Supervisor John Gioia's Weekly E-Update

March 12, 2010

Fire Prevention Steps Help Protect Homes from Wildfire

The tragic Oakland Firestorm occurred almost 20 years ago, but Bay Area residents are still learning from its devastation. With 6,000 homes in Contra Costa County located on the urban wildland interface, including many in West County, wildland fire prevention must be taken seriously.

Our local fire departments, including the Contra Costa Fire Protection District, are using and advocating for cutting edge "urban interface" fire prevention techniques. Many of these are based on the concept of creating "defensible space" around your home, which can significantly help it survive a fire. Defensible space -- a fire resistant zone around your house -- can also help slow the spread of wildfire.

I am co-sponsoring a community workshop this Saturday, March 13, to help inform the public about fire prevention techniques. If you live near open space or wildland, come and learn state-of-the-art ways to protect your home. Topics covered will include vegetation management, building fuel breaks, using fire resistant roofing materials -- and more.

The Contra Costa Fire Protection District also has great information on defensible space on its website at www.cccfpd.org/exhazard/defensiblespace.html.

All fires are frightening, and damage can be horrific. But it's reassuring to know that a few relatively easy steps may help protect your house, as well as your community.

The meeting will be held from Noon to 2:00 pm, on Saturday March 13, at the Serra Adult School (in the multipurpose room), 6028 Ralston Ave. (one block below Arlington Ave.) Richmond. The other co-sponsors include the Contra Costa Fire Protection District, El Cerrito Fire Department, Kensington Fire Protection District, and the Diablo Firesafe Council.

I look forward to seeing you there.

John Gioia
Chair,
Board of Supervisors