

FIREWISE

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Communities Firewise Foundation (NCFE) and the Calistoga Fire Safe Council. NCFE is a county-wide nonprofit organization whose mission is to reduce the risk and impacts of wildfires through fire fuel reduction and community education. NCFE is the umbrella organization for the many neighborhood Fire Safe Councils – such as Calistoga and Diamond Mountain – that have organized and become extremely active in the wake of the 2017 Tubbs Fire and the 2020 Glass Fire.

These resident-led councils, funded through grants from NCFE, lead the way in promoting fire prevention and preparedness strategies within their local communities. Heading up the local 'Reflect to Protect' project was Shaw-Williams Road resident Piper Cole, who serves as co-lead of the Calistoga Fire Safe Council steering committee as well as a member of the NCFE's board of directors. Working with Cole was NCFE president Christopher Thompson, JC Greenberg of Cal Fire/Napa County Fire and NCFE board member, Gretchen de Limur and Jerry Newell, both residents of the Diamond Mountain area and members of its Fire Safe Council, and Calistoga Fire Chief Steve Campbell.

Friendships and working relationships with key Bank of the West employees led to a partnership in which the bank's Corporate Social Responsibility & Sustainability department agreed to help pay for the reflective address markers, the tools to install them and employee volunteers to do the work.

On Wednesday morning, dressed in Kelly Green t-shirts, 32 bank employees grabbed sledgehammers and tool bags filled with the necessary items to hang the address markers, and set off in teams to work the entire day installing them.

A second full day of volunteer installation is set for next month.

"We just thought this was such a worthwhile project to support," said Melissa Fifield, senior vice president and head of Corporate Social Responsibility & Sustainability at Bank of the West. "What was appealing to us about this particular project, more so than being able to help with grant funding, was the opportunity for us as bank employees to get out from behind our desks and actually do some hands on volunteer work that makes a difference in people's lives."

For more information about NCFE's work and the Fire Wise councils in this area, visit <https://napafirewise.org/>