



NEWS RELEASE

Placitas Community Briefing on Wildfire Scenarios Scheduled for May 12, 2026

An early spring heatwave followed by weeks of windy and dry weather have Placitas residents concerned about increased risk of wildfire in their community. The recently posted 2025 Sandoval County Community Wildfire Protection Plan, which takes into consideration a variety of risk factors in communities throughout the county, assesses the wildfire danger level in Placitas as “high” under normal circumstances, a situation exacerbated by heat, wind and lack of humidity.

With these circumstances in mind, the Placitas Resilience & Emergency Preparedness Alliance (PREP) will be observing National Wildfire Awareness Month by offering area residents a May community briefing titled, “Wildfire Spread Probability: Computer Simulations of Wildfire Behavior in Placitas.”

The free event takes place at 7 p.m. Tuesday, May 12, 2026, at Las Placitas Presbyterian Church, 7 Paseo de San Antonio, in Placitas.

Ken Born, district ranger of the Sandia Ranger District, Cibola National Forest, will lead the presentation.

Born said he and his USFS colleagues “will present wildfire spread probability simulations using FSPro, a fire behavior modeling tool used by the agency.” He stressed that these simulations are probability models, not predictions. “The simulations,” he continued, “draw on historical weather patterns, local fuel conditions, and terrain to help forest managers better understand potential fire behavior.” He hopes that the presentation will help Placitas residents better understand how the U.S. Forest Service uses science-based tools as they make land and fire management decisions.

According to PREP president Allen Saville, the event will also offer attendees the opportunity to ask questions and to learn how to be better prepared for wildfire and where to find additional helpful information.

For residents who prefer to attend the event “virtually,” a Zoom option will be available. Details will be posted on the PREP website at <https://PrepAlliance.org>

. The presentation will also be recorded for KUPR-FM, Placitas’s low-power radio station, to be made available via their website (<https://KUPR.org>) at a later date.

During PREP’s first year of existence, the all-volunteer organization has offered community briefings about home hardening, emergency evacuation and homeowner insurance issues. PREP is planning additional briefings in 2026:

- “Sheltering in Place” is the topic of a briefing slated for June.
- In September, “National Preparedness Month,” PREP will host a public meeting, intended to be an annual event, to promote public awareness of PREP’s programs and resources and to gather input from Placitas residents about their emergency preparedness needs.
- In October, “Fire Prevention Month,” PREP plans to team up with local emergency responders to raise public awareness about fire danger in and around the home and to give residents hands-on practice with fire extinguishers.

For more about PREP, including the organization’s goals and priorities, links to online resources, and archived audio recordings of past PREP briefings, go to <https://PREPalliance.org>.

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