and Accessing State and Local Assets***

Your organization should establish positive working relationships with other local fire departments; local public safety agencies; state-level fire service organizations; and state-level forestry, interior and land management officials. Your goal should be to identify the staffing and equipment resources that would be available to your organization if your resources become overwhelmed and foster relationships before an event occurs. State-level groups may also be able to help you with funding and localizing the message.

### ***Step 6: Identifying and Accessing Federal Assets***

Your organization should establish positive working relationships with representatives of federal agencies to connect with those who share your goal of creating a fire-adapted community, can help with planning, and can provide resources if your organization becomes overwhelmed in wildland fire preparedness and response. Visit our 'Partners' Page under the 'About' tab at [www.wildlandfireRSG.org](http://www.wildlandfireRSG.org) to learn more about our federal partners.

