

**Mediterra Community Development District**  
**OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT MANAGER**  
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January 31, 2025

Dear Members of the Mediterra Community Development District (CDD),

Considering the recent unprecedented wildfires in California, we want to update you on actions taken by the CDD Board to mitigate wildfires in the preserves. We recently completed a wildfire fuel load reduction along right of ways in Mediterra, which provide the only ingress and egress to certain neighborhoods in the community. In addition, a contractor has been engaged to reduce fuel load within sixty feet of residences in all areas of the preserve. This project will be performed during late Winter and Spring.

The history and details of fuel load reduction in the preserves follows:

In 2017, the CDD Board of Supervisors recognized the need to understand what could be done about reducing the effects of preserve wildfires. Johnson Engineering was retained and produced several reports and recommendations. In 2018, the CDD implemented a Preserve Management Plan to reduce the fuel load in preserve areas within sixty feet of Mediterra's homes. Following a three-year cycle, we again cleaned up these preserve areas in 2022. Cleanup involves the removal of fallen dead trees, palm fronds, saw palmetto fronds (the most flammable plant material in the preserves), vines, and vegetative debris. This work is very labor intensive as it includes removal of "duff," partially decayed plant matter including pine needles, from the ground. No mechanical equipment can be used in the preserves. All debris must be hand carried using large buckets. This is required by the South Florida Water Management District to protect the native vegetation not subject to removal.

In December 2024, we added cleanup of portions of the preserve along roadways such as Castellano Way, which provide the only entry in and out of the northeastern part of Mediterra West. This work addressed the risk that a fire along this type of roadway might block residents from leaving the community and emergency equipment from entering. The work commenced in late December and was completed by mid-January. Only areas owned by the CDD were cleaned totaling 13.61 acres. The work was performed by EarthBalance at a cost of \$206,000.

In early January, the project to clear behind the structures was put out for bid as required by the CDD statute. Ten companies received the invitation. In the past, three bids had been received. This year, surprisingly, there was only one bidder. At the January meeting of the Board of Supervisors, the contract was awarded to EarthBalance for the next cleaning cycle encompassing 26.13 acres at a cost of \$785,000. The work will be performed over the next several months, so you may see EarthBalance employees in the preserves.

Given the substantially increased cost of this project, the CDD will be researching before the next three-year cycle, new technologies for early wildfire detection.

**As a reminder to all residents: the removal of vegetation in the preserve is only allowed by the CDD and its contracted service providers as permitted by the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD). No dumping of vegetative matter or other debris is allowed in the preserves and is strictly enforced by the SFWMD.**

If you have questions, please feel free to contact any Board member or District staff at (877) 276-0889.

Kenneth Tarr, Chair  
Victoria Gartland, Vice Chair  
John Henry, Supervisor  
Mary Wheeler, Supervisor  
Stephen Light, Supervisor