

# Preparedness is focus of recovery workshops

## Neighborhood, home programs will be explained

*The Chronicle*

OKANOGAN — “Map Your Neighborhood” and Firewise workshops are planned during the coming months.

The Omak-Okanogan Long-Term Recovery Organization, Okanogan County Office of Emergency Management and the Okanogan Conservation District are joining to provide the workshops.

The first session will be at 5:30 p.m. Feb. 4 in the Okanogan County Sheriff’s Office conference room in the Grainger Administration Building, 123 N. Fifth Ave.

The event begins with dinner; attendance is limited to 27, so advance registration is recommended.

Map Your Neighborhood is part of a continued effort by the recovery organization to increase community collaboration in the event of a

disaster.

“Skills learned during the MYN workshop will teach participants how to be self-sufficient during the first 72 hours after a disaster,” said recovery group spokeswoman Denise Varner.

Kirsten Cook, Firewise program coordinator for the conservation district, said both city and rural property owners can make their homes and neighborhoods safer from wildfire.

“Homeowners who take proactive steps to reduce the likelihood of their home igniting during a fire have a far greater chance of having their homes survive,” she said.

Map Your Neighborhood is designed to improve disaster readiness at the neighborhood level and teaches neighbors to rely on each other during the hours or days before emergency personnel arrive. During a disaster, the neighbors can provide the most immediate source of help.

Traditional 911 responders - police, fire, medical and utility - can become quickly

overwhelmed by demand. Knowing what to do in the first hour of a disaster response may save a life, reduce the severity of injuries and reduce the amount of damage sustained, the groups said.

Workshop registration and more information are available from Glenda Beauregard, 509-422-7206 or [em@co.okanogan.wa.us](mailto:em@co.okanogan.wa.us).

Map Your Neighborhood was developed by LuAn Johnson, first in Sunnyvale, Calif., and then in Seattle. The program was implemented statewide by the state Emergency Management Division in 2006.

The Omak-Okanogan Long-Term Recovery Organization was created in the fall of 2015 after the Okanogan Complex and other wildfires.

Its mission is to provide coordination and recovery services to area residents who may be adversely impacted by disasters in the county, and to provide preparedness training to ensure communities will be better prepared for future disasters.