For Immediate Release

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San Jose Water Expands Wildfire Resiliency with New Grant to Santa Clara County FireSafe Council

The grant will support the Aldercroft Heights Firewise Community Wildfire Resilience Program, a CAL FIRE designated very high fire severity zone neighborhood to reduce wildfire risk.

November 1, 2024, Saratoga, CA—The Santa Clara County FireSafe Council (SCCFSC) announced today it has been awarded a new grant from San Jose Water to spearhead the Aldercroft Heights Firewise Community Wildfire Resilience Program. The funding will support continued technical assistance as well as two specific projects aimed at increasing wildfire resiliency and community safety. These are the Community Outreach Roadside Banner and Signage Campaign and the Aldercroft Heights Community Roadside Vegetation Clearance Project.

The goal of the Aldercroft Heights Signage Community Grant is twofold. It includes installing improved roadway signage throughout the neighborhood to assist emergency vehicles, evacuees, and large trucks to effectively navigate neighborhood roadways, and creating a reusable banner series to educate the community regarding wildfire resilience.

The main goals of the Aldercroft Heights Community Roadside Vegetation Clearance Project are to secure the safety of the primary egress/ingress routes within the community by providing roadside vegetation treatment. Treatment areas will be along each of the 11 roads within Aldercroft Heights, excluding Aldercroft Heights Road. The Santa Clara County FireSafe Council will serve as Project Manager. The treatment area will extend up to 15 feet on either side of the road edges along all 11 roads in Aldercroft Heights, covering a total of approximately 7 acres. Some roadside edges allow only several inches of management, while others allow for several feet. The approximate timeline includes community outreach starting in January 2025, with project completion by the end of June 2025.

San Jose Water's Manager of Environmental Planning, Jared Lewis noted, "Mitigating the risk of wildfire in communities adjacent to San Jose Water land is a key component of our overall wildfire mitigation and system resilience strategy. Through partnerships with communities with shared boundaries, we address landscape-level risks and ultimately, address those that cross land ownership boundaries."

According to Seth Schalet, CEO of Santa Clara County FireSafe Council, "This new funding is an expansion of our partnership with San Jose Water and the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) communities, which are located in service areas that are challenged with ingress/egress considerations in CAL FIRE-designated High and Very High Fire Severity Zones. Through a combination of technology investments, hazardous fuel reduction projects and community engagement, we share San Jose Water's commitment to wildfire resiliency. Amanda Brenner Canon, Program Director with the Santa Clara County FireSafe Council, will oversee these projects."

About San Jose Water:

Founded in 1866, San Jose Water is a regulated private utility and is one of the largest and most technically sophisticated urban water systems in the United States. The company serves over one million people in the greater San Jose metropolitan area. San Jose Water is owned by SJW Group, a publicly traded company listed on the New York Stock Exchange under the symbol SJW. SJW Group also owns: Connecticut Water Company in Connecticut; Maine Water Company in Maine; and Texas Water Company in Texas. To learn more about San Jose Water, visit: sjwater.com.

About Santa Clara County FireSafe Council:

As a 501 (c)3 nonprofit with a 20-year history, Santa Clara County FireSafe Council's core mission is to mobilize the people of Santa Clara County to protect their homes, communities, and environment from wildfires. As a trusted partner across the government, fire service, corporate and WUI residential communities, SCCFSC has led some of the most complex hazardous fuel reduction projects in the region. With a board and advisory council that has a deep expertise across the wildfire ecosystem including wildfire and environmental research, academia, emergency management, regional planning, technology products and wildland firefighting leadership, Santa Clara County FireSafe Council is uniquely positioned to lead cross-sector collaborations, government-private partnerships in Silicon Valley, Santa Clara County and beyond. For more information, visit www.sccfiresafe.org

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