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## Bille Park neighborhood becomes first Firewise neighborhood in Paradise

By: Janelli Pedroza  
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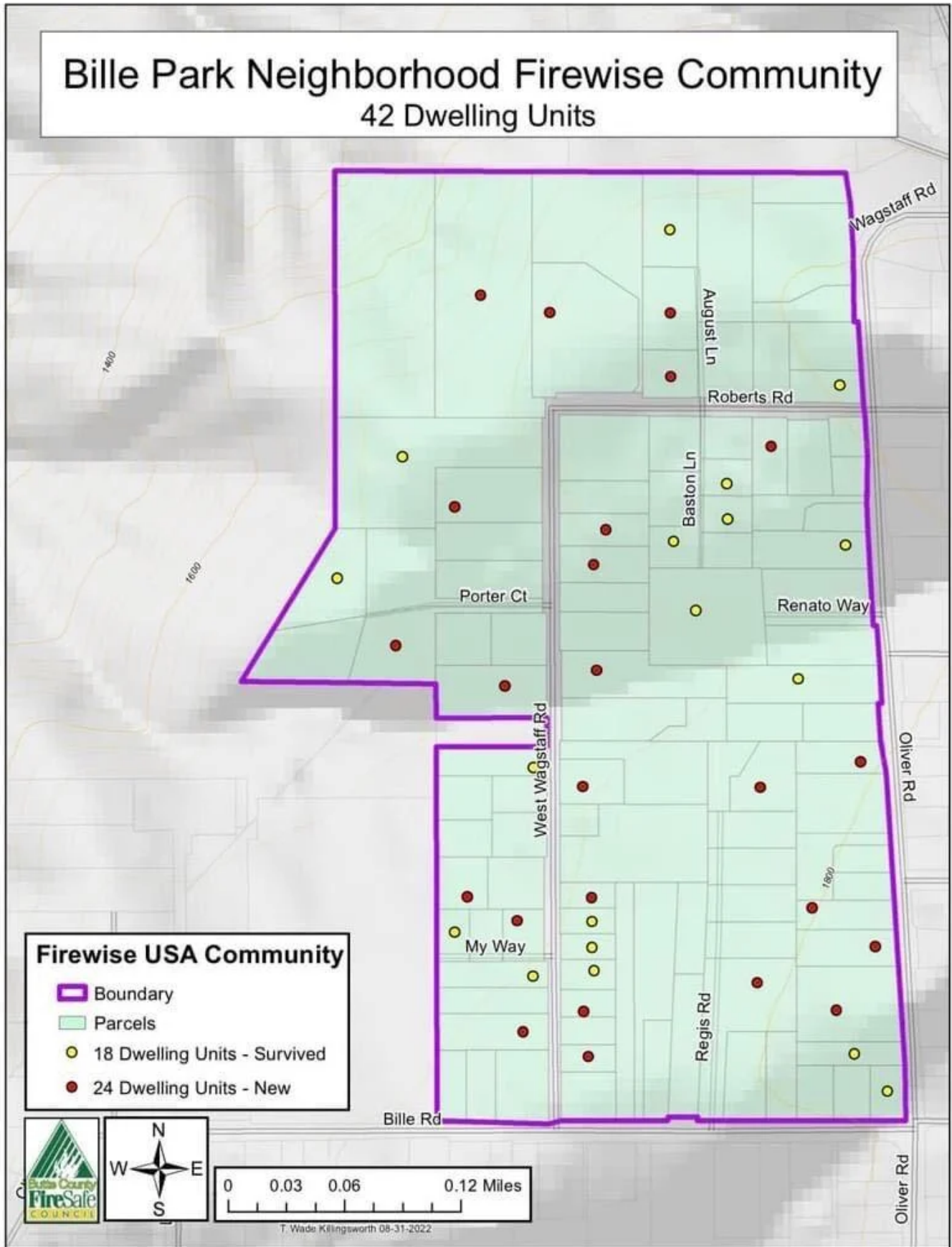
Firewise is a program that helps communities reduce wildfire risk and helps homeowners qualify for an insurance discount.

**PARADISE, Calif.** - Bille Park neighborhood in Paradise is now the first Firewise neighborhood in the town.

A total 42 homes located on the west side of Oliver road, between Bille Park road and Wagstaff road, are now Firewise-certified.

Firewise is a program, administered by the NFPA (National Fire Protection Association) that helps unite neighbors to reduce wildfire risk and better protect their homes. Under Firewise, homeowners are also eligible for an insurance discount, which depends on the company homeowners are with.

Jen Goodlin, who spearheaded the Firewise effort and lives in the Bille Park neighborhood, and is also the CEO of Rebuild Paradise Foundation, told Action News Now that the Butte Fire Safe Council helped create a map of the 42 homes. Twenty-four are new, rebuilt after the Camp Fire, and 18 survived the fire.

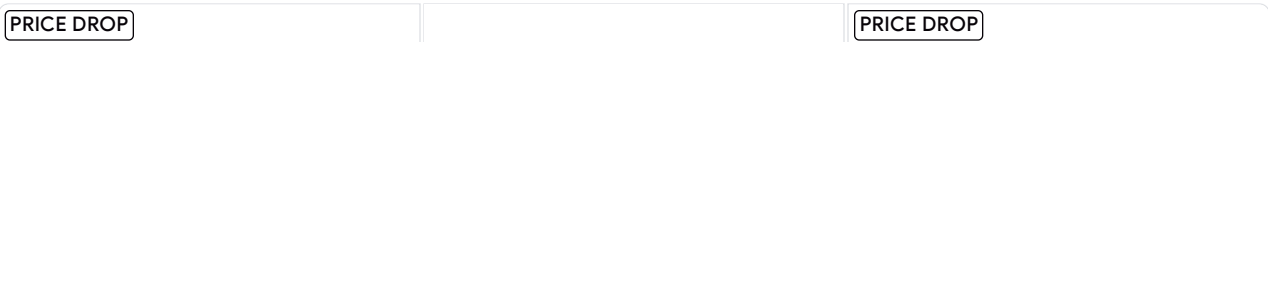


Goodlin shared she wanted to do something about rising insurance premiums and help others in her community experiencing the same after noticing insurance premiums going up by 600%. Now, the neighborhood is in the process of creating a 3-year plan to help keep their community safe and lessen the burden of high-costing insurance premiums.

“It’s in the hands of homeowners and residents. It’s not in the hands of a government entity. It gives us the power back, and when you know your neighbors and you’re bringing together neighbors, it’s actually more powerful and more safe,” Goodlin said. “We all have this care and investment and intentionality. I think that’s across the board in any neighborhood in Paradise, so that’s really special and this is just another way to continue that comradery together and do something to make a change.”

Allan Jaenecke and Robbie Jaenecke also live in the Bille Park neighborhood. They have lived in Paradise for over 40 years and told Action News Now they are thankful their home survived the Camp Fire, but would also like to see something done about rising insurance costs.

“We’ve lived here for so long and it is our home and we want it to grow, we want it to thrive, and insurance rates are going to be a detriment to the survival of this town, I think,” Robbie said. “Yeah people won’t want to move here because they’ll find out about the insurance rates going up, and it’s really not fair, I don’t think. We survived the fire, so we’re not sure how much our insurance rate is gonna go up, but we’ll find out when the renewal comes in March,” Allan added.





Others like Heidi Lange, who live in surrounding communities, are also trying to find solutions to high insurance rates and are looking to join the Firewise program.

“I just started and trying to find out a constructive way to go about addressing that, rather than just stomping my feet and throwing a fit, and so I thought we have strength in numbers here on the Ridge and we’ve already overcome rebuilding after the Camp Fire, so I’m sure that we can put our heads together and do something constructive with this,” Lange said. “I just want to express my encouragement to our community here in Paradise and Magalia that are all facing these hurdles and struggles and insurance renewals to reach out and communicate their situation, and come together and don’t be intimidated by it. You know if we’ve come this far, we can certainly make progress on the insurance issue as well.”



As part of Firewise, the 42 homes have to complete 42 hours of work, which includes removing dead trees, weeds and other fuel reduction activities.

While the Bille Park neighborhood is Firewise-certified now, a new application must be submitted every three years to stay in good standing and maintain the certification.

Rebuild Paradise invites anyone interested in learning more about Firewise to email them or visit their office located at 6067 Skyway Rd, Suite B, Paradise.

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Janelli Pedroza