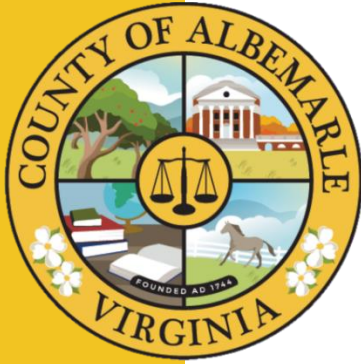


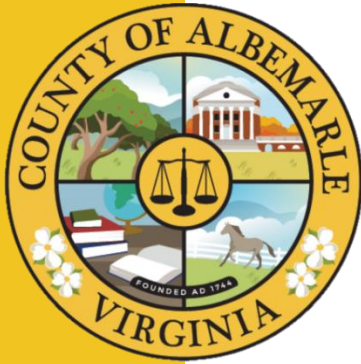
Wildland Fire Prevention Strategies - Albemarle County Fire Rescue



Increase in Wildfire Risk

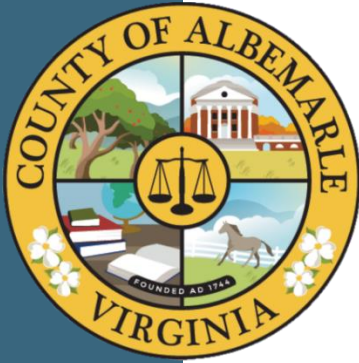
Climate Change & Urbanization are the primary drivers

- Climate changes that impact wildfire risk:
 - Rising temperatures increases the rate of evaporation drying out soil and vegetation
 - Longer dry spells between storms contributes to the drying of fuel layers
 - Lower air humidity – further dries out vegetation
- Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) – Wildfire impact mostly driven by human behaviors



Wildfire Risk Assessment

- VA Hazard Mitigation Plan (2023)
- TJPDC Hazard Mitigation Plan (2023)
- County's Climate Vulnerability & Risk Assessment (2022)
 - Recognizes local wildfire risk and provides starting point
 - Experience over last two years suggests it underestimated the growing risk of wildfire risk in Albemarle
 - Report does not address smoke and air quality impacts from wildfires in other places (Canadian wildfires - summer 2023)
- Working closely with County's Climate Program staff to monitor and evaluate the impact on wildfires

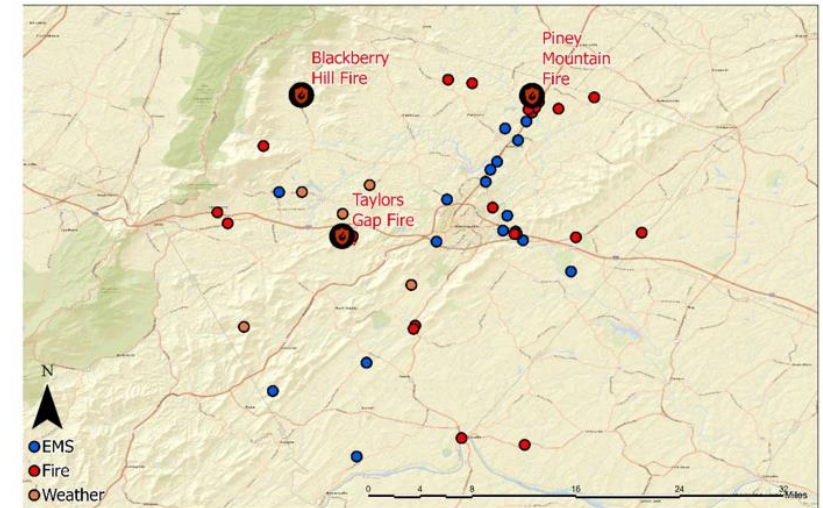


Events of March 20, 2024

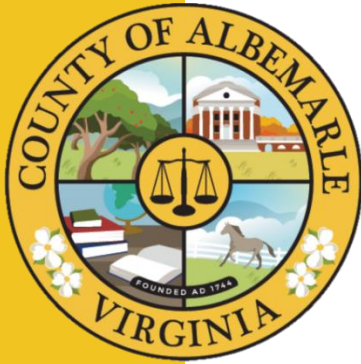
ACFR managed exceptional demand for service

- From 12-8pm- 49 total calls for service (3x typical dispatch)
- Clean-up/wrap-up extended thru March 22
- Activated our local EOC
- Total OT = 60k
- Local declaration of emergency & requested statewide mutual aid thru VDEM

Albemarle County Fire Rescue Responses 12-8 PM on 3/20/2024

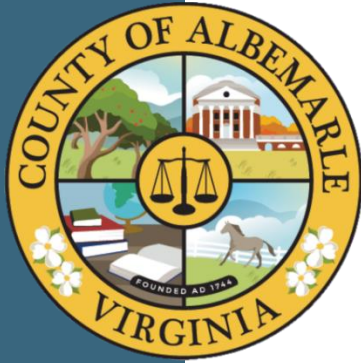


*26 outdoor fire incidents,
3 significant fires totaling 520 acres



March 20th After Action Review

- Resource allocation amidst concurrent incidents
 - Three major brush fires within an hour span, all county resources depleted
- Mutual aid resources
 - Surrounding localities dealing with similar fires
 - Statewide resources took several hours to respond
 - Cumberland, Amelia, Pulaski, & Carrolton Counties
 - Virginia Department of Forestry
- Evacuation & Notification
 - Gaps in notification systems identified
 - Also need for additional public education

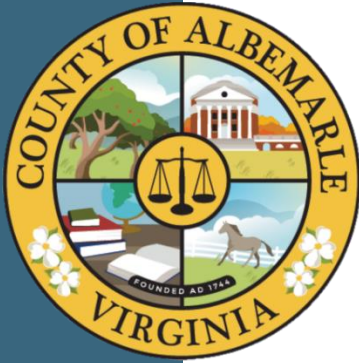


Enhanced Preparedness

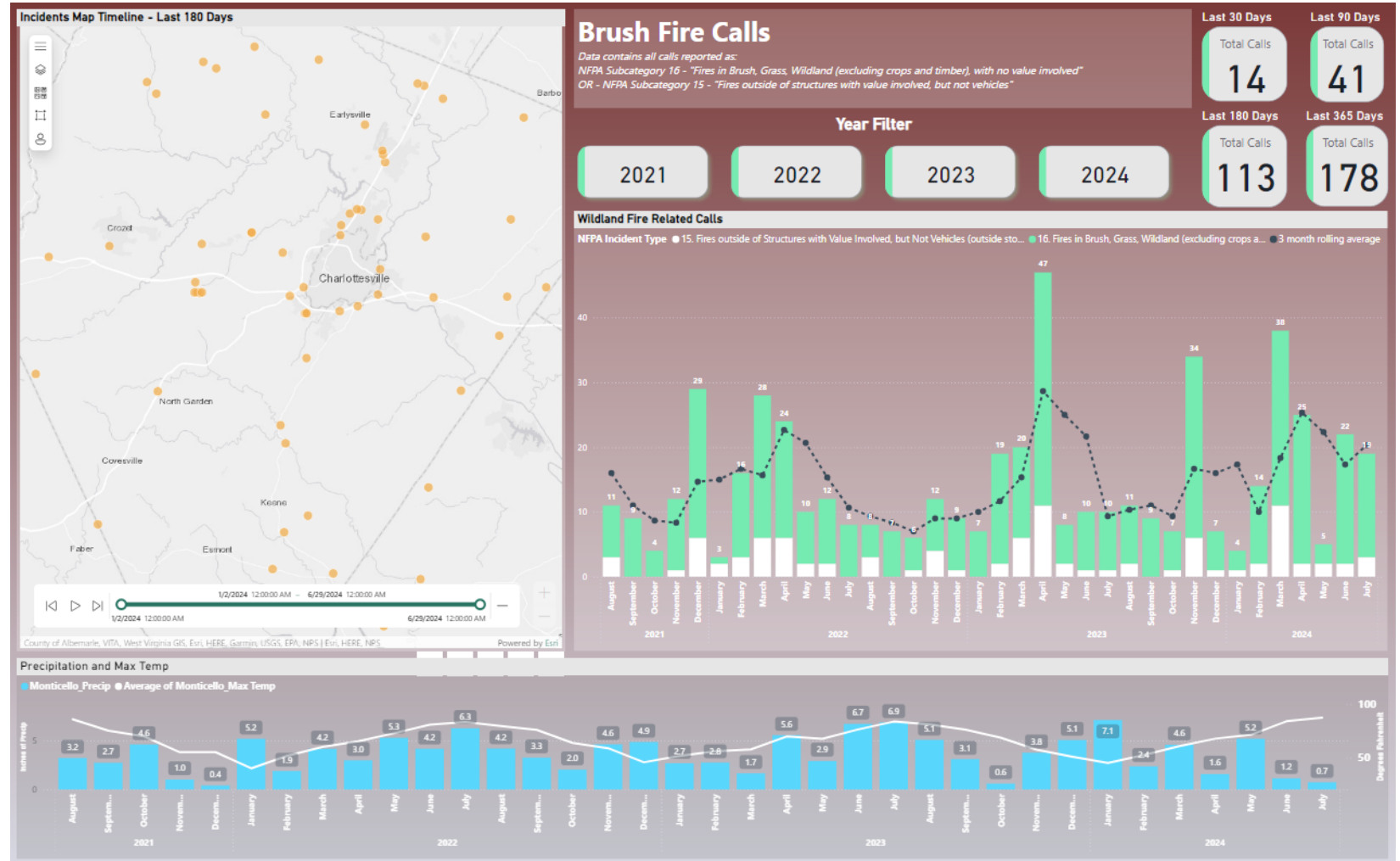
Improved Analytic Capabilities

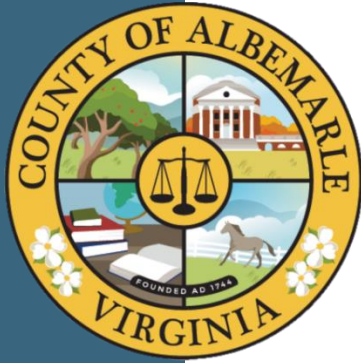
- Analyst products – Situational Awareness Dashboard
- Environmental Services Division dataset purchase

Daily Wildfire Threat Analysis during peak periods
Resilient Together Initiative – long term mitigation



Situational Awareness Dashboard

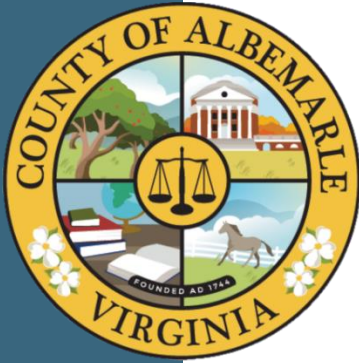




Daily Wildfire Threat Analysis

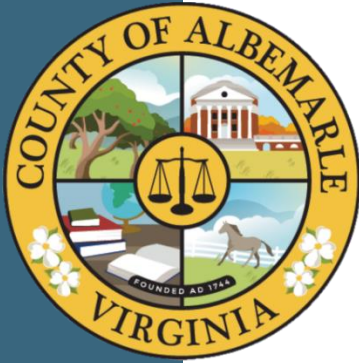
Daily assessment based on the following sources:

1. Virginia Forestry Fire Danger Rating
2. Precipitation and Weather Forecast – National Weather Service (NWS)
3. Wildland Fire Assessment System (WFAS) – U.S. Forest Service
4. National Weather Service (NWA) Fire Weather
5. Rainfall Observations – (NWS)
6. Dead Fuel Moisture
7. Drought Conditions – U.S. Drought Monitor
8. Air Quality – DEQ AirNow

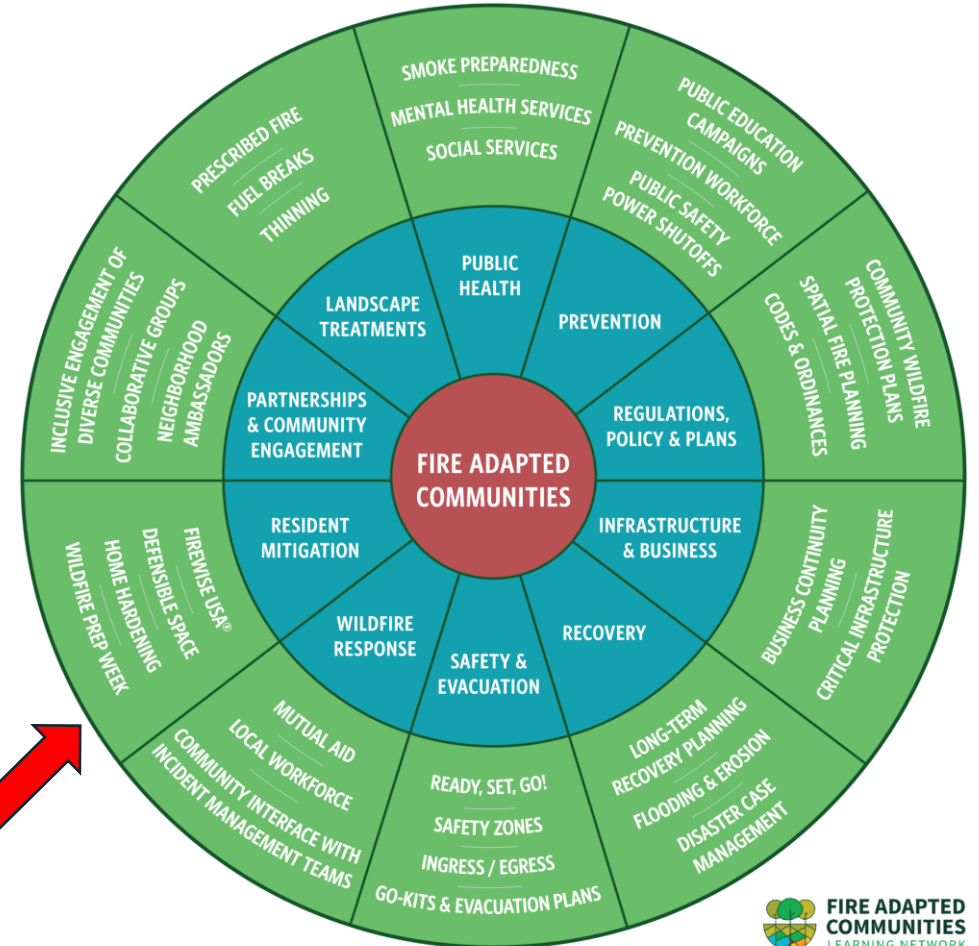


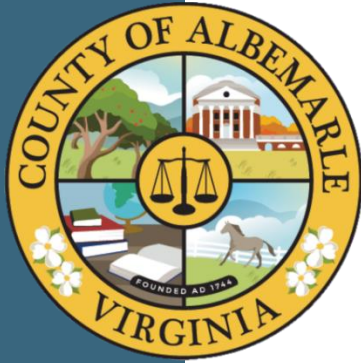
Future ACFR Preparedness

- Develop a Fire Adapted Communities plan
- Develop and implement an enhanced wildfire training program
- Evaluate and identify essential equipment needs for wildfire management
- Work with The Virginia Department of Forestry to develop a fuel management plan for Albemarle County
- Update the Open Burning Ordinance (Chapter 6, Article IV “Burning of Brush”) to address identified gaps



Fire Adapted Communities

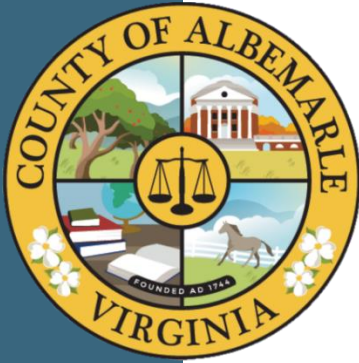




Firewise USA

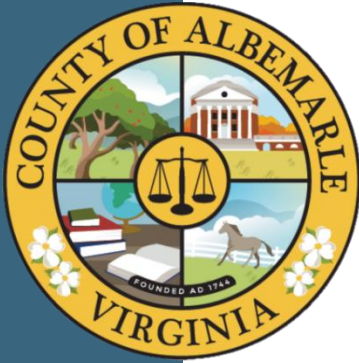


- Firewise USA originated in 1985 after a devastating fire season which destroyed 1,400 homes.
- The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service partnered with the National Fire Protection Agency (NFPA) to create Firewise.
- Provides a collaborative framework to help neighbors get organized and take action to reduce wildfire risks at the local level.



Benefits of Firewise Communities

- Reduces risk of property damage and loss of life
- Decreases firefighting resource needs
- Empowers and educates community members
- Increases community resilience



Firewise Principles

Creating defensible space

Hardening homes

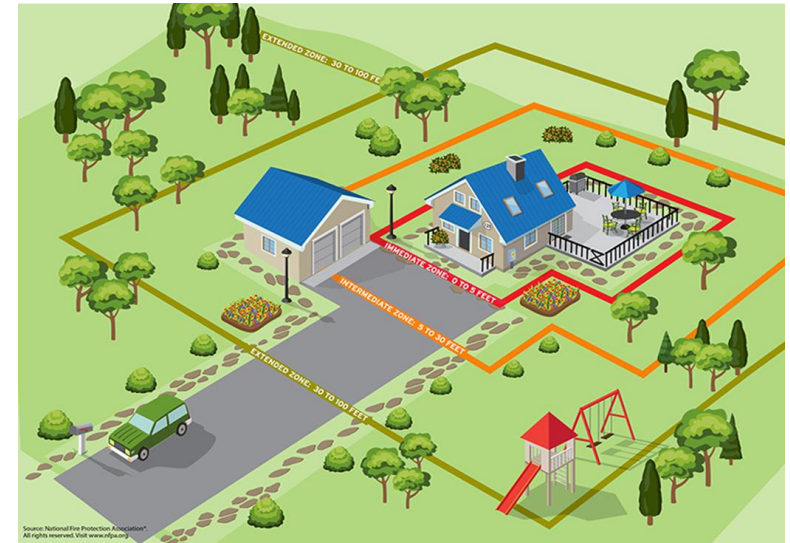
- Building materials
- Landscaping
- Regular maintenance and upgrades

Planning for evacuations

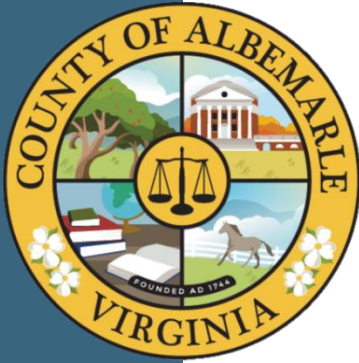
- Importance of having a plan
- Routes, meeting points, communication
- Alerts & notifications

Community-wide preparedness and education

- Conduct Firewise workshops & clean-up days

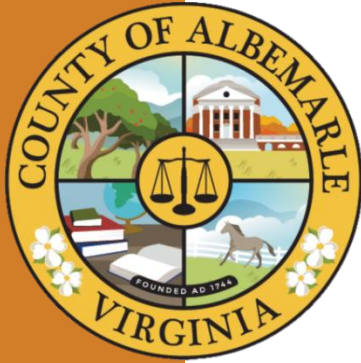


Creating Defensible Space - Home Ignition Zone



Implementing Firewise

1. Complete comprehensive community risk assessment
2. Identify and prioritize areas of highest risk
3. Conduct outreach to highest risk neighborhoods to seek participants in Firewise.
4. Conduct Firewise program (Emerald Ridge Community Pilot in 2019)



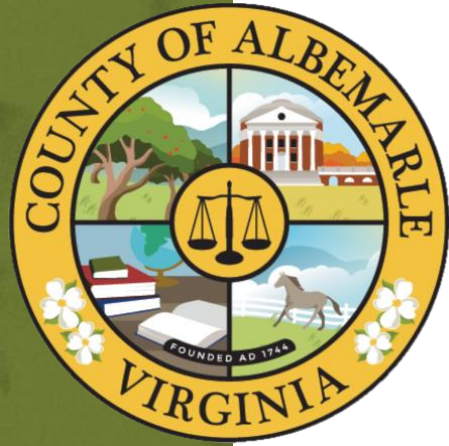
Burn Ordinance Update

Research/comparative analysis of other localities in Virginia completed

Gap analysis of existing ordinance completed

Recommendations for revisions include:

- Clarify categories of burning & make easier to understand
- Clarify/simplify permit requirements
- Clarify air quality impacts and actions that can be taken
- Consider adding fall burn ban period (10/1-11/15)



Questions?