

Happy Fire Safe New Year!

Kensington Fire Safe Soundbite #2-2021

Thanks to lots of neighbor support, 2020 was a good year for fire safety in Kensington: at least no fires since the October, 2019 Fairmount Canyon one!

First, under Beverly Barrett's able direction and a team of conscientious volunteers, seven grant-funded, fire-fuel-filled (say that twice) dumpsters left our canyons a lot less dense this past October. Then, after many years of tireless work, Bev passed the FSC virtual fire hose to us, Amy Dyson and Judy Harrington. Here's what we've been up to:

- **Getting our feet on the ground:**

- Bev connected us to the FSC of SD County zooms to learn about other FSCs's projects and fundraising and we won't miss future ones – way too valuable!
- We also zoomed with FSC of SDC leadership to clarify how to stay an official FSC, like developing a "CWPP" – Community Wildfire Prevention Plan. It's on our 2021 to do list.
- We've contacted the San Diego Fire Rescue Department regarding zooming with our local Fire Station to learn more about how we can support them – date TBD.
- Meanwhile, we delivered a basket full of goodies donated by area residents and two boxes of fresh produce from Staley's. Firefighters were much appreciative and we really appreciated all the donations!

- **Non-Profit Push**

- Based on these learnings and additional research, we decided to incorporate and seek non-profit tax status. This will enhance our ability to secure additional grants and manage our finances.
- We formed a starting board of directors and re-named the organization "Kensington Fire Safe" (KFS) as one council incorporating the former five.

- o Our filed Articles of Incorporation were approved December 5. We've also set up an accounting system to keep track of all those grants we hope to secure.
- o We've written bylaws and a conflict of Interest policy, and our next step is applying for a non-profit Employer Identification Number.
- **Communications...**
 - o Using our newly designed logo, we established our own website and social media presence: <https://www.kensingtonfiresafe.org/> and <https://www.facebook.com/kensingtonfiresafe>.
 - o We published the first of these "Safety Soundbites" to keep you informed of our efforts and get community feedback.
 - o Our resident surveys, announced through Nextdoor, were completed by 12 residents and provided some great ideas, as well as potential volunteers.
- **Projects:** the tricky part...what to actually DO to increase safety!
 - o #1 is continuing the **October Dumpathon!** Survey says: THIS IS IMPORTANT! Some suggested more dumpsters and/or twice a year – good possibilities if we can find ways to raise the funds.
 - o Also suggested: **clearing the canyons of non-native palms** and other fire-prone trees. Using helicopters, SD Canyonlands and the San Diego River Conservancy have done this in two urban canyons; very expensive. They hope to find funding for efforts in other canyons and Board member Ken Burkhart is staying in touch with them on our behalf.
 - o **Searchable FAQ:** One resident suggested developing a searchable list of well-thought-out, frequently-asked-questions and equally well-thought-out answers. We'll see if one already exists, and if not - any volunteers to help do this?

There are other good suggestions, but we're hoping to get a few more responses, and then we'll do a full report. **Please fill one out if you haven't already:** <https://forms.gle/yNVVnuPRTpdHkDeN7>. Meanwhile...thanks for everyone's help so far! If we keep it up, hopefully we can all look forward to a fire safe 2021!