

Town of Saratoga Community Wildfire Protection Plan

AN ACTION PLAN FOR WILDFIRE RISK REDUCTION
2023-2027

Adopted: 5/17/23



Prepared By: Amy Penn, DNR
April 28, 2023



RESOLUTION NO 5/17/2023

**ADOPTION OF THE
TOWN OF SARATOGA COMMUNITY WILDFIRE PROTECTION PLAN (2023-2027)**

WHEREAS, the Healthy Forest Restoration Act of 2003 was created in order to reduce the threat of destructive wildfires while upholding environmental standards and encouraging early public input during review and planning processes, and

WHEREAS, The Town of Saratoga has been identified as being at Very High risk in the Wisconsin Communities-at-Risk Assessment, and

WHEREAS, a Community Wildfire Protection Plan is recommended for communities listed as an at risk community in a federal or state risk assessment, and

WHEREAS, The Town of Saratoga has worked cooperatively with other stakeholders to develop a Community Wildfire Protection Plan, and

WHEREAS, the intent of the plan is to help fire protection agencies, community leaders, natural resource professionals, and homeowners be better prepared for wildfire, and

WHEREAS, adoption of a Community Wildfire Protection Plan results in priority consideration for Wildfire Risk Reduction funding made available through DNR, and

WHEREAS, the Town of Saratoga Board of Supervisors has reviewed the draft of the *Town of Saratoga Community Wildfire Protection Plan* and concurs with the final plan content.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Town of Saratoga Board of Supervisors hereby adopts the *Town of Saratoga Community Wildfire Protection Plan (2023-2027)*.

Dated this 17th day of May, 2023.

Resolution introduced and adoption moved by Lorelei Fuehrer

Motion for adoption seconded by Chase Bruckman

Voting Aye: 5 Nay: 0

APPROVED:

Lorelei J. Fuehrer Chairman
Name Title

Bryan D. Pelt Supervisor
Name Title

[Signature] Supervisor
Name Title

[Signature] Supervisor
Name Title

ATTEST:

[Signature] Town Clerk
Name Title

Roger Wilco
Supvr.

Introduction

The Town of Saratoga is designated as a community at very high risk to wildfire due to several factors: the vegetation of the area, housing density and fire occurrence. The DNR's Division of Forestry is committed to offering resources and support in planning, preparing and preventing wildfires to at risk towns and municipalities. One way to do this is through the creation of a Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP).

Community Wildfire Protection Plans

A Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) is a document collaboratively created at the township level in Wisconsin. Community Wildfire Protection Plans address issues such as emergency response, fuels reduction, community preparedness and structure ignitability. The Wildfire Risk Reduction Action Plan, or the list of projects to pursue, is the key component of the CWPP. The minimum requirements for a CWPP are collaboration, prioritized fuels reduction and treatment of structural ignitability. The final contents of a CWPP must be mutually agreed upon by the local government (Town Board), the local fire department (Rome, Nekoosa and Grand Rapids Fire Departments) and the state entity responsible for forest management (Wisconsin DNR Division of Forestry).

Saratoga's CWPP Background

To address the risk, the Town of Saratoga participated in the creation of a CWPP in partnership with the Town of Grand Rapids in 2010. The CWPP, prepared by the North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission, was adopted by the Saratoga Town Board on July 7, 2010, with projects planned for the years 2011-2015 (See Appendix 1). A representative of the Town of Saratoga attended the CWPP work group meetings in 2010, 2013 and 2014 before communication with DNR was interrupted.

Planning Process

In fall 2022, the DNR Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) Specialist reached back out to the Saratoga Town Board because of a new funding opportunity (Community Wildfire Defense Grants) available to towns with CWPPs less than 10 years old. The current town board welcomed the opportunity to take steps to improve wildfire readiness. On October 5, 2022, the Town agreed to participate in the CWPP planning process by passing a *Resolution to Participate*. Three planning meetings were held and took place on February 15, 2023, April 24, 2023, and May 8, 2023.

A Driving Tour of the town took place on April 13, 2023. The tour resulted in a better understanding of the complexity and scope of issues related to wildfire risk. Some sites visited included: Carousel Court and Young Street, Beppler Road and Bell Road. We looked at the new Solar Farm and stopped at a private property to discuss best practices to avoid ignitions and the loss of structures. We also visited a subdivision at 64th and Townline, Manhattan and the new Nepco subdivision. The Nepco subdivision has one area where the homes are closer together but for the most part, homes in the Town are on big enough lots that there is not much overlap of home ignition zones. The tour also included a visit to the Rome Fire Department and the DNR Wisconsin Rapids Service Center.



Tour of DNR wildland fire equipment



Fire chief providing tour of Fire Dept.

Participants reported enjoying the driving tour because it provided an opportunity to really get out and see the area and get an overview of risk issues firsthand. It was helpful to see a contrast between various driveways and to learn about specific recommendations to make homes more ignition resistant.

CWPP Planning Committee

The following report is a collaborative effort between various participants. The representatives listed below comprise the core decision-making team responsible for this report and mutually agree on the Plan’s contents.

Name	Organization	Mtg #1 2/15/23	Tour 4/16/23	Mtg #2 4/24/23	Mtg #3 5/8/23
Roger Wilcox	Supervisor, Town of Saratoga	X	X	X	X
Lorelei Fuehrer	Resident, Town of Saratoga	X		X	X
Sarajane Snyder	Resident, Town of Saratoga	X	(x)	X	
Rob Borski	Resident, Town of Saratoga	X	X	X	X
Amy Penn	Forestry Specialist, DNR	X	X	X	X
Aaron Wallace	Forester, DNR	X	Fire staffing	X	X
Brady Backes	Forester, DNR	X	Fire staffing		
Sarah Christensen	Director Emergency Mgt Wood County	X	X		
Mike Hartje	Chief, Nekoosa Fire Department		X	X	
Bob Piatt	Chief, Grand Rapids Fire Department		X		
Mark Kane	Chief, Rome Fire Department	X	X	X	X



Left to right (back row): Chief Mark Kane, Chief Bob Piatt, Chief Mike Hartje, Rob Borski. Left to right (front row): Amy Penn, Sarah Christensen, Roger Wilcox

Community Background & Existing Situation

The Town of Saratoga is located in southeastern Wood County, Wisconsin. Portage County lies to the east and Adams County is to the south. Land ownership is primarily private. The population was 5,023 according to the 2015 census and the town is roughly 50.8 square miles in size. The Town of Saratoga has mostly permanent residents.

The northern half of the town has scattered residential development with significant commercial development along State Highways 13 and 73. In the southwest there is scattered residential and commercial development as well as quite a bit of lowland areas. In the southeast there are scattered homes and more agricultural lands.

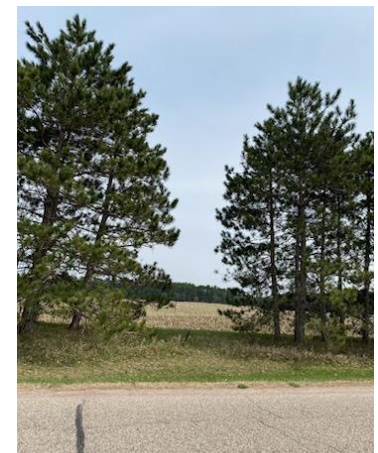
Wildfire Risk, Fire Behavior and Fire History

Fire intensity and rate of spread depend on fuels, topography and weather conditions. Weather conditions are dynamic which means fire behavior can vary significantly, even during the course of one day.

Red pine, jack pine and white pine with oak is the typical cover type. There is also mature and young pine plantation throughout the area. The solar farms, two 1,000 acre blocks, were recently converted from pine plantation to grasses. Certainly, the fuels in the area will carry wildfire. The terrain is mostly flat. There are some large agricultural fields mixed in throughout the town, which provides a break in fuel type.

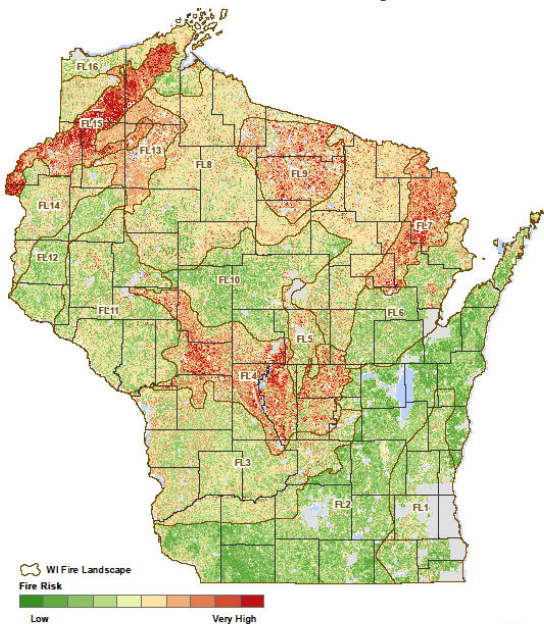


Low areas on west side of town



Agriculture fields provide fuel break

Wisconsin Fire Risk Analysis



The Town falls within *Fire Landscape 4: Central Wisconsin Sands* which is described as containing extensive areas of jack and red pine, with dry, sandy and organic soils. This is one of the highest wildfire risk landscapes in Wisconsin, with a notable wildfire history and potential for a 10,000-acre fire. Since 1975, there have been five wildfires greater than 2,500 acres in size in Central Wisconsin:

FIRE NAME	YEAR	SIZE
Brockway Fire	1977	15,471 acres
Saratoga Fire	1977	6,159 acres
Lyndon Station Fire	1988	3,177 acres
Cottonville Fire	2005	3,410 acres
Arcadia Fire	2023	3,037 acres

The Department has made reasonable efforts to provide accurate information, but cannot accept the liability of errors or omissions in analyses or of changes in actual conditions. The Department makes no warranty of any kind, either expressed or implied. Changes may be periodically made to the calculator based on updates to the program of the department or changes regarding applicable law.

Saratoga Fire of 1977

Fifteen tractor plows, 18 bulldozers, 12 fire departments and about 100 men and women worked on the fire, which began on April 27 and burned a total 6,159 acres. Five homes, one house trailer, 10 barns and 84 outbuildings were destroyed, but approximately 300 buildings were saved. Total damages were over a million dollars.

Between 2013-2022, there were 40 wildfires in the Town of Saratoga burning a total of 40.92 acres. Out of those 40 wildfires, 34 were less than one acre in size. Six (6) wildfires were larger than 1 acre in size with the largest fire being the County Line Fire which burned 22 acres in 2013 (cause: campfire). A total of 19 structures were saved due to suppression efforts; 0 structures were lost.



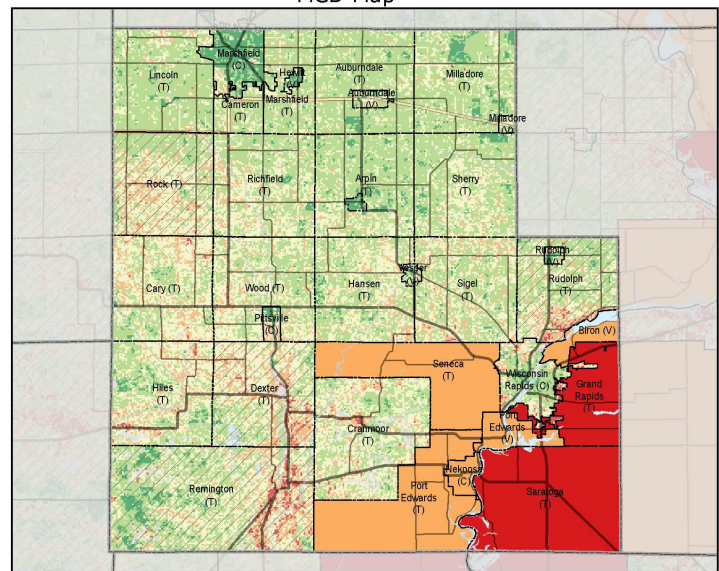
Overall, the leading cause of wildfires was debris burning (40%), followed by miscellaneous/other/unknown (36%). Typically, the second most common cause is equipment fires; equipment was the cause for 10% of fires in Town of Saratoga. The majority (60%) of the fires occurred during the traditional spring fire season months of March, April and May. For additional information on local fire history (see Appendix 2).

Risk Assessment

The Wisconsin DNR has created a statewide list of Communities at Risk (CAR) to wildfire at the town/municipality level. The CAR list is based on inputs to three map layers: hazard, risk, and values. The three layers have been given the following weighted values: hazard 40%, risk 30%, and values 30%. Hazard addresses information regarding vegetation types, which is our best indicator of where crown fires may occur as well as where fire starts have historically been known to occur. Similarly, risk and values contains information like housing density and population density.

According to this statewide risk assessment, the Town of Saratoga falls into the “very high” risk category (see Appendix 3). There is flammable vegetation throughout the Town and many homes are located on wooded lots. There are some specific areas of concern identified by the planning

Wood County MCD Map



Communities-at-Risk

MCD Name	Hazard (40%)	Risk (30%)	WUI (30%)
Grand Rapids (T)	VH	H	VH
Saratoga (T)	VH	VH	VH
Biron (V)	H	M	VH
Nekoosa (C)	H	M	H
Port Edwards (T)	H	H	VH
Port Edwards (V)	H	M	VH
Seneca (T)	H	H	H

Communities-of-Concern

Dexter (T)
Remington (T)
Rock (T)
Rudolph (T)



committee:

- Hazardous fuels accumulating on private property and options for brush disposal.
- The need to raise awareness about wildfire risk and how to prevent wildfires, including debris burning, burn permits and burning restrictions.
- Driveways/private roads that don't provide adequate access to emergency vehicles.

DESCRIPTION OF WILDFIRE RISKS

With all community wildfire protection plans, there are generally five risk areas that are addressed: hazardous fuels, structural ignitability, wildfire awareness, wildfire prevention and emergency response.

WILDFIRE RISK #1: Fuels

Any kind of vegetation, whether living or dead, can be fuel for a wildfire. Property owners should avoid having dead trees and brush within 100 feet of their homes. Brush piles can be a concern because once ignited, they can burn for a long time, must be monitored until extinguished, take a lot of resources to put out and can be a source of embers to ignite homes. When firefighters are forced to concentrate on these areas, it can mean fewer resources to focus on containing the wildfire. The buildup of dead fuels on the forest floor can also act as a fuel "ladder" which provides a path for a surface fire to get up into the crowns of trees where it becomes more difficult to suppress.

Even with the development of the Wood County Solar Farms, there are still vast areas of pine plantation in the town. Pine plantations can also be a concern because of their ability to support fast-moving crown fires. Coniferous trees, in general, are more of a concern than deciduous trees when it comes to wildfire. They burn quickly and intensely. The structure of a pine plantation, with the continuity of the tree canopy, means that once ignited, a fire can travel great distances from crown to crown, even apart from a surface fire that could be burning on the forest floor. When dealing with a crown fire, firefighters must often disengage from direct attack for safety reasons and look for opportunities to indirectly engage the fire.

The most important area where homeowners should concentrate their fuels reduction efforts is the home ignition zone, or within 100-200 feet of the home. Consider how to make fuels reduction easier for homeowners. This discourages debris burning, which is the number one cause of wildfires in Wisconsin.

Currently, residents of the Town of Saratoga may purchase an annual



Pine plantation supports crown fire

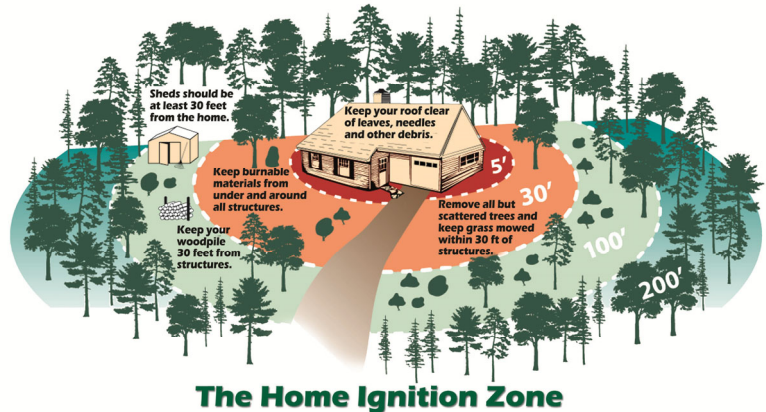


Saratoga Brush Site

permit for the Wisconsin Rapids Compost Site for \$55 to dispose of yard waste. The Town has a brush site located at 12799 Hollywood Road. It is open the 3rd Saturday each month April through October from 8 am to noon for use by Saratoga residents (see Appendix 4).

WILDFIRE RISK #2: Structural Ignitability

The Town is very rural. The lots are larger and spread out along town roads. There are not really any subdivisions or areas of higher density housing. Even where there are a couple roads together, the homes themselves are still on larger lots. Most of the time the homes have 100 feet + between them. For the most part, neighboring home ignition zones don't overlap.



Nearly all the lots throughout the town are wooded. In general, homes have adequate defensible space around them. However, nearly all of them have multiple outbuildings and there is a lot of non-vegetative fuel for a wildfire

(campers, vehicles, old buildings) that once ignited could impact the primary structure. In the event of a wildfire, there could definitely be loss of structures but it's a different scenario than neighbors to the south that have hundreds of homes in subdivisions.

While it is not possible to completely eliminate wildfire from the landscape, a homeowner can influence the intensity of an approaching wildfire by managing the home ignition zone. In fact, when adequately prepared, a house can withstand a wildfire even without the intervention of the fire service.

That said, there are still many homes that can improve their properties. If homes are not accessible to fire trucks, it is even more critical that the house be ignition resistant so that it can survive on its own for a time. A brief summary on recommendations to reduce likelihood of ignition is included in this section (See Appendix 5).



All homes in fire-prone areas are encouraged to follow recommendations for:

- construction (roof, siding, windows)
- landscaping (rock mulch instead of wood mulch)
- maintenance (pine needles cleaned out of gutters)
- distance to flammables (firewood stored 30 feet away from buildings)

Construction

Fire resistant construction includes roofing (asphalt or metal), siding (log construction or vinyl) and gutter materials (metal) as well as issues related to windows and vents. Most homes in the Town of Saratoga have fire resistant roofing materials like asphalt, as is common throughout Wisconsin. There are some homes with wood siding; vinyl siding is more common. There are even some homes with non-flammable cement siding.

Landscaping

Landscaping of homes in the Town is variable. Most homes have at least some mowed grass which provides a fuel break around a home. The use of wood mulch around homes is fairly common. Special attention to what kinds of plants and materials are placed in the zone within 5 feet of the home can be critical to home survival. It is recommended that plants near homes be deciduous, well-maintained and with space between them.

Maintenance

Even a home that is Firewise requires regular maintenance to reduce vulnerability to windblown embers which can travel on wind currents over a mile from a wildfire. Anywhere you notice leaves and pine needles accumulating, like gutters and on or under decks, are places where windblown embers will likely accumulate in the event of a fire. Regular maintenance will reduce these risks.

Distance to Flammables

Seeing a stack of firewood on a wood deck is a fairly common occurrence in Wisconsin. Flammables like firewood, fence materials or other scrap wood are best stored 30 feet away from buildings. It is best if propane tanks are also 30 feet from buildings. If they are closer than that, they should be cleared of flammables out to 10 feet. Ideally outbuildings would also be 30 feet from homes.

WILDFIRE RISK #3: Wildfire Risk Awareness

Without a true understanding of the wildfire risk of the area, people may think that a wildfire is unlikely to affect them. When people don't understand the real potential to start a large and costly wildfire they may not feel a sense of urgency to prepare for evacuation or be cautious with fire in the outdoors. It is likely that a majority of property owners in the Town are not aware of the true fire risk in the Town. For those that remember the Saratoga Fire in 1977, the risk may seem more real.

WILDFIRE RISK #4: Wildfire Prevention

The public should be made aware of the wildfire risk of the area and keep it in mind as they introduce fire into the outdoors by means of fireworks, campfires or debris burning. The number one cause of



wildfires in Wisconsin is debris burning.

A free annual burning permit is required by the DNR to burn when the ground is not completely snow-covered. Once a person has obtained a burning permit (by phone or online), it is their responsibility to check the burning restrictions daily after 9:00 a.m. on any day they wish to burn. Burning restrictions can be checked over the internet at dnr.wi.gov, keyword "fire" or by phone at 1-888-WIS-BURN (947-2876). Cooking and warming fires do not require burning permits. People should be aware of the weather conditions so that they are choosing to burn at the safest times.

WILDFIRE RISK #5: Emergency Response

Fire Protection: The DNR out of the Wisconsin Rapids Service Center and the Rome, Nekoosa and Grand Rapids Fire Departments provide wildland fire suppression for the Town. In rural areas, it takes time for firefighters to arrive on the scene of a fire. Not only does it take time for volunteers to respond to the fire station, but it also takes time for them to then travel to the scene. Homes might need to be able to survive on their own for a time, which makes following recommendations around homes even more critical (see Appendix 6).

Fire Detection:

To avoid extending the response time even more, it is critical that the public call 9-1-1 immediately when a wildfire is detected. Firefighters recommend that people stop and call for help rather than trying to extinguish a fire on their own. Civilian casualties and fatalities have occurred on fires when people try to put the fire out themselves.

For example, lives have been lost due to a heart attack brought on by vigorous physical work and the stress of the situation.

Water Sources

In a large wildfire situation, many homes and buildings can be threatened at the same time. Having an adequate supply of water is critical to fire suppression and structural protection. In most rural areas, fire hydrants are not available. Fire departments identify water points ahead of time and can request mutual aid from surrounding departments for use of their water tenders to ensure a steady and reliable source of water. There are hydrants in Nekoosa, a hydrant behind the Rome Fire Department and one near Tractor Supply in Wisconsin Rapids.

Driveway Access

If firefighters cannot safely drive a fire truck to a home, they will come up with an alternate plan to help. No matter what that plan is, such as parking the truck on the street and dragging hose down the driveway or sending a smaller truck down the driveway to scout out the



Fire trucks need clearance from surrounding vegetation



Narrow, winding, dirt driveway

situation, the alternative can cost precious time. As you can imagine, the faster a fire is extinguished, the lower the risk of damage.

In the Town of Saratoga, a high percentage of homes have long driveways with structures that are not visible from the road. Many driveways do not have adequate clearance from vegetation to allow a fire truck, or even an ambulance, in some cases, access to the property (See Appendix 7). Some driveways are one-lane, 2-track dirt roads. Inadequate road and driveway access can result in slowed emergency response, unsafe working conditions for firefighters and dangerous conditions during evacuations. The Town does have a driveway ordinance (No. 3-15-17), however it does not address concerns related to vegetation clearance and requirements for long driveways.

Road Access: There are many private roads (“trails”) throughout the township. Generally, there are 2-3 homes along these trails. The trails are often dirt or gravel and typically wind back through the woods in such a way that the homes cannot be seen. Private roads can mean limited access for firefighters. They should meet the same recommendations as driveways. On some town roads, there are areas without adequate clearance in the road right of way, where vegetation goes all the way to the edge of roads.

Address signage

Address signs should be visible from both directions of travel. Being visible means address numbers should be written on both sides of the sign and the numbers should be large and reflective to make it easier for responders to locate properties after dark. Wood County and the Town of Saratoga undertook the project of installing blue, reflective address signage throughout the Town. The project was finished in 2022 and improves the ability of emergency vehicles to quickly arrive at the scene of an emergency. To maintain the visibility of address signs, property owners will need to keep vegetation cleared away from the sign post as needed.



Blue address signs are highly visible

Process to Create Action Plan

After a review of the risks in the Town, the planning committee brainstormed a list of potential projects to address each risk identified. The projects in the Action Plan will help move us towards reaching the following goals.

Goals

- Encourage fuels reduction on private property by educating town property owners on existing options for brush disposal.
- Educate town property owners on wildfire risk, wildfire prevention, how to reduce structural ignitability and how to improve driveway access.
- Undertake actions at the township level to improve emergency response.
- Educate town property owners on why they should improve driveway/private road access and how they can go about it.

Goals & Strategies

Encourage fuels reduction on private property by educating town property owners on existing options for brush disposal. (Fuels)

- Determine options currently available for disposal of brush and then share with property owners (Wisconsin Rapids Compost Site east and west; Hollywood location; other businesses).
- Gain familiarity with the Town of Saratoga Compost Site (on Hollywood, 13 acres). What are the current hours? How is it currently being used related to brush drop off? What is the purpose of the site? How is it staffed? What would it take to make this a viable location for brush drop off?
- Host an event to support people working on their own properties. For example, consider a two-day event in spring and/or in fall (clean up days) where the town makes resources available for disposing of brush. Town could have staff available, provide extended hours or access to services as well as use the opportunity for education.



Educate property owners on wildfire risk, wildfire prevention, how to reduce structural ignitability and how to improve driveway access. (Education)

- Spring awareness banner in spring on 13 on state land (where red pine seed orchard is perhaps)
- Blurb in town newsletter related to wildfire
- New Smokey fire danger sign at Saratoga Town Hall (DNR supports with town investment in maintaining accuracy)
- Put a vertical banner in the town hall for when people come in to pay their taxes (November/December) and during spring fire season (March – May)
- Create Wildfire Information Spaces at: sign outside town hall, Saratoga Mini Mart, Transfer Site, inside Town Hall
- Continue building an email list for distribution of information to property owners
- Consider a direct mailing in the springtime; perhaps a post card to minimize postage costs
- Work on updating website to include wildfire information.
- Share messages on Facebook, especially during spring fire season
- Structural Ignitability - When builder wants a building permit, they meet at Town Hall. Include driveway flyer and a copy of the driveway ordinance if there is one as well as Firewise Building flyer.

Undertake actions at the township level to improve emergency response. (Emergency Response)

- Consider pursuing Wood County Fire Chiefs driveway signage project and possible improvements
- Ensure town roads have adequate clearance from vegetation in the road ROW to speed emergency response.
- Develop town ordinance related to driveway access. Consider requirements based on distance and creating a vegetation clearance window. Confer with local fire departments on their recommendations.

**Educate folks on why they should improve driveway/private road access and explain what is needed.
(Emergency Response)**

- Advertise fire department open houses through Town of Saratoga; use fire engine banners during fire dept events
- Fire truck with fire engine banner at town annual meeting
- Identify properties that have issues with adequate access of driveways and private roads. Create a list and do a targeted educational mailing.
- When people come into the town for a driveway permit, hand them a driveway access flyer.

WILDFIRE RISK REDUCTION ACTION PLAN 2023-2027

Partner Implementation

Town

- Education: When builder wants a building permit, they meet at Town Hall. Include driveway flyer and a copy of the driveway ordinance if there is one as well as Firewise Building flyer.
- Education: Blurb in town newsletter related to wildfire; share deadline and subject preference with DNR
- Education: Continue building an email list for distribution of information to property owners
- Emergency Response: When people come into the town hall for a driveway permit, hand them a driveway access flyer

DNR

- Education: Share messages on Facebook, especially during spring fire season
- Education: Spring awareness banner in spring on 13 on state land (where red pine seed orchard is perhaps)
- Education: Blurb in town newsletter related to wildfire
- Education: Put a vertical banner in the town hall for when people come in to pay their taxes (November/December) and during spring fire season (March – May)

Fire Department

- Emergency Response: Advertise fire department open houses through Town of Saratoga; use fire engine banners during fire dept events
- Emergency Response: Fire truck with fire engine banner at town annual meeting in April

Priority #1 Projects

- Fuels: Determine options currently available for disposal of brush and then share with property owners (Wisconsin Rapids Compost Site east and west; Hollywood location; other businesses.
- Fuels: Look into Town of Saratoga Compost Site (on Hollywood, 13 acres). What are the current hours? How is it currently being used related to brush drop off? What is the purpose of the site? How is it staffed? What would it take to make this a viable location for brush drop off?
- Emergency Response: Have large posters of fire department coverage areas printed for the three fire departments and the town hall to improve efficiency of response.

Priority #2 Projects

- Education: New Smokey fire danger sign at Saratoga Town Hall (DNR supports with town investment in maintaining accuracy)
- Education: Create Wildfire Information Spaces at: sign outside town hall, Saratoga Mini Mart, Transfer Site, inside Town Hall
- Emergency Response: Develop or revamp town ordinance related to driveway access. Some suggestions include requirements based on distance and creating a vegetation window. Refer to existing ordinances in the area.

Priority #3 Projects

- Fuels: Host an event to support people working on their own properties. For example, consider a two-day event in spring and/or in fall (clean up days) where the town makes resources available for disposing of brush. Town could have staff available, provide extended hours or access to services as well as use the opportunity for education.
- Education: Consider a direct mailing in the springtime; perhaps a post card to minimize postage costs
- Education: Work on updating website to include wildfire information.
- Emergency Response: Ensure town roads have adequate clearance from vegetation in the road ROW to speed emergency response.
- Emergency Response: Identify properties that have issues with adequate access of driveways and private roads. Create a list and do a targeted educational mailing.
- Emergency Response: Consider pursuing Wood County Fire Chiefs driveway signage project and possible improvements

CWPP Implementation

Once adopted, the Work Group will begin project implementation according to the Wildfire Risk Reduction Action Plan. Work Groups generally meet 2-3 times per year depending on project activity. Wildfire risk reduction funds to support risk reduction projects are available through the Division of Forestry (the application period is open in the fall). Towns with CWPPs are given priority consideration for funding.

APPENDIX #1: Saratoga Mitigation Action Plan 2011-2015

CHAPTER 5: IMPLEMENTATION

MITIGATION ACTION PLAN

Implementation of the Grand Rapids/Saratoga CWPP focuses on intermediate range needs for the next five years through mitigation projects selected by the towns. The Action Plan identifies priority mitigation projects that the towns will work to accomplish as well as when it should be done and who is responsible for overseeing the project. The projects in the Action Plan will better prepare the area for the threat of wildfire.

The CWPP Planning Committee intends to meet quarterly to review the Mitigation Action Plan and work on implementation. Regular reviews will continue on an annual basis with complete plan updates occurring every five years.

Project	Responsible Party	Timeline
Continue to supply information in town newsletters, on town websites, and in town halls.	Towns of Grand Rapids & Saratoga	On-going
Set up prevention/wildland-urban interface display at local fire department open houses and other community events.	Towns of Grand Rapids & Saratoga	On-going
Continue to support the mitigation efforts of Brookhaven Estates, a subdivision in the Town of Grand Rapids, which is a recognized Firewise Community/USA.	Towns of Grand Rapids & Saratoga	On-going
Mail brochures to homeowners to educate on home ignition zone and recommendations for reducing structural ignitability.	Towns of Grand Rapids & Saratoga	Winter 2011
Hold meetings or workshops to teach about the importance of the home ignition zone and recommendations for reducing structural ignitability.	Towns of Grand Rapids & Saratoga	Winter 2011
Open landfill in Town of Saratoga for brush to be chipped by company to be sold for fuel.	Town of Saratoga	2011
Write or update town driveway ordinances to address width, height, and turnarounds. Educate property owners about driveway access issues.	Towns of Grand Rapids & Saratoga	2011
Develop and distribute a publication describing wildfire concerns, local issues, resources and the CWPP process.	Towns of Grand Rapids & Saratoga	2011
Fire Department/DNR joint property inspections. Start with high hazard neighborhoods in Planning Units 4, 5, and 9 (i.e. Manhattan Woods in PL 9).	Towns of Grand Rapids & Saratoga	2011
Offer town-wide curbside brush pick-up on a periodic basis. Consider offering home ignition zone assessments in conjunction with brush pick-up.	Towns of Grand Rapids & Saratoga	2012
Change fire number signs in towns so they are more visible.	Towns of Grand Rapids & Saratoga	2013
Work with property owners to continue to remove berms so fire equipment has better access to suppress wildfires.	Town of Saratoga	On-going

APPENDIX #2: Town of Saratoga Wildfires 2013-2022

- There were 40 wildfires in the Town of Saratoga burning a total of 40.92 acres.
Out of those 40 wildfires, 34 fires were less than one acre in size; 6 wildfires were larger than 1 acre in size.
- The largest fire was the 22-acre County Line Fire of caused by a campfire which occurred in 2013.
- A total of 19 structures were saved due to suppression efforts; 0 structures were lost.
- The leading cause of wildfires was debris burning (40%).
- 24 of the fires (60%) occurred during the months of March, April and May (spring is #1 season in Wisconsin).
- Out of the 40 fires, 21 fires or 53% were human-caused (debris burning, campfire, fireworks, warming fire) and therefore could have been prevented.

**Number of Fires
2013-2022**

	# Fires	Acres	Saved
2013	5	22.16	0
2014	1	0.01	0
2015	10	3.88	0
2016	6	2.19	2
2017	0	0	0
2018	7	8.31	5
2019	1	0.18	0
2020	1	0.07	0
2021	6	3.27	6
2022	3	0.85	6
TOTAL	40	40.92	19

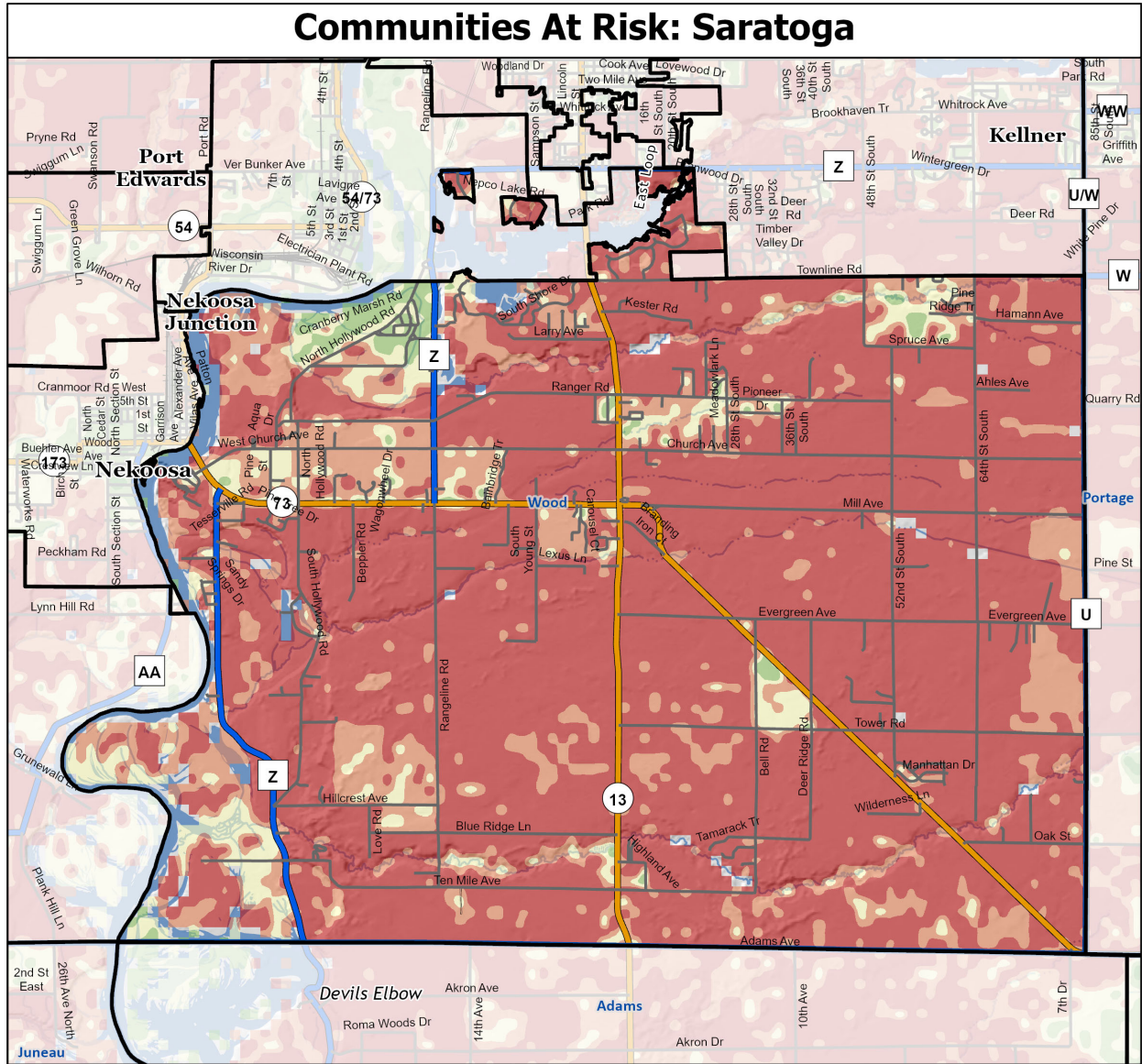
Wildfire Causes 2013-2022

	#	%	Preventable?
Debris Burning	16	40%	Yes
Miscellaneous: Other	8	20%	Not sure
Unknown/Not Available	6	16%	Not sure
Equipment	4	10%	No
Campfire/Bonfire	3	8%	Yes
Misc: Power Line	1	2%	No
Misc: Fireworks	1	2%	Yes
Warming Fire	1	2%	Yes
Incendiary (excite, pest)			Yes
Lightning			No
Railroad			Yes
Smoking			Yes
Misc: Structure Fire			No
Misc: Playing with Matches			Yes
Misc: Ash Disposal			Yes
Misc: Experimenting with Fire			Yes
TOTAL	40	100%	

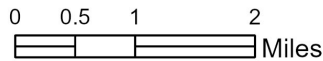
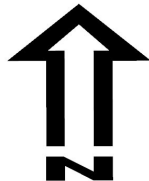
Wildfires By Season 2013-2022

Season	Number	Percentage
Winter: Dec, Jan, Feb	0	0%
Spring: Mar, April, May	24	60%
Summer: June, July, Aug	8	20%
Fall: Sept, Oct, Nov	8	20%
TOTAL	40 fires	100%

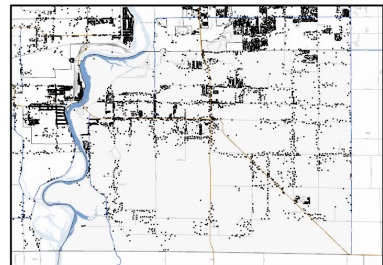
APPENDIX 3: Town Level Risk Map



- Boundaries**
- Municipal Boundary
- Transportation**
- State Hwy
- County Roads
- Town Roads
- Trail
- Railroad
- CAR Composite**
- Very Low
- Low
- Moderate
- High
- Very High



2017 Structures



Credits Ben Garrett 2/10/2023 9:31 AM

Use Limit The information shown on these maps has been obtained from various sources, and are of varying age, reliability and resolution. These maps are not intended to be used for navigation, nor are these maps an authoritative source of information about legal land ownership or public access. Users of these maps should confirm the ownership of land through other means in order to avoid trespassing. No warranty, expressed or implied, is made regarding accuracy, applicability for a particular use, completeness, or legality of the information depicted on this map. For more information, see the DNR Legal Notices web page: <http://dnr.wi.gov/org/legal/>.



APPENDIX 4: Town of Saratoga - Yard Waste & Brush

TOWN OF SARATOGA

WOOD COUNTY, WISCONSIN

Town of Saratoga Residents

Metal and Tires

The transfer site at 9642 County Road Z South, Nekoosa, will be open the Second and last Saturday of the month, April through October, from 8:00A.M.-2:00P.M. for the collection of metal and tires.

Identification will be checked

The transfer site will accept up to 10 passenger or light truck tires 20 inches or less per address, per year, with no fee.

Residents owning more than one property in the Town will only be allowed 10 tires total free of charge, any over the 10 will be charged.

All other tires:

\$3 per tire for passenger and light truck tires 20 inches or less, over the 10 per address limit.

\$3 per tire for any racing slicks, ATV, Garden Tractor and motorcycle tires

\$10 per tire for tires that are over 20 inches to tractor trailer tires

\$15 per tire for farm tractor tires

Business addresses will not be allowed to bring in the 10 tires free of charge.

All tires taken are at the discretion of the Town employees at the transfer site.

Yard Waste

Residents of the Town of Saratoga may purchase an annual permit for the Wisconsin Rapids Compost Site for \$55. Permits may be purchased from the Saratoga Mini Mart, (8810 Hwy 13 South, Wisconsin Rapids) or from the City of Wisconsin Rapids garage (1411 Chase Street, Wisconsin Rapids).

Please check www.wirapids.org for open dates and times

Brush

Identification will be checked

The Brush site located at 12799 Hollywood Road, Nekoosa, will be open the 3rd Saturday each month

April through October from

8:00A.M.-12:00P.M.

Only Saratoga residents are allowed to use the site

Commercial Businesses are not allowed to use the site.

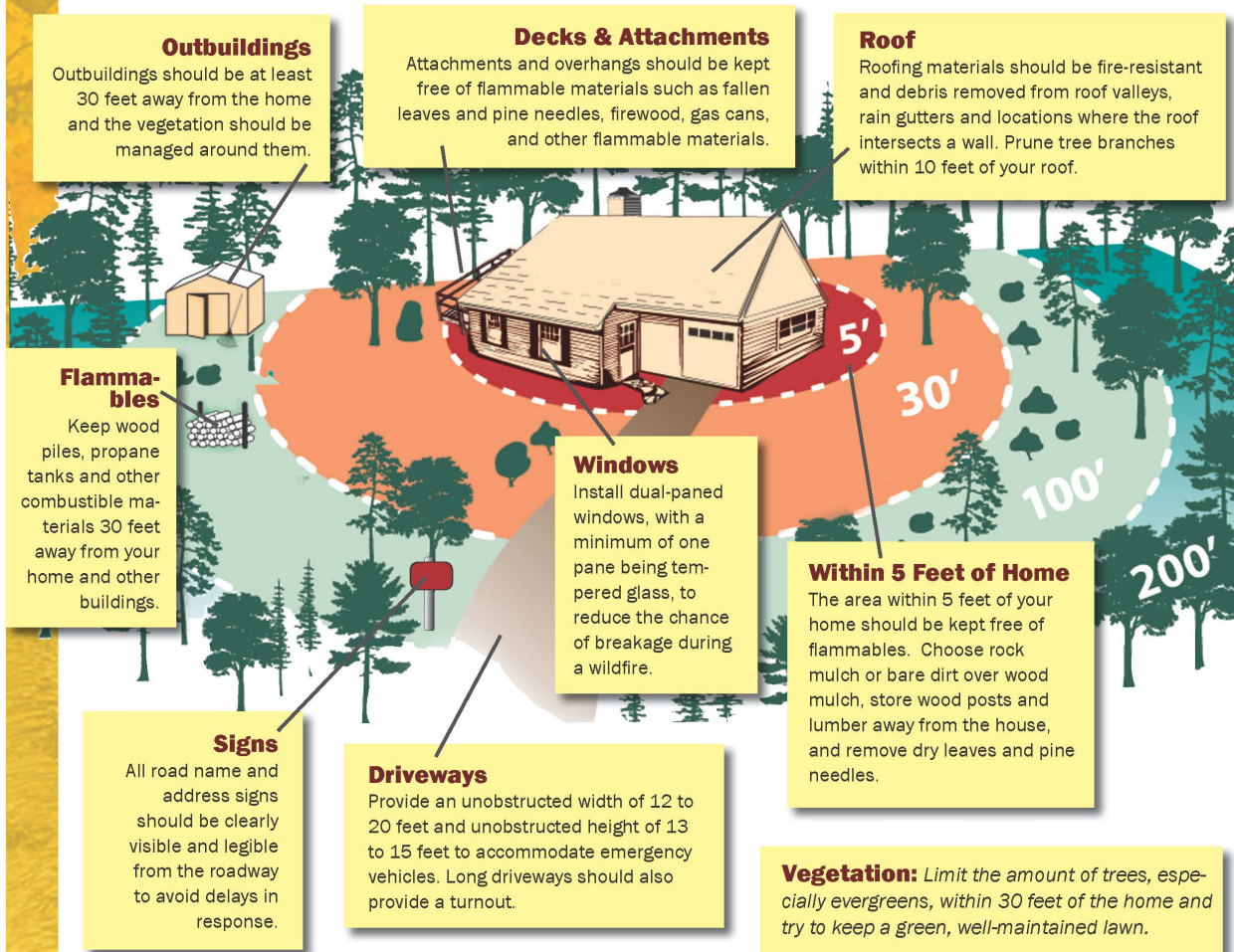
Appendix #5: Home Ignition Zone

Reduce the ignitability of your structure and be Firewise

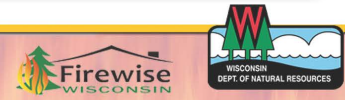
Small steps are the key to a Firewise home!

Improving your home's chance of surviving a wildfire can seem like an overwhelming task – one that you may feel is impossible to achieve. Not necessarily so! Research shows that flying embers (firebrands) and creeping surface fire are significant contributors to the loss of homes to wildfires...

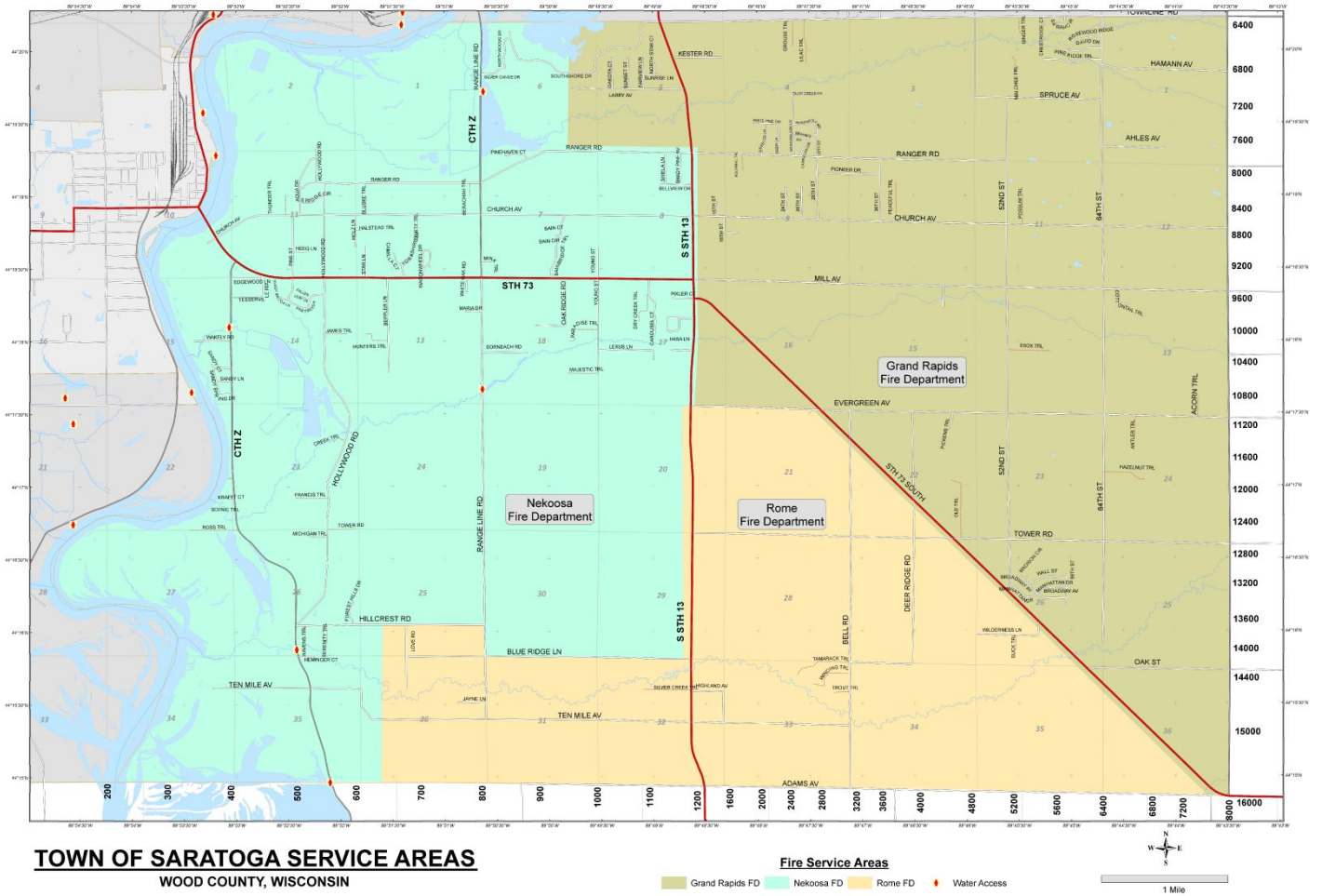
sometimes hours after the fire has passed. To begin making your home and property "Firewise," start with the structures on your property and move out as time allows. Keep in mind that anything attached to a structure (deck, fence, overhangs, etc.) is part of the structure.



The home ignition zone is your home and its surroundings out to 100-200 feet. In this area, vegetation and personal property should be managed and maintained to reduce the wildfire threat and improve the likelihood of your home surviving with little or no assistance from firefighters.



APPENDIX 6: Fire Department Coverage



APPENDIX 7: Driveway Access Recommendations

Driveway Access



Help fire, ambulance and law enforcement personnel get to your home quickly and safely in the event of an emergency

A black silhouette of an emergency vehicle, possibly a fire truck or ambulance, parked on a curved driveway. The background is green with black silhouettes of trees.

Turnaround

Provide a place for emergency vehicles to
near your home or cabin

Ensure driveway has adequate height and width

Clearance

from vegetation for large emergency vehicles

A black silhouette of a fire truck with emergency lights. A vertical double-headed arrow to the left indicates a height of 13.5 feet minimum. A horizontal double-headed arrow below the truck indicates a width of 12 feet minimum. The truck is positioned in a driveway with trees and bushes.

13.5 feet minimum*

12 feet minimum*

* Based on standards set by the National Fire Protection Association. Talk to your local fire chief, town chair or village administrator to learn about local driveway ordinances or requirements.

Make sure your address sign is **Visible** from both directions of travel

A black signpost with a sign that reads "1944 Smokey Trail". The sign has a starburst effect next to the address number. The signpost is surrounded by black silhouettes of bushes and trees.

Trim vegetation away from sign

Large reflective numbers

Address numbers on both sides

Questions?

Contact your local fire department or municipality

The logo for the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, featuring a stylized 'W' and 'DNR' text.

FR-625a-2017

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources is an equal opportunity employer. Alternative format is available upon request. Please call (608) 267-7494 for more information.