



Town of New Castle
450 W. Main Street
PO Box 90
New Castle, CO 81647

Administration Department
Phone: (970) 984-2311
Fax: (970) 984-2716
www.newcastlecolorado.org

Memorandum

To: Mayor & Council
From: David Reynolds
Re: Agenda Item: Fire Resiliency Review
Date: 06/16/2026

Purpose:

The purpose of this agenda item is to allow time for Town staff to provide information regarding fire resiliency related to home construction, exterior building materials, and community wildfire preparedness. As the risk of wildland and urban fires continues to increase throughout Colorado due to continued drought conditions, weather patterns, and expanding development within wildfire-prone areas, it is important to understand how wildfires and ember storms can impact homes, neighborhoods, and entire communities.

Staff will share educational research, videos, and other resources developed by the Insurance Institute for Business & Home Safety (IBHS) and other wildfire resiliency organizations. These materials demonstrate how modern construction methods, fire-resistant building materials, and defensible space practices can significantly improve a structure's ability to withstand wildfire exposure and ember intrusion.

Staff will also provide information regarding recent changes in Colorado law that require local governments to adopt wildfire resiliency standards and building code provisions for development occurring within designated Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI) areas. The 2025 Colorado Wildfire Resiliency Code (CWRC) is a state-mandated minimum code for wildfire-prone areas that requires ignition-resistant construction and defensible space standards. Municipalities with mapped Wildland-Urban Interface areas are required by state law to adopt a code meeting or exceeding the state's minimum standards. While the statute does not currently establish specific fines or financial penalties for non-adoption, failure to adopt could place a municipality out of compliance with state law and expose it to legal or legislative remedies.

These state requirements reflect a growing recognition that communities must proactively address wildfire risk through land use planning, building design, and construction practices.

As homeowners, developers, insurance providers, and local governments increasingly focus on reducing wildfire risk, there is growing demand for homes and neighborhoods that are built to modern

resiliency standards. Research indicates that wildfire-resistant construction practices can help reduce property losses, improve community survivability during wildfire events, and may positively influence insurance availability, ratings, and premiums over time.

Wildfire-resilient building codes such as the WUI and CWRC fit within the broader framework of modern building regulation. Just as building codes in earthquake-prone regions incorporate seismic standards and coastal communities adopt hurricane-resistant construction requirements, wildfire-prone communities are increasingly utilizing WUI and related code provisions to address the unique hazards associated with wildfire exposure.

The intent of this agenda item is informational and intended to provide Town Council with a better understanding of wildfire resiliency, evolving state requirements, and the potential benefits associated with adopting and implementing modern wildfire-resistant construction standards.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lvbNOPSyys>

<https://abc11.com/post/fire-proof-house-couples-home-resilient-features-survives-pacific-palisades-heres-what-homeowners-installed/15813629/#>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ev0eyjkUSJU>

<https://headwaterseconomics.org/natural-hazards/redefining-the-urban-wildfire-problem-in-the-west/>

<https://www.usfa.fema.gov/downloads/pdf/publications/wui-issues-resolutions-report.pdf>