



Arrowhead Regional Development
Commission
221 West First Street
Duluth, MN 55802



ARROWHEAD WILDFIRE MITIGATION PROJECT

Funding for the Arrowhead Wildfire Mitigation Project is made possible by a FEMA Pre-Disaster Mitigation grant through the State of Minnesota.

For More Information:

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Is your home Firewise? To learn more visit: www.dnr.state.mn.us/firewise



Photograph of property protected from wildfire by Firewise methods.
Photo from Minnesota DNR Firewise

Fire Risk in NE Minnesota

Throughout the Arrowhead region, more people are building within areas where wildland fuels (trees, brush, and other vegetative materials) threaten to ignite combustible homes and structures. ("the wildland/urban interface").

There are homes, cabins, and commercial properties within these interface areas, and because many of these properties are remote with limited services they are at high risk in the event of a wildfire.

The goal of the Arrowhead Wildfire Mitigation Project is to retrofit existing residential structures located in the high-risk wildfire areas of Cook, Lake, and St. Louis Counties with external sprinkler systems, thus reducing vulnerability to wildfire.

Why Sprinklers?

Sprinkler systems can help in wildfire damage prevention when used in combination with Firewise practices for the creation of defensible space.

Properties with sprinkler systems proved to be effective in Cook County during the Ham Lake Fire in May, 2007, which claimed over 100 homes. Over 50 structures were saved by sprinkler systems. This project will add significant protection to homes throughout the Arrowhead region in the event of major wildfire incidents.

Role of ARDC and Partners

The Arrowhead Regional Development Commission is the fiscal manager for the project, working with a Sprinkler Committee consisting of emergency management partners from Cook, Lake, and St. Louis Counties in the development and implementation of the project.

Project Process and Cost Share of Installation

In early 2008, homeowners from Cook, Lake, and St. Louis Counties were invited to submit applications for a sprinkler system. Those selected to participate must have homestead status and be located in a high-risk wildfire area. Additionally, homeowners must formally commit to sprinkler system maintenance and adopt Firewise practices to create defensible space around the home.

Homeowners will work directly with a sprinkler contractor in the design and installation of a sprinkler system on their property.

Sprinkler systems will be installed at the owner's expense, with 75% of the cost to be reimbursed upon completion of the project. Homeowners will be responsible for 25% of the project cost.

Project Timeline

ARDC will begin implementation in 2009, with project completion no later than August 2012.