



## Ready Set GO! Fire Company

5 Points

10 Points

15 Points

### New Action November 2015

The Ready, Set, Go! (RSG) outreach program is designed to build a better relationship between the local fire department and local residents to provide information and education to residents in the event of a wildfire incident. The Ready, Set, Go! Program is managed by the International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC). Launched nationally in March 2011, this free program helps fire departments to teach individuals who live in high risk wildfire areas and the wildland-urban interface, how to best prepare themselves and their properties against fire threats.

The International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC) has designed the Ready, Set, Go! (RSG) Program to be a wildfire outreach program that local fire departments use to develop and improve the dialogue between the department(s) and the residents they serve. In delivering this program to local residents however, the NJ Forest Fire Service, local governing bodies, local police departments and municipal Office of Emergency Management (OEM) coordinators should all be familiar with the RSG program work being championed by their local fire department. One of the components of RSG is to partner with interested agencies to create a successful program. This is a variable point action and municipalities can earn between 5-15 points based on the number of fire companies in a community that participate in the RSG program. Fire companies can earn 5 points for their municipality by joining the RSG program, completing at least 2 community educational programs from within 12 months of the June certification deadline during the previous year that utilize RSG materials and principles, and also earn certification through the International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC) as a Ready, Set, Go! (RSG) fire department. Municipalities with multiple fire companies can earn an additional 5 points for up to two additional fire companies that earn certification in the RSG program for a maximum of 15 points per municipality.

### Why is it important?

New Jersey is the most densely populated state in the country. Combine this with our vast areas of wildland urban interface, (WUI, the area where the forest meets development) and changing weather patterns, and New Jersey could face an unprecedented wildfire incident not seen in our history. Residents, homes and businesses would be impacted. The Ready, Set, Go! (RSG) program is designed and managed by the International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC) to give local fire departments the outreach tools they need to educate residents about the dangers of wildfire. The RSG tenets help residents be "Ready" with preparedness understanding, be "Set" with situational awareness when fire threatens and "Go" by planning ahead and acting early when a fire starts and residents are given the order to evacuate. The RSG program is designed to give outreach tools to fire departments no matter their size or community dynamics.

Climate change and development patterns in New Jersey's wildland urban interface will create many challenges for residents, businesses and emergency services personnel during a wildfire. History shows New Jersey has always had a wildfire problem. As development increases, the problem is magnified as our population increases. RSG is part of a suite of 4 wildfire related actions: Firewise Communities; Ready, Set, Go!; Community Wildfire Protection Plans and local Wildfire Safety Councils.

The four collective actions included in this "suite" of Emergency Preparedness Actions seek to comprehensively address managing the increasing threat of wildfire in our communities. These four actions, when collectively implemented, are also the key components of a Fire Adapted Community designation, a national wildfire initiative.

### Who should lead and be involved with this action?

Fire Companies/Departments are the primary lead agencies for this action but it is essential to partner with their communities to better educate and inform the residents about the risk of wildfire. Successful RSG programs enlist the support of local municipal officials, the Office of Emergency Management and local police departments in a coordinated effort to educate residents about wildfire risk.

## Timeframe

Utilizing the extensive materials and resources available on the Ready, Set, Go! program website, fire departments can register and successfully plan and execute at least two community education events in a 9 to 12 month period.

## Project costs and resource needs

There is no cost to join Ready, Set, Go! (RSG) or for any of the outreach resources. The RSG program provides implementation guides, briefing documents, effective practices, presentation tools, customizable formats to localize the RSG message for your municipality. The only commitment from the fire department is volunteer or staff time needed for the outreach activities or events. There are also grants available through the International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC) to the local fire department for creating new ways to deliver the RSG message.

For additional information you may contact the Ready, Set, Go! Program directly at: 703.273.0911 or via e-mail at RSG@iafc.org

## What to do, and how to do it (“How to”)

*This section provides guidance and recommendations for implementing this action. Your municipality does not need to follow this guidance exactly, as long as it meets the requirements for earning points for this action.*

1. To get started, each fire department seeking points for their municipality in the Ready, Set, Go! program will need to register with the RSG program. The International Association of Fire Chiefs (IAFC) offers a simple online sign up for departments to join the RSG program at <http://www.wildlandfireRSG.org>. By registering with the program, your fire department will gain access to the free program materials available to “members” only and also be able to report your RSG program activity using their Achievement Management System (AMS) portal. To initially register with the program you will be asked to input Fire Department information and provide two (2) Fire Department contacts.
2. Once signed up, the department may access all outreach information that IAFC has available. Resources include:
  - a. <http://www.wildlandfirersg.org/Explore/Guidance>
  - b. RSG Models of Outreach
  - c. RSG Implementation and Background Guide
  - d. RSG and Firewise, How They Work Together
  - e. Talking Points in presenting to City-Town Decision Makers
  - f. RSG for the Fire Department
3. After reviewing the program materials, the local fire company reaches out to local government leaders that may include the Mayor, emergency squad, community development director, and OEM coordinator to explain the basis for the Ready, Set, Go! program and identify opportunities to promote the program during community outreach and educational events. The RSG program tenets help residents be “Ready” with preparedness understanding, be “Set” with situational awareness when fire threatens and “Go” by acting early when a fire starts. Please note that program materials are available in English and Spanish.
4. To become a RSG fire department, you will need to complete at least 2 outreach events, activities or campaigns that focus on expanding the knowledge of residents and businesses about the program by utilizing the RSG program materials.
5. To earn points with Sustainable Jersey for RSG, two outreach events to the community must be held by the local fire company **from within 12 months of the June certification deadline**. Outreach events may include RSG information presented at annual events like Fire Prevention Week, local Community Days, and fire company open houses or during fire company training programs.
6. After your department has signed up for RSG, they can use their new access code to input and track all information through their IAFC Achievement Management System (AMS) tracking program. To access the system visit <http://www.wildlandfirersg.org/>. For detailed guidance on how to input your events and volunteer/staff hours into the AMS system, please review a simple tutorial [here](#). The purpose of AMS is to record and recognize the departments’ work in presenting RSG to residents. This system records what was done, how many firefighters were involved and the total volunteer hours involved in the outreach activity. AMS reports can be printed from the IAFC web site and will need to be submitted as part of your municipality’s documentation. Problems or questions on the AMS reporting system should be directed to RSG staff at 703.273.0911 or (RSG@iafc.org)(<a href="mailto:YourName@RSG@iafc.org">mailto:YourName@RSG@iafc.org)).

7. We encourage RSG certified fire companies in the municipality to mentor and support other companies' departments that service your municipality to participate in the program.
8. This is a variable point action. Municipalities can earn 5 points for each fire department that earns the RSG certification by completing a minimum of two outreach or presentation activities **from within 12 months of the June certification deadline** and successfully reporting them on the IAFC Achievement Management System. To earn certification for Sustainable Jersey, the Fire Company/Municipality will need to provide a copy of each fire departments' AMS report that shows that their outreach/presentation activity has been approved by the national RSG staff.
9. Five points will be awarded for one RSG fire department, 10 points awarded for two fire departments and 15 points if documentation for three fire departments if documentation indicating they have successfully met the RSG program standards are is uploaded for this action.
10. Prepare a short narrative that describes the 2 RSG outreach or presentation activities completed by each fire department. The narrative should describe the activity, fire department volunteer or department personnel staff hours, type of RSG program resources used and outcomes for the event (i.e. number of attendees or homes visited; materials distributed) by each fire department to include in the narrative text box for the action. To continue to earn 5-15 points for this action, the local fire department(s) will need to maintain their RSG certification by hosting 2 outreach activities or programs **from within 12 months of the June certification deadline**.

### What to submit to earn points for this action

In order to earn 10 points for this action, the following documentation must be submitted as part of the online certification application in order to verify that the action requirements have been met.

This will be a variable point action (5-15) with more points awarded based on the number of RSG fire companies that are recognized within a municipality.

- Municipalities with one RSG Company that completes two outreach events **from within 12 months of the June certification deadline** and earns RSG recognition: 5 points.
- Municipalities with two RSG Fire Departments that each complete two outreach events **from within 12 months of the June certification deadline** and earns RSG recognition: 10 points.
- Municipalities with three RSG Fire Departments that each complete two outreach events **from within 12 months of the June certification deadline** earns RSG recognition: 15 points maximum.

In the text box, please provide a short narrative (300 words Mmaximum) to summarize that describes the 2 RSG outreach or presentation activities completed by each fire department. The narrative should describe the activity, fire department volunteer or department personnel staff hours, type of RSG program resources used and outcomes for the event (i.e. number of attendees or homes visited, materials distributed) by each fire department. to include in the action narrative box. Focus on what was accomplished and the general steps taken to accomplish it.

1. Upload a copy of each fire department's approved Ready, Set, Go! report form from the IAFC Achievement Management System reporting system that indicates your education and outreach activities were accepted. Municipalities can submit documentation from up to 3 fire departments servicing their municipality. Five points will be awarded for each fire department.

All documentation must be **from within 12 months of the June submission deadline**.

### IMPORTANT NOTES:

There is a limit of six uploaded documents per action and individual files must not exceed 20 MB. Excerpts of relevant information from large documents are recommended.

All action documentation is available for public viewing after an action is approved. Action submissions should not include any information or documents that are not intended to be viewed by the public.

### Spotlight: What NJ municipalities are doing

**Barnegat Township, Ocean County, NJ** has been impacted by many wild fires throughout history. In 2007, the Warren Grove bombing range fire forced the evacuation of large areas in the township. Three homes were lost and most residents in the town were impacted either by evacuation, smoke or falling embers. This wildfire became the catalyst that brought many different partners together to develop a plan to address wildfire safety.

In Barnegat many different partnerships have been formed as a result of the Warren Grove Fire. The town now has provided 20 RSG presentations to residents per year; three communities are listed as Firewise; multiple mitigation projects have been done, and Barnegat Township is the first to have completed a Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) in NJ. (2010). In 2014, Barnegat became one of 18 pilot communities in the country in the Fire Adapted Communities (FAC) program. The FAC program will combine what has been learned in these communities (Firewise, RSG, CWPP) and utilize this information to promote wildfire preparedness in Barnegat and create wildfire resiliency with the residents of Barnegat.

## **Resources**

**The Ready, Set, Go! (RSG) Program** is managed by the [International Association of Fire Chiefs \(IAFC\)](#). Launched nationally in March 2011, the program helps fire departments to teach individuals who live in high risk wildfire areas – and the wildland-urban interface – how to best prepare themselves and their properties against fire threats.

### **International Association of Fire Chiefs, Ready, Set, Go! Program**

Program website: [www.wildlandfireRSG.org](http://www.wildlandfireRSG.org)

Program Guidance: [www.wildlandfirersg.org/Explore/Guidance](http://www.wildlandfirersg.org/Explore/Guidance)

Program registration page: [www.wildlandfirersg.org/Join](http://www.wildlandfirersg.org/Join)

Spanish Language Toolkit: [http://www.wildlandfirersg.org/Explore/Spanish- Language-Toolkit](http://www.wildlandfirersg.org/Explore/Spanish-Language-Toolkit)

### **New Jersey State Forestry Services, Forest Fire Service**

[www.state.nj.us/dep/parksandforests/fire/contactus.html](http://www.state.nj.us/dep/parksandforests/fire/contactus.html)