

Will Your Home be Triaged GREEN, YELLOW or RED?

Saturday's Rocky Mountain News headlined an excellent article that is a **MUST READ** for all mountain dwellers. Go to http://www.rockymountainnews.com/drmn/local/article/0,1299,DRMN_15_4765077,00.html and be sure to read the related articles as well.

The "Defending Your Home" presentation by Bill Lundquist although poorly attended, those who did come learned that soon our Fire District will be doing the same thing. They are getting "Red Zone" software and will be identifying homes by one of three categories: Green—will survive on its own; Yellow—will survive with help from the fire department; or Red—will not survive, do not defend. The Big Thompson Canyon Volunteer Fire Department will train a group of SMERT volunteers to assess a property for its defensibility. SMERT can then assess your property and advise you what you need to do to assure your home is categorized GREEN. They use a technique he called "bump and run" which is to foam down a "green" structure and then leave. Allow the fire to pass over and then come back and check for spot fires.

New evacuation procedures make a lot of sense. Unless you are in an area that is severely threatened you may not be asked to evacuate unless you have special needs; to rush and evacuate only clogs our already limited access road. Better to stay and use your own garden hoses and sprinklers to wet down the areas surrounding your home; move all of your "yard accumulation" that is combustible far away from your structures; and perhaps help a neighbor who needs help doing the same things.

Buried propane tanks? Some may think it is safer to bury their propane tank—but if yours is buried and you have a structure fire, will the fire department know where the shut-off is? Or, where the tank is buried? Be prepared and mark the location of the tank and shut off clearly so time is not wasted trying to find it. Also, keep your propane tank full. A partially full tank is more likely to explode and take you or your home with it.

Ever wonder how much water is required to fight a structure fire? Take the square footage of your home and divide by three. That is the number of gallons of water to flow PER MINUTE. By that calculation our brush truck contains enough water to defend a 700 square foot home for ONE minute.

Bill says it will be a miracle if we don't have a fire on the scale of the Bobcat Gulch fire this year because current conditions are extreme.

RISK? The fire department policy is simple.

Take considerable risk to save a saveable life.

Take calculated risk to save a "yellow" structure

Take NO RISK to save the unsaveable.

Both Bill Lundquist and Chief David Jiles were not discouraged by our poor turnout. They are more than willing to repeat this presentation. Apparently Saturday afternoon was not a good time for many folks. What days and times would you prefer to see programs of this sort presented?