



## Andover Fuels Mitigation Minnesota 2006

The city of Andover has a significant number of 25- to 50-year-old red pine plantations. Most of these highly flammable stands have never been thinned and are now being developed for housing, as the Twin Cities urban area expands. These areas are also suffering from other problems such as bark beetles, which attack overly dense forests. A fire struck in one of these stands in 1999. Although the fire claimed no homes, sparks burned a shed in a neighborhood almost a quarter of a mile away.

The community-based Andover Fuel Mitigation Activity is part of the Minnesota Firewise Project administered by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources. The project integrates planning, assessment, and education, in addition to hazardous fuels mitigation and risk reduction. Funded in part by grants from the USDA Forest Service under the National Fire Plan, the project's goal is to help Andover reduce its wildfire risk.

Beginning in January 2002, the Minnesota Firewise Team began working with the local fire chief, city forester, and engineer, to complete a wildfire risk analysis of the neighborhoods in the community. Six high risk neighborhoods were identified. Working in the first neighborhood, the community used a \$13,600 National Fire Plan grant to hire a private logger to thin a 34-acre pine stand, lower the risk of a serious fire by removing dead trees and underbrush, and improve forest health. The grant funded fuels treatment on all 17 of the properties in the pine stand, including thinning of merchantable trees. The slash and residuals were chipped by a Sentence-to-Service crew. The chips were used by residents for landscaping or sent to the St. Paul Energy facility for fuel.

Since 2002, Andover has used additional National Fire Plan funding to complete hazard mitigation projects in three neighborhoods and is currently working in a fourth neighborhood.

The Minnesota Firewise Project is granting National Fire Plan funds to other communities for on-the-ground activities such as homeowner education, home site assessment, and improving access. Projects involve community groups including fire and emergency services, local schools, city staff such as foresters and planners, volunteers, and local interest groups.



*A wildland fire burns in a red pine plantation. Photo courtesy Metropolitan Mosquito Control District*

For more information contact:

Billy Terry, Assistant Director  
USDA Forest Service, Northeastern Area State and Private Forestry  
Newtown Square, PA 19073  
(610) 557-4145 (-4154 Fax)  
[bterry@fs.fed.us](mailto:bterry@fs.fed.us)