



National Wildfire Coordinating Group Communicator's Guide for Wildland Fire Management: *Fire Education, Prevention, and Mitigation Practices*

1. Introduction and Organization

Introduction

Communicator's Guide for Wildland Fire Management introduces ways of communicating about wildland fire issues so we have a basic framework to reach mutual objectives of protecting people and natural resources.

This *Communicator's Guide* is designed to help you address the key elements of effective communication: who says what to whom, when, where, and why. Just as each fire takes on characteristics of its own, a well-planned communications program is unique because your messages are specifically linked to your ecosystem, local community, agency/organization mission, methods and media used, and your credibility as the messenger.

Organization

Following is an overview of the chapters found in this Guide. Each chapter includes resources to help you, such as internet information and references to example materials. Internet sites are offered as starting points, rather than definitive sources of information. The example materials are referenced for illustrative purposes with the idea that you will build your own materials.

1. Introduction and Organization of NWCG Communicator's Guide for Wildland Fire Management: *Fire Education, Prevention, and Mitigation Practices*

The chapter you are currently reading outlines the format and use for this Guide.

2. Wildland Fire Overview

This chapter outlines the basic information communicators should know when talking about fire. A concise section on the science of wildland fire and its role in ecosystems is included as background information. You can craft meaningful messages using this information, your existing knowledge, and the science of wildland fire in your particular area.

3. Fire Management

Included in this chapter is an overview of the interagency fire management network and an introduction to the history of wildland fire and societal influences. Fostering communication with your audiences requires messages that address human dimensions issues, therefore a section on public perceptions and attitudes is included.

Wildland Fire Management is often described as a range of possible technical decisions and actions available to prevent, suppress or use fire in a given landscape to meet specific goals and objectives.

However, it is imperative that we recognize and integrate into our communication efforts all resource management perspectives, social and economic issues, community perceptions, and the ecology role of wildland fire so collaboratively we generate practical solutions to fire related threats to biodiversity.

Verify sources and data with other authoritative sources before disseminating information obtained through the Internet.

4. Communication Planning and Strategy

The Communication Planning and Strategy chapter outlines concepts to be considered when designing a communications plan, and offers descriptions of sample tactics. This chapter section is written in a general sense, not tied to specific types of fire communication such as education, prevention, or mitigation. Subsequent chapters will address sample messages and tactics for specific types of outreach.

5. Communication Materials

Guidelines for various communication tools are outlined in the Communication Materials chapter. Again, this chapter is written in a general sense, not tied to specific types of fire communication such as education, prevention, or mitigation. However, some materials may lend themselves to certain forms of outreach.

6. Collaboration

Collaboration is a central component of wildland fire management. This chapter addresses considerations for establishing and managing partnerships with other agencies and organizations.

7. Fire Education

This chapter presents the core NWCG wildland fire messages as well as communication techniques that are specific to this important topic.

8. Fire Prevention

Fire Prevention includes specific concepts for communicating prevention messages. This chapter also includes information about the national Wildfire Prevention Education Teams. Much of this chapter has been consolidated from the Fire Prevention Guides, which are being discontinued and replaced with this *Communicator's Guide*.

9. Fire Mitigation

Mitigation is essential to reducing the loss of homes and resources in the wildland/urban interface. This chapter presents sample strategies for fostering community collaboration to reduce wildfire vulnerability.

10. Resources

This chapter includes lists of resources for the information found in this *Communicator's Guide*, including Web sites, recommended reading, and glossary.

11. Appendix

The appendix is a collection of references and sample materials for your consideration as you develop and implement your education, prevention, and mitigation communication programs.

NWCG Communicator's Guide for Wildland Fire Management: Fire Education, Prevention, and Mitigation Practices consolidates several NWCG materials, including *Communicator's Guide - Wildland Fire* and the NFES Fire Prevention Guides. It also draws on various resources and best practices of many NWCG Working Teams, individual agencies, and partners.