For Immediate Release

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Santa Clara County FireSafe Council Awarded $25,000 For Wildfire Home Ignition Zone (HIZ) Inspections In Underserved Communities Throughout Santa Clara County.

Innovative corporate partnership aims to provide bilingual wildfire education and risk reduction in CAL FIRE designated high, and very high severity zone neighborhoods.

December 16, 2024, Saratoga, CA—The Santa Clara County FireSafe Council (SCCFSC) announced today it has been awarded a new $25,000 pilot program grant to conduct Home Ignition Zone (HIZ) inspections in areas throughout Santa Clara County that have a combined income-based need coupled in areas of CAL FIRE designated high and Very High Fire Severity Zones. Home Ignition Zone Inspection (HIZ) assessments are confidential home assessments to learn best practices for home hardening and defensible space. Certified Santa Clara County FireSafe Council staff will accompany the resident on a 60-90 minute inspection of their property, educating residents regarding the specific actions they can take to make their properties more resilient to wildfire. We will review defensible space, home hardening principles, and make specific recommendations for the property to mitigate its wildfire risk. Participants will receive a written copy of our recommendations. Properties for inspection will be determined using the California Climate Investments Priority Populations 2024 low-income dataset segmentation.

CAL FIRE's fire scientists and wildfire mitigation experts developed the Fire Hazard Severity Zone Map using a science-based and field-tested model that assigns a hazard score based on the factors that influence fire likelihood and fire behavior. Many factors are considered, such as fire history, existing and potential fuel (natural vegetation), predicted flame length, blowing embers, terrain, and typical fire weather for an area. These zones fall into the following classifications – moderate, high, and very high. Overall the map shows increased fire hazard, reflecting California's increase in wildfire occurrence and severity because of many factors, including a changing climate.

According to Seth Schalet, CEO of Santa Clara County FireSafe Council “Wildfires are agnostic, they don’t consider political party affiliation, income, age, whether you are employed or unemployed when they strike. We know lower income communities do not regularly receive all the resources they need commensurate with their wildfire risk. This partnership and grant from Lockheed Martin focuses on serving residents who will benefit from this community outreach. For this, we are most appreciative of Lockheed Martin’s philanthropic engagement.”

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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