

Calif. better prepared for wildfire season

By Kurtis Alexander, San Francisco Chronicle

When Anne Faught got a knock on her front gate recently, she was surprised to find two uniformed men at her rural Marin County property, one with a clipboard.

The firefighters had come to her home for an impromptu safety inspection. They were making sure she had cleared hazards like flammable brush and overgrown trees, both common in the small town of Woodacre, where houses like Faught's nestle against a landscape of picturesque but perilous fire-prone hills.

"I just did \$3,000 worth of tree work," Faught said, pointing to two compost bins stuffed with leaves and branches. "We all saw what happened last year."

In the wake of the most destructive fire season in California history, peaking with the fast-burning Wine Country blazes that killed 41 people and wiped out nearly 9,000 homes and other buildings, pressure to reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfire has been immense. And in many ways, the response has been proportionate.

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