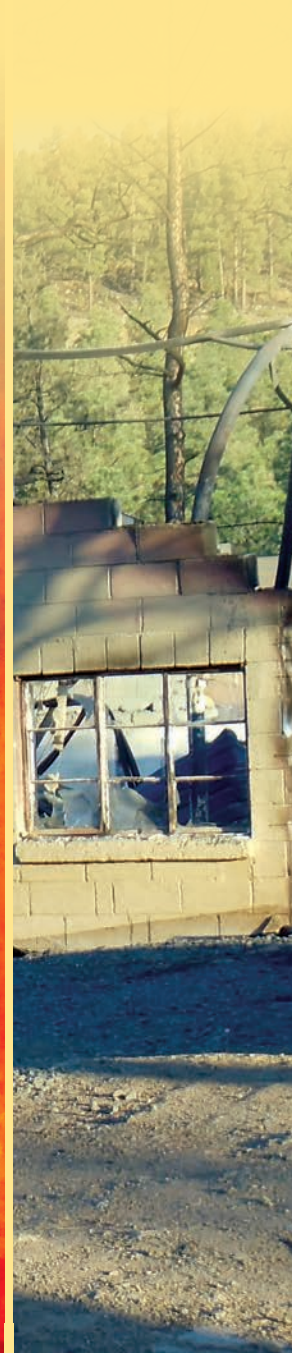
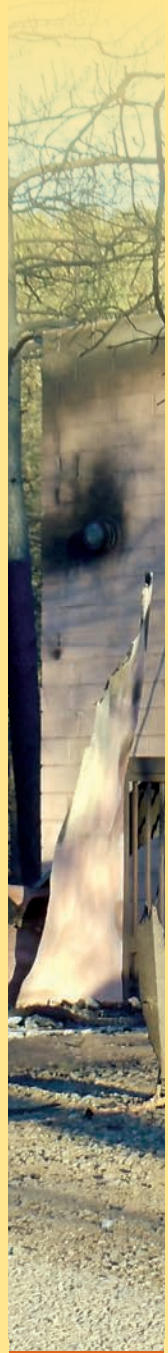


WILDFIRE SEASON

In - New Mexico



What You Need to Know to Protect Your Family, Animals, and Property

For additional information – including important telephone numbers and websites to reference this fire season – EMIFPA.org

HOW HOMES IGNITE



Excerpted from "Communities Compatible with Nature" with permission from the National Fire Protection Association's Firewise Communities Program

To understand a home's wildfire risk and what you can do to protect it, first consider how wildfires spread. **Wildfires do not always burn everything in their paths — fire behavior is affected by fuel, weather, and terrain.** Here is a look at the role these elements play:

FUEL:

Fuel includes anything that burns - trees, shrubs, grass, homes, fences, sheds and other vegetation and structures. Fine fuels, such as dead grass and pine needles, spread fire faster than coarse fuels, such as dead twigs and branches.

- Surface fuels include dry grass, shrubs, pine needles, dead branches and twigs. Surface fires tend to be relatively low-intensity fires, but homes are at risk if there are continuous fuels that can burn right up to the house.
- Ladder fuels include tall brush, low branches, and other fuels that can carry fire from a low-intensity ground fire up into the tops of the trees, known as the crowns or canopies.
- Crown fuels are flammable tops of trees and tall shrubs, also called canopies. Once a wildfire becomes a crown fire, it spreads rapidly and reaches extreme intensity. Research suggests that homes must be within 100 feet of the flames to be directly ignited by a high-intensity crown fire, and breaks in tree canopies, such as roads and utilities, frequently keep high-intensity crown fire from directly reaching communities. During a high-intensity wildfire, homes are far more likely to be threatened by firebrands (burning embers) that can be carried more than a mile by strong

winds and start separate fires that lead right up to the home.

WEATHER:

Dry, windy weather contributes significantly to the spread of wildfire. Drought conditions accompanied by low humidity lead to dry vegetation that burns easily. Wind can cause wildfires to grow quickly, to die down, or to change direction. Wind can also carry firebrands long distances - up to a mile or more.

TERRAIN:

Generally, fire moves more quickly uphill and has longer flames than on level ground or when spreading downhill. Even the direction of the slope and how much sunlight or wind an area receives can impact fire behavior.



The Little Bear Fire burns near Ruidoso, 2012. Photo courtesy of Kari Greer, U.S. Forest Service.

FIREWISE TIPS CHECKLIST FOR HOMEOWNERS



Reprinted with permission from the National Fire Protection Association's Firewise Communities Program

Wildfire doesn't have to burn everything in its path. In fact, **cleaning your property of debris and maintaining your landscaping are important first steps to helping minimize damage and loss.**

The work you do today can make a difference. Follow these simple action steps now and throughout the year to prepare and help reduce the risk of your home and property becoming fuel for a wildfire:

- Clear leaves and other debris from gutters, eaves, porches and decks. This prevents embers from igniting your home.
- Remove dead vegetation from under your deck and within 10 feet of the house.
- Remove anything stored underneath decks or porches.
- Screen or box-in areas below patios and decks with wire mesh to prevent debris and combustible materials from accumulating.
- Remove flammable materials (firewood stacks, propane tanks, dry vegetation) within 30 feet of your home's foundation and outbuildings, including garages and sheds. If it can catch fire, don't let it touch your house, deck or porch.
- Wildfire can spread to tree tops. If you have trees on your property, prune so the lowest branches are six to ten feet from the ground.
- Keep your lawn hydrated and maintained. If it is brown, cut it down to reduce fire intensity. Dry grass and shrubs are fuel for wildfire.
- Don't let debris and lawn cuttings linger. Dispose of these items quickly to reduce fuel for fire.
- Inspect shingles or roof tiles. Replace or repair those that are loose or missing to prevent ember penetration.

- Cover exterior attic vents with metal wire mesh no larger than 1/8 inch to prevent sparks from entering the home.
- Enclose under-eave and soffit vents or screen with metal mesh to prevent ember entry.

Learn more about how to keep your family safe and reduce your home's risk for wildfire damage at www.firewise.org.



The Little Bear Fire destroyed this home and more than 250 other structures when it burned near Ruidoso in 2012. Photo courtesy of Kelly J. Hamilton, Southwest Border Food Protection and Emergency Preparedness Center.



KNOW BEFORE YOU GO CAMPFIRES AND ENJOYING THE GREAT OUTDOORS RESPONSIBLY

New Mexico State Forestry

With the summer season right around the corner, many New Mexicans have camping on their minds. Our public lands will be bustling with activity, and folks from across the state will be making plans for a getaway to enjoy all that the great outdoors has to offer.

Whether you're planning a quick weekend escape with the family or an extended period of time camping out, there are some important things to remember before you leave.

Few things are more associated with camping than the traditional campfire. They keep us warm, cook our food and enhance camp songs and storytelling. But with this tradition comes responsibility.

New Mexico has experienced some of the driest years on record recently, and because of that, fire restrictions on public lands during periods of high fire danger have become a necessity.

For this reason, it's imperative that you "know before you go" – that is, check to see if any fire restrictions have been put in place for the area you plan to visit.

While we take advantage of what the great outdoors has to offer in New Mexico, we must all do our part to make sure our actions don't unintentionally cause wildfires to start. Campers and hunters must take care that their fires are out and that the ground is cold to the touch before they leave, even if they're just going for a 10-minute hike. Off-road and ATV enthusiasts have a responsibility to make sure their vehicles are properly maintained so exhaust emissions, brake pads and catalytic converters don't cause fires.

It's also very important that residents and visitors enjoying our public lands be vigilant and keep an eye out for fires. If you see a fire, call 911 or alert state park or national forest/park staff members. As always, it's a good plan to call ahead or look online before you travel to confirm that the areas you plan to visit aren't under fire restrictions or closed to access.

Take advantage of the wonderful options we have and enjoy our natural resources in New Mexico. However, remember we have a responsibility to "Think Smart and Don't Let Wildfires Start."

If you plan to camp at an area where fires are allowed, remember to follow these guidelines:

- Even if there are no restrictions, never build a campfire on a windy day. Sparks or embers from the fire could travel quite a distance and set a fire unintentionally.
- Watch the wind direction to ensure sparks aren't getting on flammable materials.
- Build campfires where they will not spread and are well away from tents, trailers, wood piles, dry grass, leaves, overhanging tree branches and any other combustible material.
- Build campfires in fire pits (if available) or on bare rock or sand.
- Clear away grasses, weeds and debris from around the fire ring or pit.
- Build a campfire surrounded with rocks to contain the campfire.
- Use crumpled paper or kindling to start a fire rather than flammable liquids.
- Never use gasoline as an aid to start a campfire.
- Never leave campfires unattended. Ensure that a responsible adult is monitoring the fire at all times.
- Keep plenty of water and a shovel around to douse the fire when you're done. Once the water has been applied, stir the dampened coals and douse the fire again with water. Do not leave the campsite until the fire pit is cold to the touch.



BURNING ISSUES

By Dr. Doug Cram, Extension Wildfire Specialist for New Mexico State University

It has been 15 years since New Mexico's attention was baptized by fire during Cerro Grande. Prior to 2000, fires were largely perceived as one-and-done events where once you paid your dues with a big one you were off the hook for another 100 years or so. However, since 2000 numerous points on a map have become household names: Trigo, Las Conchas, Whitewater-Baldy, Little Bear, and Silver. Now, with each year it has become more difficult to catalog 'old' fires and keep up with new fires such as Jaroso, Diego, and Signal. Subsequently, **one reality New Mexicans are starting to embrace is that learning to live with fire is easier than being caught off guard and unprepared.**

Since 2000, fire suppression, fuel load buildup, recurring drought, and subsequent high-severity fires have become routine knowledge in New Mexico. Likewise, stakeholder knowledge and general agreement on solutions to this challenge are also expanding and providing greater support for the 'social license' necessary to realize greater forest management and restoration payoffs through forest thinning projects.

Given this ever-expanding awareness and even appreciation of the inevitable reality of recurring fire (sorry, Smokey Bear), here are some resources that may benefit families, animals, and property in New Mexico:

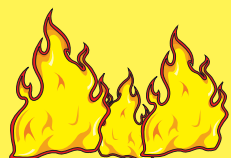
- **AfterWildfireNM.org** – This New Mexico-specific website was recently developed as a guide for community leaders and individuals in fire-affected areas. It has also proven to be a useful planning tool. The guide addresses immediate safety, mobilizing your community, who can help, post-fire treatments, financial tips, flood information, and more.
- **United Policyholders** – A good resource if you want the "straight scoop on insurance matters" following wildfire and other disasters.
- **Fire Adapted Communities and the FAC Learning Network** – Communities are working together to be prepared for wildfires. This is a process and transition that occurs over time, not overnight. A 'Fire Adapted Community' incorporates people, buildings, businesses, infrastructure, cultural resources, and natural areas to prepare for the effects of wildfire. The Learning Network enhances this effort. Is your community fire adapted? Join the Forest Guild and their partners as they build fire-adapted communities.



- **Southwest Fire Science Consortium** – The consortium is an effort for managers, scientists, and policymakers to interact and share science. The goal is to see sound science used in management decision making.
- **Be Ember Aware** – More homes are lost to wildfire as a result of embers than direct flame contact. On youtube, see "Wildfire Ember Highlights" to see firsthand how embers reach out ahead of a flaming front to take down ill-prepared and unsuspecting homes, then visit LivingWithFire.com to learn more.
- **Managed Fire/Wildland Fire Use** – The name continues to change, but expect to see more wildfires on federal lands managed for natural resource benefit. Although potentially contentious, especially when results do not match expectations, the practice designed to allow fire to play a natural role in the environment can have positive results such as reduced fuel loads.
- **Cooperative Extension Service** – Cooperative Extension agents occupy a unique role within their communities. Their ability to reach landowners, their connection to academia and the latest science, and their being embedded in communities across the state, uniquely positions them to help prepare individuals and communities for wildfires. Give your Extension agent a call and ask about preparing for wildfires.



New Mexico's extension wildland fire management specialist Doug Cram demonstrates and compares fire behavior between a thinned and un-thinned forest at a recent youth education day in Alma, New Mexico.



CLIP-AND-SAVE CHECKLIST: WHAT TO DO BEFORE AND DURING FIRE SEASON

By Kelly J. Hamilton, Southwest Border Food Protection and Emergency Preparedness Center

Things to do before wildfire season:

- 🔥 Create defensible space around your buildings
 - Remove shrubbery, wood piles, and other combustible materials
- 🔥 Create a family emergency plan
 - Practice evacuating your family and pets; time yourselves
 - Know where you will go if you have to evacuate
- 🔥 Make sure pets are micro-chipped and identifiable
- 🔥 Know how you will get emergency information

Always prioritize LIFE over property!

Things to do when wildfire season starts:

- 🔥 Follow directions from emergency personnel
- 🔥 Keep vehicles fueled and maintained
- 🔥 Know two ways to leave your neighborhood
- 🔥 Keep an emergency kit packed and ready to go
 - Water, non-perishable food, medications, money, eyeglasses, infant supplies, clothing, blankets and a flashlight with batteries
- 🔥 Locate and be prepared to take important documents
 - Social security card, birth certificate, etc.
 - Family photos
 - Other small family treasures
- 🔥 Remove flammable drapes and curtains
- 🔥 Consider purchasing non-combustible window coverings
- 🔥 Move combustible items away from your home

Things to do when wildfire is approaching:

- 🔥 Pets
 - Confine pets to the house during potential evacuations so you can evacuate them quickly
 - Ensure you have water, food, medication and other important items for your pets
 - Keep pets in kennels
- 🔥 Open fireplace damper and close fireplace screens
- 🔥 Close windows, vents and doors
- 🔥 Wet down as much of your roof, siding and the ground around your home as possible
- 🔥 Turn on lawn sprinklers and position them on your roof if possible
- 🔥 Turn off propane tanks and gas lines
- 🔥 Turn on a light in each room to increase the visibility of your home in heavy smoke

HOW WE PREPARE IN NEW MEXICO

By Tom Dean, Southwest Border Food Protection and Emergency Preparedness Center

If you have to evacuate, do you have an emergency plan for your family? What about your animals?

Preparedness is a state of mind. At some point, chances are that you and your family will encounter a situation that will cause you to have to take action for you and your animals' continued well-being. So what do you do to ensure the safety and well-being of animals? It's simple: Prepare, plan, practice and stay informed.

1. PREPARE:

Make sure you have thought about your basic needs for survival and those of your animals. In an evacuation, for example, you should have ample supplies, including medications, for you and your animals to survive for 72 hours. In New Mexico, every attempt will be made to create evacuation shelters where you and your companion animals can be co-located. But you can assist in the operation of that process by having the supplies you need, and those that your animals need. Animal shelters require a check-in process that ensures pets are reunited with their owners at the end of an event. You will need animal records (animals not up to date on vaccination requirements may be turned away) and identification.

2. PLAN:

Create your emergency plan knowing that each urgent situation will require slightly different responses. You can assist emergency response officials by pre-identifying where you would go in an evacuation of your community. If you live in a community that is prone to wildfires or floods, for example, you can prepare and leave supplies for you and your animals at a friend's or family's residence that you would evacuate to in an emergency.

3. PRACTICE:

Plans only work if they are practiced or exercised. While it is good to have a plan written and posted to remind family what to do in an emergency, it is also best if that plan is practiced on a regular basis. Elements in a plan will change, and your plan must recognize those changes and incorporate them.

4. STAY INFORMED:

Visit websites that include more information about the process, including the website for the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) at www.ready.gov. Also, there are planning groups; contact your local emergency manager and become involved.

Finally, when the time comes, listen to emergency announcements during an event to know what you'll be expected to do, such as what routes to take in an evacuation. If you have prepared, you and your companion animals will be well taken care of during an evacuation.



This trailer is used to haul equipment to set up temporary animal shelters. Metal panels inside are assembled into 65 crates, which are used to comfortably hold small animals.



EMERGENCY PLANNING FOR COMPANION ANIMALS

By Sharon Jonas, Animal Protection of New Mexico

When a situation isn't safe for you to stay in your home, it's not safe for your animals either. Follow these three steps to keep you and your companion animals safe.

1. PREPARE:

Make Your Emergency Plan

Write an evacuation plan for people and animals, and keep it where all household members can find it. Talk with your neighbors about how to help each other in case you can't get to your own homes. Ask about your community's disaster response plan.

Keep an Emergency Kit Ready

Store enough supplies for three or more days in portable waterproof containers. Your animal emergency kit should include copies of vaccination and important veterinary records, medications, leash, carrier, food and a manual can opener, water, food/water bowls, bedding, towels, small litter box, cat litter and scooper, pet first aid kit, and any special items that might be comforting to your animals. Keep all vaccinations up to date; this is important for emergency shelters or foster homes. Note: For items not stored in the kit, create a grab-and-go list of things you can grab in five minutes.

Identification is Critical

Have current pictures of you with your animals. Animals should wear up-to-date identification at all times, including an emergency phone number where you can be reached. Microchip your animals to help ensure their safe return if you become separated. Put identification on all collars, harnesses, cages and carriers.

Know Where You Are Going

Find these options before a disaster happens. Keep a list of safe places to go in your disaster kit, with addresses and phone numbers of friends and family outside your immediate area, veterinary offices, boarding kennels, or animal-friendly motels where you can take your animals. Local animal shelters can usually help with housing or referrals. Human evacuation shelters usually do not allow animals except service animals. If you have more than one animal, you may need to house them separately.

2. PRACTICE:

It's important to practice your evacuation routine with everyone in the family, including the animals. Take dogs, cats and other small animals for practice trips in the car, then do the same in a rushed manner. Practice loading horses and other large animals into trailers.

3. ACT:

Don't Wait Until the Last Minute

When threatening conditions arise, confine your animals so you can leave with them quickly if necessary. Evacuate early, if you can, before a mandatory evacuation order.

Don't Leave Animals Behind to Fend for Themselves

Pets can be lost, injured or killed. Do not leave them chained or locked in buildings or cages from which they cannot escape. You may not be allowed back to your property for several days.

If You Don't Evacuate

Only "shelter in place" when recommended by local authorities. Protect your companion animals from smoke by keeping them indoors as much as possible with windows and doors closed; provide plenty of water and use re-circulated air if possible.

See Animal Protection of New Mexico's Animal Safety Planning web page for more information and useful links: www.apnm.org/disaster.



Angela Stell of the non-profit dog rescue organization NMDOG works to make a dog comfortable during an evacuation exercise hosted by Bernalillo County in June 2013. Photo courtesy of Sharon Jonas, APNM.



IF A WILDFIRE APPROACHES, ARE YOU PREPARED?

Southwest Border Food Protection and Emergency Preparedness Center



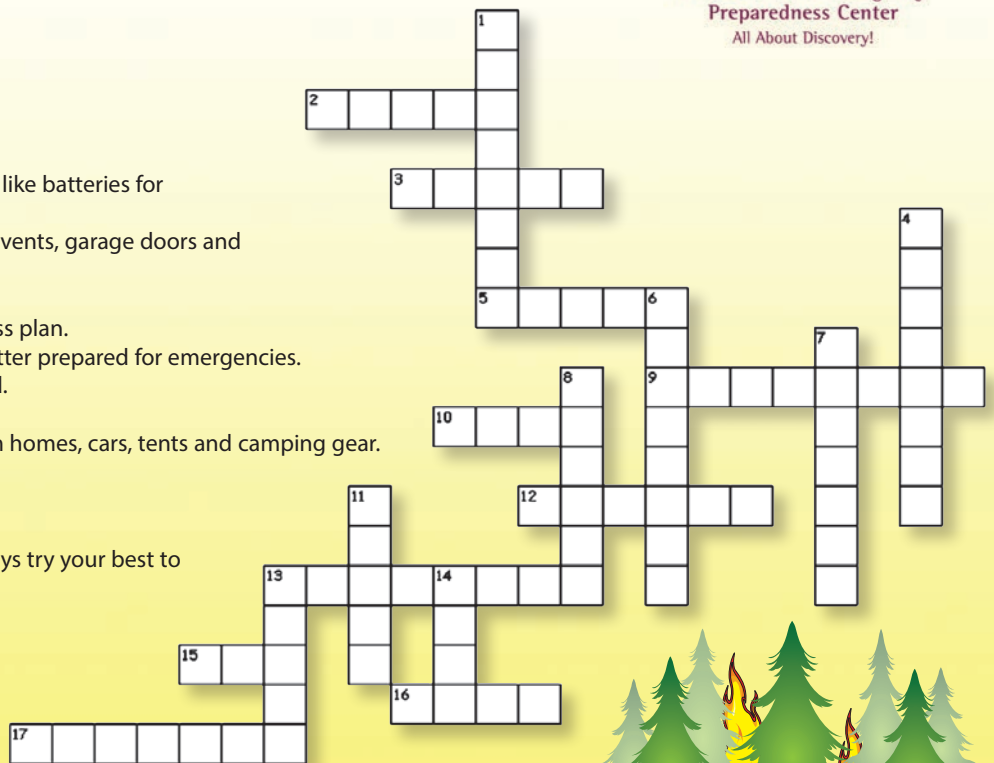
Southwest Border Food
Protection and Emergency
Preparedness Center
All About Discovery!

ACROSS

2. Heat and _____ can be very dangerous for you.
3. Many items are important to have in your emergency supply kit, like batteries for _____ lights.
5. In case of a wildfire near your home, close all _____, windows, vents, garage doors and other entrances.
9. If necessary, _____ the family to a safe location.
10. Dogs, cats and other _____ should be part of your preparedness plan.
12. By creating an emergency supply kit, your _____ can be better prepared for emergencies.
13. All it takes for a _____ to start is a spark and a little wind.
15. Stay with your campfire until it is completely _____.
16. If you must build a fire it should be at least 15 _____ away from homes, cars, tents and camping gear.
17. Check the _____ forecast before camping.

DOWN

1. There are many types of natural emergencies and disasters. Always try your best to be _____.
4. Never play with matches or _____.
6. _____ bags are great for overnight camping trips.
7. Fire spreads very _____!
8. It is very important to create and practice a fire _____ plan.
11. Follow the _____ before building a campfire.
13. Always have a bucket of _____ and shovel nearby.
14. Do not build a _____ if there are restrictions in place.



FIREWISE QUIZ

Reprinted with permission from the National Fire Protection Association's Firewise Communities Program

1. What are the safety benefits to keeping your lawn well-hydrated and maintained?
 - A. Reduces a fire's intensity
 - B. Creates less fuel for a wildfire
 - C. Makes it easy to mow
 - D. A and B
2. What material is best used to enclose under-eave and soffit vents to prevent embers from entering the home?
 - A. Metal wire mesh no larger than 1/8 inch
 - B. Metal plate
 - C. Metal wire mesh no larger than 1/4 inch
 - D. Aluminum foil sheets
3. What flammable material should be moved 30 feet away from your home?
 - A. Firewood stacks
 - B. Propane tanks
 - C. Overgrown shrubs
 - D. All of the above
4. Why is it important to prune tree branches six to ten feet from the ground?
 - A. Less leaves and debris fall on the ground
 - B. Prevents wildfire from spreading to tree tops
 - C. Prevents the tree from burning down
 - D. Keeps tree limbs from falling on a house
5. What Firewise safety tip helps protect your home from wildland fire?
 - A. Creating an emergency evacuation plan
 - B. Clearing leaves and other debris from gutters, eaves, porches and decks
 - C. Storing lawn furniture during red-flag warnings
 - D. B and C
6. Ember or spark penetration to the home can happen through what means?
 - A. Window screen
 - B. Missing or loose shingles/roof tiles
 - C. Open garage doors
 - D. All of the above
7. What plants are recommended for Firewise landscaping?
 - A. Seasonal, flowering plants
 - B. Waxy, short-leaved plants
 - C. Low-growing, low-flammability plants
 - D. Tall weeds
8. What area near the house should be clear of debris and other flammable materials?
 - A. Garage
 - B. Under decks and porches
 - C. Pool
 - D. Driveway
9. What kind of roofing material is considered "Class A" for the best fire resistance?
 - A. Asphalt shingle
 - B. Concrete tile
 - C. Metal
 - D. All of the above
10. What types of fuel breaks work well around a home's perimeter?
 - A. Gravel walkway
 - B. Driveway
 - C. Stone wall
 - D. All of the above

Crossword Answers:

Across: 2. Smoke, 3. Flash, 5. Doors, 9. Evacuate, 10. Pets, 12. Family, 13. Wildfire, 15. Out, 16. Feet, 17. Weather.

Down: 1. Prepared, 4. Lighters, 6. Sleeping, 7. Quickly, 8. Escape, 11. Rules, 13. Water, 14. Fire.

Quiz Answers:

1-D, 2-A, 3-D, 4-B, 5-D, 6-D, 7-C, 8-B, 9-D, 10-D



This wildfire mitigation newsletter is a cooperative effort between the New Mexico Department of Agriculture, the New Mexico Department of Homeland Security & Emergency Management and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Funds used to produce this newsletter were made available through the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP). The HMGP funding is made available after a federally declared disaster, if requested by the state or by a tribal entity. Local governments, tribal entities or institutions must have a FEMA-approved Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan in order to qualify for HMGP mitigation project funding. The HMGP funding is available statewide for mitigation project work and Natural Hazard Mitigation Plans. For more information, visit www.nmdhsem.gov/mitigation.