



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Napa Firewise
Shelly Engleman – 707/257/9378
sengleman@cityofnapa.org

Balzac Communications & Marketing
Roger Archey – 707/255/7667
rarchey@balzac.com

NAPA FIREWISE GRADUATES NEW CROP OF FIRE INSPECTORS

NAPA, CA, June 21, 2005 – Napa Firewise, a countywide wildland fire awareness program sponsored by the Napa County Fire Marshal's office and the City of Napa Fire Department, announced 18 new fire inspectors have graduated from an intense 5-day training course held recently in St. Helena.

The June class included:

George Bachich, Bill Robertson, Darren Drake, Katie Roath, DeAnna Fister, Don Gasser, James Hofgesang, Greg Holquist, Nick Ramirez, Tim Hoyt, George Laing, Todd Snyder, Jeannie Tofanelli, Linda Galvan, Nancy Carver, Andy Titus, Nathan Garrett and Kevin Hostert.

The 40-hour course, created for members of the building and landscape trades, is designed to augment the County's limited inspector force with qualified individuals from the private sector.

The classes focus on the critical issues wildland fire poses for Napa County and the measures property owners can take to minimize the risk to themselves and their neighbors. Fire professionals from the State Division of Forestry, Napa County Department of Emergency Services, and the Napa Fire Department provided the training and certification.

The course covered:

- Fire history of California
- Basic fire behavior
- Codes and regulations
- Fuel models and treatments
- Fire protection plans
- Firewise landscaping
- Property owner communications

Kate Dargan, Fire Marshal for Napa County and team leader for the training program, said having more inspectors is critical to the County's 5-year fire prevention plan. "Napa County has mobilized a new wildland fire awareness program under the banner of *Napa Firewise*, says Dargan. "Our mantra is '100 feet of defensible space.' In generally under an hour, a trained fire inspector can assess a home and property for fire risk and offer concrete suggestions on how the property owner can create a defensible space where firefighters can safely defend the property should a wildland fire occur. Without the additional inspectors from the private sector, the job of covering the County would be impossible."

The first Napa Firewise inspector class was a pilot program funded through a grant from the Wildland-Urban Interface program and Napa County. Additional training programs are planned for next year and will be open to members of the building trades and other pre-qualified individuals.

For additional information on the *Napa Firewise* inspector's program, visit www.co.napa.ca.us/firewise or call 707-967-1426.

###