



# THE FIRE PLUG

Fall Edition | 2023  
[www.kensingtonfire.org](http://www.kensingtonfire.org)



## COMMUNITY SAFETY EVENT **SHRED & MEDS** PAPER AND PHARMACEUTICAL DROP-OFF UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH NORTH PARKING LOT

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**SAT 10/28**  
**10am-12pm**

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*Alan Siegel leads a tour from Kensington Court to Leneve Place in El Cerrito.*

### **Wildcat Firewise Walk with Firefighters to Enhance Community Safety**

In a remarkable display of community spirit, over 50 Wildcat Firewise residents, accompanied by children and dogs, recently took to the streets to assess wildfire risks in their neighborhood. Guided by Wildcat Firewise Lead Alan Siegel, this walk through the community focused on areas where work has been completed and where work needs to be done. Kensington Fire Protection District Board Director Larry Nagel joined the walk to discuss initiatives increasing Kensington’s safety and emergency preparedness.

The walk was a crucial opportunity for residents to engage with Kensington’s firefighters and emergency preparedness coordinator and gain insights into effective wildfire prevention measures. Larry Nagel’s presence underscored the shared commitment of both residents and local authorities to safeguarding the community from potential fire threats.

Wildcat Firewise actively seeks resources to support removing hazardous trees and vegetation. Contra Costa County’s Measure X funds offer a promising avenue to finance these critical efforts, ensuring the community’s resilience against wildfires.

Notably, this event drew the participation of community members from neighboring areas, eager to pursue their own Firewise designation in Kensington. They are capitalizing on the momentum generated by Wildcat Firewise, seizing the opportunity to fortify their communities against future fire risks. To learn more about how Kensington residents prepare for emergencies, visit [www.kensingtonfire.org/volunteer](http://www.kensingtonfire.org/volunteer).



## Residents Tour PG&E's Hazard Center

Kensington residents from Wildcat Watch and the Kensington Fire Protection District's Emergency Preparedness Committee were given a tour in early August of PG&E's Hazard Awareness and Warning Center (HAWC), which is located in San Ramon. Wildcat Watch is a volunteer organization that monitors three wildfire cameras overlooking the badly over-grown Wildcat Canyon during red-flag days with the goal of providing early detection of fire for Kensington and the neighboring cities. The Emergency Preparedness Committee is composed of two members from the Fire Board and seven members from the community who work on ways to strengthen Kensington's resilience to wildfire and other natural disasters.

The HAWC is a high-tech information hub staffed with 31 PG&E employees that identify and alert PG&E operations to threats from wildfire, earthquake, flooding, landslides, etc. The Center is housed in a large room equipped with a multitude of computers and a giant wall of monitors with real-time displays of:

1. Satellite images that give a large-scale view of fires night and day,
2. Weather and fire-risk forecasts (5-day) from various agencies,
3. Measurements from weather stations, including 1400 stations installed by PG&E,
4. Views from any of the 611 wildfire cameras installed by PG&E,
5. Wildfire alerts originating from various sources, including analysis based on artificial intelligence (AI) of PG&E's wildfire cameras,
6. Nearby earthquakes and
7. Tripped fault sensors on major transmission lines that might indicate sources of sparks or gas leaks.

Monitoring all these sources of information is a challenge that PG&E meets by breaking its vast operating area into four regions. Each region is monitored 24/7 by two analysts. Several supervisors coordinate and manage the overall area.

The head of HAWC led the 1-hr tour and questions. Several of those questions centered on how PG&E initially identifies fire. The most obvious way is using the more than 600 wildfire cameras, but it is not feasible to have enough PG&E staff to constantly monitor so many cameras. PG&E noted and praised Kensington's Wildcat Watch for their effort in monitoring the three cameras near Kensington during threatening conditions. Most recently, PG&E intervened to ensure that the three cameras used by Wildcat Watch are aimed at Wildcat Canyon to maximize the chances of early detection of a fire in our backyard. To detect early ignition of fires in its much larger operating area, PG&E is relying primarily on computer-based image recognition software using AI. Further questions from the Kensington visitors suggest this technology still has a ways to go before it has proven it can outperform trained human observers strongly motivated to spot fire before it can harm their family or neighbors. To learn more about Wildcat Watch, volunteer, and read more about the tour, visit [wildcatwatchgroup.blogspot.com](http://wildcatwatchgroup.blogspot.com). Find more volunteer opportunities by visiting [www.kensingtonfire.org/volunteer](http://www.kensingtonfire.org/volunteer).

## Kensington Fire Volunteer Opportunities

A new webpage has been created on the Kensington Fire Protection District website to provide residents with a centralized location to learn more about volunteer opportunities related to emergency preparedness and fire prevention.

This page empowers Kensington residents to take action and work collaboratively to heighten awareness of wildfire risk and improve disaster resiliency. This page is beneficial to the new Kensington residents who may need to be fully aware of all the activities focused on emergency preparedness and fire prevention. Did you know some Kensington residents monitor the ALERT Wildfire cameras to provide early detection of a wildfire in Wildcat Canyon? Did you know there are training opportunities to help prepare for disasters? We invite you to visit the website and explore what your neighbors are doing to help make Kensington safer. There may be an opportunity that interests you also to get more involved. Learn more at [www.kensingtonfire.org/volunteer](http://www.kensingtonfire.org/volunteer).

## El Cerrito/Kensington CERT Water Storage and Fire Extinguisher Sale

El Cerrito/Kensington CERT, in partnership with Lamorinda CERT, has an open sale for emergency water storage and fire extinguishers. This sale promotes emergency preparedness, specifically for earthquakes impacting water supply infrastructure.

Residents are stocking up on potable water for emergencies, and the kits sold contain supplies for water treatment and long-term storage. Through these sales, it's possible to buy containers ranging from 2.5 gallons to 55-gallon drums. Place an order now before Noon on October 12th by visiting [www.kensingtonfire.org/suppliesale](http://www.kensingtonfire.org/suppliesale). Look for the link to register for notifications about future sales.

## Red Flag Warning Email List

The Kensington Fire Protection District initiated a Red Flag Warning Email program to notify residents of weather conditions and other potential hazards that may require action at home before an emergency arises. Since the program started, over 700 Kensington residents have subscribed to this email list. These emails help residents prepare and remind them of specific actions to take in anticipation of an emergency.

This email program is not a primary emergency notification alert. The email is an additional tool for emergency preparedness. Contra Costa County's Community Warning System (CWS) is the primary warning system for our community during an emergency. If you have not done so already, register for the County's CWS Alerts by visiting [www.cwsalerts.com](http://www.cwsalerts.com) or calling 925-655-0111. Subscribe to the KFPD Red Flag Warning Emails by visiting [www.kensingtonfire.org/redflag](http://www.kensingtonfire.org/redflag).

## CPR/First Aid Training

CPR/First Aid Training classes are offered throughout the year. Registration is necessary and space is limited. Priority registration is available for Kensington and El Cerrito residents. The processing fee is \$55 for CPR and \$110 for CPR/First Aid for El Cerrito and Kensington residents. The next scheduled sessions will be held on Saturday, October 28, 2023 and December 9, 2023. For more information or to sign up, please contact the El Cerrito-Kensington Fire Department at (510) 215-4450.

## Paper Shredding & Expired Pharmaceutical Collection Event

Kensington Fire Protection District will host a paper shredding and pharmaceutical collection event on Saturday, October 28th, 2023, from 10:00 am until 12:00 pm. This free event is for Kensington residents to learn more about making their homes and communities safer. **Please note the location has changed to the Unitarian Universalist Church of Berkeley at 1 Lawson Road in Kensington (north parking lot).**

The KPCCSD, in coordination with the DEA, will be facilitating the National Prescription Drug Take-Back campaign to safely dispose of all unused or expired medications, including narcotics, pills, syrups, inhalers, etc.

We do not accept any household hazardous waste. It is important not to flush your unwanted medications down the toilet as they will pollute our drinking water and ground soil. For more information about this event, please visit the Kensington Fire website: [www.kensingtonfire.org](http://www.kensingtonfire.org)

### KFPD BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**Julie Stein** *President*

[jstein@kensingtonfire.org](mailto:jstein@kensingtonfire.org)

**Daniel Levine** *Vice-President*

[dlevine@kensingtonfire.org](mailto:dlevine@kensingtonfire.org)

**Larry Nagel** *Secretary*

[lnagel@kensingtonfire.org](mailto:lnagel@kensingtonfire.org)

**Don Dommer** *Director*

[ddommer@kensingtonfire.org](mailto:ddommer@kensingtonfire.org)

**Jim Watt** *Director*

[jwatt@kensingtonfire.org](mailto:jwatt@kensingtonfire.org)

### KFPD STAFF & CONSULTANTS

**Mary Morris-Mayorga** *Interim-General Manager*

[mmayorga@kensingtonfire.org](mailto:mmayorga@kensingtonfire.org)

**Eric Saylor** *Fire Chief*

[esaylor@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us](mailto:esaylor@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us)

**Candace Eros Diaz**

*Executive Assistant / Board Clerk*

[cerosdiaz@kensingtonfire.org](mailto:cerosdiaz@kensingtonfire.org)

**Johnny Valenzuela**

*Emergency Preparedness Coordinator*

[jvalenzuela@kensingtonfire.org](mailto:jvalenzuela@kensingtonfire.org)



**KENSINGTON**  
FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT  
217 ARLINGTON AVE KENSINGTON CA 94707

# ***NATIONWIDE EMERGENCY ALERT TEST***

**WED 10/4/2023 11:20AM**

The national test will help ensure that Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEA) and the Emergency Alert System (EAS) continue to be effective ways to warn the public about emergencies, particularly those on the national level.

All major U.S. wireless providers participate in Wireless Emergency Alerts and will transmit the national test to their subscribers.

If your mobile phone is on and within range of an active cell tower from a participating wireless provider, you should receive the national test. Wireless providers will transmit the national test for 30 minutes, but your phone should only receive it once.