

Wildfire Safety

Radio Announcements Give Wildfire Safety Tips

(NAPSA)—Wildfires burn millions of acres a year. While some are beneficial, others can cause long-lasting damage, especially in places where people live, work and play.

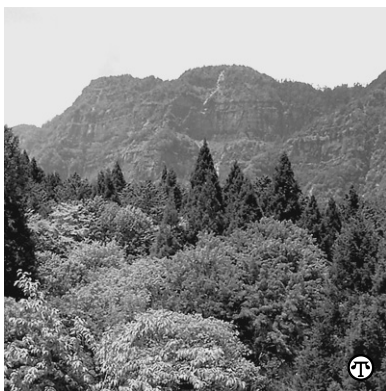
Residents of areas prone to fire can minimize the risk and danger to their property and lives by taking a few precautionary steps. Public service announcements (PSAs), funded by the Heinz Family Philanthropies, are giving these communities tips on safety and prevention, wildland fire ecology, and fire management.

“Wildfires are a natural part of life in many parts of our country but they can also jeopardize the safety and property of people who live close to our beautiful wildlands,” said Teresa Heinz, chairman of the Heinz Family Philanthropies. “It is my hope residents and communities will learn useful tips from our ‘hot topics’ and keep themselves and their loved ones safe and sound during fire season.”

“Wildland fire is a natural event, much like hurricanes and tornadoes,” explains Larry Hamilton, director of fire and aviation for the Bureau of Land Management. “With assistance from Teresa Heinz and the Heinz Family Philanthropies, the public service announcements will help people be more aware of what they can do to be prepared. Communities can live compatibly with wildland fire.”

Residential and commercial development, and recreation are rapidly increasing in wildlands. Forest and rangeland fires, worsened by drought and weather conditions, cause more than a billion dollars a year in property damage and increasingly threaten the lives of residents and firefighters.

But the hazards from unwanted



For people who live and work in wildland areas, there are ways to protect property from being ravaged by wildfire.

wildland fire can be mitigated, if people who reside or work in wildlands are aware of the danger and willing to take a few steps to defend their property from fire. By applying some of the valuable techniques contained in these PSAs, wildland visitors and residents will reduce their risks and help maintain healthy wildlands.

“We’re not going to see a decrease in the number of people living, working and playing in our wildlands,” said Hamilton. “We need to increase public awareness of how the dangers of wildfire can be lessened. These PSAs will help accomplish that.”

The announcements are available on the Web at www.nifc.gov.

Development of the “hot topic” PSAs was funded by the Teresa and H. John Heinz III Foundation. The Heinz Family Philanthropies (www.heinzfamily.org) try to create positive change by establishing public and private linkages, particularly in the areas of the environment, health care and women’s health and economic security.