

TPR Forest Health

Tall Pines Ranch is a beautiful neighborhood. One of the main reasons it is so wonderful is our diligence in protecting it from fire and beetle damage. There are some easy ways to prevent this that will benefit all of us.

Fire Prevention is vitally important. As seen this summer, a fire can quickly escalate. Here is a list of prevention tips:

1. Make sure your house number is clearly visible and that you know where your well is for responding firefighters.
2. Make sure your smoke detectors and fire extinguishers are working.
3. Maintain a 75 ft defensible space around the perimeter of your home by doing the following:
 - a. Prune trees within the defensible space up to a height of 10 ft. above the ground.
 - b. Dispose of all slash and debris.
 - c. Remove shrubs and small trees or potential "ladder" fuels from beneath large trees. These can carry ground fire into the tree crowns.
 - d. Trim branches which extend over roof eaves.
 - e. Remove branches within 15 ft. of chimneys.
 - f. Clean needles and leaves from roof gutters.
 - g. Stack firewood at least 30 ft. from structures and clear vegetation 10 ft. away from these stacks.
 - h. Maintain this defensible space annually.

Beetle prevention is equally important to the health of our neighborhood forest. The most effective way of dealing with bark beetle outbreaks is through preventive vegetation management practices. Here is a list of prevention tips:

1. Remove some of the trees in dense stands through thinning to improve tree vigor and reduce susceptibility to bark beetles.
2. Promote a diversity of tree species.
3. Promote a diversity of age classes.
4. Remove small pockets of bark beetle infested trees when they first appear.

Aggressively searching out, removing and properly disposing of infested wood is the best way to slow the spread of bark beetles. If there is a particularly valuable tree that needs protection, spray them. The best time to spray is close, but prior to, beetle flight in July. Spraying in May or June will yield the best results and the chemicals are effective for at least a year. It is also recommended that pruning take place far ahead or clearly after beetle flight occurs to prevent fresh cut wood from attracting the beetles to the tree. Infested wood should be removed from the property and taken to a place equipped to handle it.

Please visit these websites for more information regarding beetle and fire prevention and debris management.

Black Forest Slash and Mulch – www.bfslash.org

Colorado State Forest Service – www.csfs.colostate.edu

Colorado State Forest Service fire brochure- www.csfs.colostate.edu/pdfs/wholenotebook.pdf

Colorado State Forest Service beetle brochure – www.csfs.colostate.edu/pdfs/bark-beetle-brochure.pdf