

# CAL FIRE NEWS RELEASE

## California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection



**CONTACT:** Duty PIO  
(916) 651-3473 (FIRE)

**RELEASE**  
**DATE:** May 3, 2022

### **CAL FIRE Establishes New Division to Assist Local Communities Prepare for Wildfires**

**Sacramento** – As California continues to increase its focus on fire prevention and community readiness for wildfires, CAL FIRE has established the Community Wildfire Preparedness and Mitigation Division within the Office of the State Fire Marshal. The new division follows the passage of Assembly Bill 9, authored by Assembly Member Jim Wood in 2021, which was signed into law by Governor Newsom.

“For nearly 100 years the Office of the State Fire Marshal has focused on fire prevention,” said Chief Mike Richwine, California’s State Fire Marshal. “With our new division focusing on wildfire prevention and community readiness, we will be able to expand our efforts in reducing the threat to lives and property.”

In April, CAL FIRE Director Joe Tyler appointed Chief Daniel Berlant as Deputy Director to lead the new division. Previously Berlant led the department’s Wildfire Planning & Engineering Program and worked in various fire prevention and public engagement positions within the organization for nearly two decades.

The Community Wildfire Preparedness and Mitigation Division will allow CAL FIRE to continue to develop, prioritize, and implement strategies and projects that create fire adapted communities and landscapes by improving community preparedness, fire resilience in a local and regional capacity, as well as reducing the severity and damage caused by wildfires. This Division consolidates existing department programs including defensible space, wildland building codes and home hardening, pre-fire planning, fire hazard severity zones, land use planning, wildfire prevention grants, and utility wildfire mitigation. In addition, the new Division will be expanding its local technical assistance it provides to cities and counties to ensure they have the best available measures, practices, support, and funding to prepare their communities against wildfires. With May 1<sup>st</sup> kicking off Wildfire Preparedness Week, there is no better time than now to educate yourself and your communities on how to be better prepared for wildfires.

“As California continues to experience more severe and damaging wildfires, our wildfire strategy must include preparing our homes and communities to be more resistant to the effects of wildfire,” said Chief Daniel Berlant, CAL FIRE Deputy Director of Community Wildfire Preparedness and Mitigation.

To learn more about how you can be prepared for wildfire, visit [ReadyforWildfire.org](https://www.fire.ca.gov/readyforwildfire/). For more information on the Community Wildfire Preparedness and Mitigation Division, visit <https://osfm.fire.ca.gov/divisions/community-wildfire-preparedness-and-mitigation/>.

###

#### **Editor’s Notes:**

Graphic of programs within the Community Wildfire Preparedness & Mitigation Division.

<https://www.fire.ca.gov/media/a0njf10/community-wildfire-preparedness-and-mitigation-2022.png>

Photo of CAL FIRE Defensible Space Inspectors providing preparedness tips to homeowner.

<https://www.fire.ca.gov/media/f42mjrby/d-space.jpg>

Photo of Chief Daniel Berlant, Deputy Director of CAL FIRE Community Wildfire Preparedness & Mitigation Division. <https://www.fire.ca.gov/media/goxac1ui/daniel-berlant-hr.jpg>