

The

# Mt. Lemmon Echoes

A publication of the Mt. Lemmon Homeowners' Association

mtlemmonhoa.org

## Storm's Havoc Worst in Soldier Camp

By Michael Singervalt

The high winds and snowstorm that hit in late February knocked down numerous trees, causing damage to several cabins, most seriously in Greater Soldier Camp.

Lower Soldier Camp was hardest hit, with significant damage to four cabins. Power lines were knocked down by falling trees, which also blocked roads and driveways.

*\* How Trico restored power, Page 2.*

*\* Winter 'was a doozy,' Page 3.*

Upper Soldier Camp suffered less damage, with one cabin hit by a tree.

To allow tree removal and damage repair, the Forest Service partly exempted use of power tools, normally banned in Mexican spotted owl breeding season.

No estimates were available on damage and repair costs from the storm. There were no reports of injuries to residents.

Top winds were reported in excess of 70 mph.



**Damaged cabin in Greater Soldier Camp**  
(Photo by Greg Raglow).

## Some Water Rates Will Go Up Soon

Conservation, not revenue, is the intention, district official says

The Mt. Lemmon Water District will reveal a proposed new rate structure on April 15.

Water District Board Chair Doug Mance said the new structure will have four tiers; there now are three. Customers whose usage goes into the top two tiers will pay more per gallon, Mance said.

Customers who continue to use low amounts should not see increases, he said.

"We are not in this for

revenue enhancement," Mance said in an email. "We are doing this for the greater good: mountain water conservation."

Water consumption in the district spiked 19.67% in May, June and July last year. Mance attributed it largely to cabin renters who have not been educated about the mountain's supply limits.

All of the water district's supply comes from springs, pumped to and stored in tanks

that can hold 2 million gallons.

Usage in those three months last year was 1.35 million gallons, two-thirds of capacity. In the same period in 2021, usage was 1.13 million gallons.

The Water Board will meet April 15 at 2 p.m. at the Mt. Lemmon Community Center to discuss its tiered rate proposal and get public comment.

*A fire hydrant yanked from the ground in February drained 500,000 gallons. Story, Page 5.*



# Emerging from the Dark

## *Trico Crews Worked Overtime after 'Unique' Storm*

A severe winter snowstorm with high winds knocked out power to 532 customers on Mt. Lemmon in the last week of February.

Trico Electric Cooperative had crews working even before the storm subsided, restoring some power within a day and all power by March 6.

Electricity returned first to Radio Ridge, then Summerhaven south to Palisades. Willow Canyon and Rose Canyon were the last restored.

Eighteen customers remained without power into late March because of equipment damage that customers must get repaired, a Trico spokesperson said in an email.

Once the customers have their repairs made, electrical service can be restored, the spokesperson said.

"We appreciate our members' patience as we did our best to work through difficult conditions," Trico CEO and General Manager Brian Heithoff said in an



***Trico line workers atop a pole making repairs after the Feb. 22 storm (Photo by Roni Ziemba).***

emailed statement.

Several mountain residents posted on Facebook and Nextdoor their appreciation for the Trico crews' work to

restore power.

This was among the worst winter storms to hit the mountain in terms of its effects on power service, said the Trico

spokesperson's email.

"We have had some snow- and wind-related outages on Mt. Lemmon, but they were shorter in duration and caused less damage," the spokesperson said.

"The record winds we saw in this storm combined with heavy snow made this storm unique."

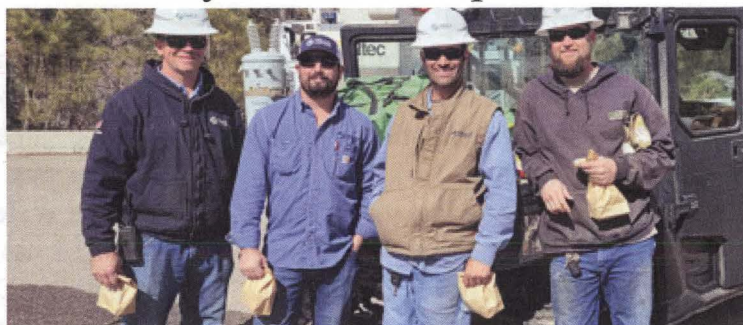
Repair work included replacing nine power poles and 18 spans of wire and making 15 cross-arm changeouts.

Fifty crew members from Trico, Sulphur Springs Valley Electric Cooperative, Powerline Contractors West and American Power did the repair work, Trico said.

A helicopter was used to bring poles to remote areas to help workers who had to carry equipment and tools in by hand over treacherous terrain and in snow drifts.

Damage and repair costs were still being calculated in late March, including for materials, contracting with the helicopter company and work with other Trico contractors.

### **Mountain Residents Offer Thanks, Yummy Treats to Repair Crews**



***Sally Crum, Linda Currin, Sandy Krauss, Leigh Anne Thrasher and Luann Waldron baked goodies for this Trico repair crew (Photo by Sally Crum). Snow plow crews also get thanks, Page 9.***



# It's Time to Change Your Smoke Detector Batteries

By Dan Leade

Mt. Lemmon Fire District

Living in Arizona can present some difficulties. Excessive heat, persistent drought, water rationing, heavy monsoons, snow and ice and wildfires are just some of the natural challenges we face. We also must consider human factors like heavy traffic, dangerous drivers, parking, trash accumulation and careless discarding of flammable items. All of these challenges affect all of our residents. One reprieve we receive for our trouble is the nonexistence of daylight savings time. Not having to reset clocks or oversleeping seems like one thing Arizona got correct.

That is if you are looking at it through the lens of a citizen. Firefighters are presented with another concern due to the lack of Daylight Savings Time.

Nationwide, firefighters have used this time as a public service reminder to change smoke detector and carbon monoxide detector batteries. Granted, many new detectors come equipped with 10-year batteries installed, but this is certainly not true regarding older models.

Daylight Savings Time occurred on March 12, and the Mt. Lemmon Fire District wants to take this time to encourage you to change your



batteries if you have older model detectors. It is even recommended to change the battery backups in hard-wired models at least once annually, according to the United States Fire Administration.

It is also recommended that any smoke detector be completely replaced after 10 years of service.

An interesting development involving Daylight Savings Time is that for the second year in a row, Congress is considering making it permanent via the Sunshine Protection Act of 2023.

If this legislation passes, then this will have been the last time Americans had to adjust their clocks.

While the benefits supporting this move are vast, it will be interesting to see how public safety entities devise a new campaign to remind people when to change their smoke detector batteries.

# Winter of 2023 'Was a Doozy'

By Michael Stanley

This winter was a doozy. Snow, ice, high winds, trees downed, heavy visitor traffic, road closures and power outages were regular occurrences.

Yet, living full-time in this paradise is the best the world has to offer.

The 100 inches of snow is not a record, and our watershed will benefit the forest through the year. Snow and ice created road access problems, and plowing became a top priority. Both plagued the community, making slips and falls common. Icicles hung from roofs, and care was needed to navigate around buildings without getting hit, as was keeping clear from rooftops shedding their snow loads.

Traffic was bumper-to-bumper on most weekends. The Sheriff's Department required a local driver's license to get past Ski Run Road into the village. Some visitors had no idea how to drive on snow, and turning around became quite hilarious. Sabino Parkway was a single lane; people parked in every space, creating a one-way traffic situation.

For Carol and me, it was wise to stay at home while visitors enjoyed the snow. Watching children frolic in the snow filled our hearts with the joy of remembering when we might have been in their boots. Cold and wet, looking for a warm place or a sip of hot chocolate to help ward off numb fingers and toes, seemed very likely the next step.

The village businesses were busy, with parking lots filled early in the day. Ski Valley opened, and when its parking was full, motorists were told to turn around.

All the pullouts and wide spots along the highway were packed with visitors.

**Continued on Page 8**



## April Calendar

- 8 - Annual trash cleanup. Meet at MLCC, bags, gloves provided, 9 am.
- 15 - Mountain meetings:
  - ML Water District Board, Zimmerman School, 8:30 am.
  - MLHOA Board, MLCC and via Zoom, 10 am.
  - ML Woman's Club, MLCC, 1 pm.
  - ML Water District Board public meeting on rate increases, ML Community Center, 2 pm.
- 17 - ML Fire Board, at Fire Station and live-streamed at [mlfdaz.org](http://mlfdaz.org), 4 pm.
- 25 - MLHOA annual dinner, Doubletree Reid Park Hotel, 5:30 pm. Registration form, Page 11.

## Correction

Editing errors led to a name being incorrect in February and March issues of *The Echoes*. The correct name is Leigh Anne Thrasher.

## Stay Up to Date on Mountain Information

By Matthew Grossman

Here are online resources to keep Mt. Lemmon residents informed between editions of *The Echoes*:

1. A Google Group has been set up to provide email updates. To join, send an e-mail to [mtlemmon-hoa+subscribe@googlegroups.com](mailto:mtlemmon-hoa+subscribe@googlegroups.com).
2. The Mount Lemmon Homeowners' Association maintains a website at <https://mtlemmonhoa.org/>. Get informed and contribute to the community.
3. Sign up at [Nextdoor.com](http://Nextdoor.com), using your cabin street address. If you use Nextdoor for your valley neighborhood, sign up for Mt. Lemmon under a new email address, because only one neighborhood is permitted per email address. This offers general information and important communication, especially with wildfires and road closures.
4. [MLFDaz.org](http://MLFDaz.org) is the web address for our Fire Department. On the home page, under the Resources tab, is Firewise. This takes you to important information and forms, including an Action List for Property Owners, a Community Communications form, cheatgrass and bark beetle identification, and more information to help keep your cabin and community safe.

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## Damage to Hydrant Caused 500,000 Gallon Water Loss

A fire hydrant that was yanked from the ground the weekend of Feb. 25-26 on Turkey Run Road led to the loss of more than 500,000 gallons of water, a Mt. Lemmon Water District official said.

The damage emptied the Miners Ridge storage tank and left Summerhaven and surrounding areas without water until mid-day on Feb. 27, Water Board Chair Doug Mance said.

He said in an email that the hydrant damage was a mystery because it "was not a lateral impact (as if hit by a vehicle). The hydrant was pulled up" and left under a snowbank.

The Water District's monitoring system was not working because electricity was out from the big winter storm, Mance said.

Damage was estimated at \$10,000 to \$12,000, and the Miners Ridge tank was not expected to be full again until the end of March, he said, adding it was good the incident did not occur in May, when water demand on the mountain is much higher.

Managing to conjure a spirit of fun about the incident, Mance called it "an addition to the many legends and stories on our mountain."

"To date, no one or entity has stepped up to claim responsibility for this event, and our investigations and accusations have been fruitless," Mance wrote in his email. "For now, I invite you to create your own short story involving -- wait for it -- the Turkey Run Yeti."



## County Supplies Trash Bags to Help Keep Mountain Clean



***Pima County is distributing trash bags such as these at the Mt. Lemmon Community Center and soon at the Palisades Visitor Center and by Sheriff's Auxiliary volunteers to motorists at the base of the mountain. District 4 Supervisor Steve Christy's office is providing the bags.***

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# Firewise Website Provides Info You Need

**By Laura Mance  
Firewise Volunteer**

As the newest Mt. Lemmon Firewise volunteers, Henry Werchan and I introduce our newest tool: the Mt. Lemmon Firewise community website.

It's where you go when you click the Firewise info button on mlfd.org, the Mt. Lemmon Fire District's home page.

The site has great information on protecting your property and the community, steps to fire-wise your cabin and other property, link to a video, information on service providers, what to do with green waste and tips to manage bark

beetles and cheatgrass.

Even experienced mountain residents may find something new. For the sake of your property and the community, take time to open the website and make yourself fire wiser.

Firewise is only as effective as the number of people who take part. Our goal is to make it easy for everyone. Simply scan the QR code on Page 12 to be taken to the site. You will find more information than at a Mt. Lemmon potluck.

If you rent out your cabin or open it for guests when you are not there, look for the section that helps you guide your

tenants and guests to be fire wise, too.

Look for the Property Owner Firewise Report, complete it and send in as directed. The report documents your involvement so we can qualify as a Firewise community, including grant money for resources.

It's not enough for a few of us to be fire wise. Protecting our mountain requires a collective effort.

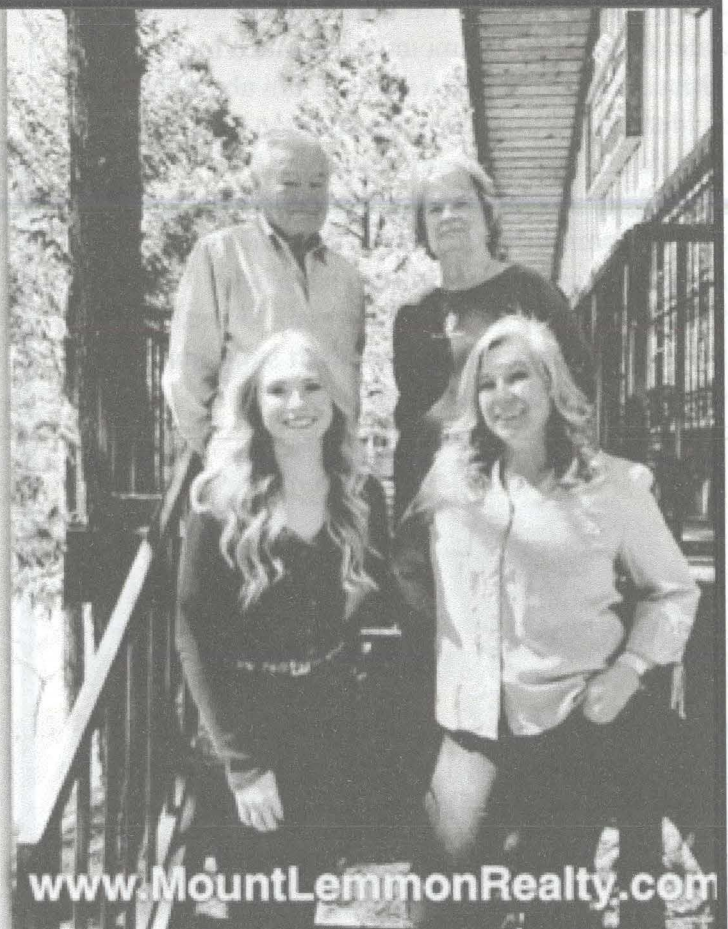
Let us commit to being fire wise together.

*More Firewise information: Neighborhood captains' contact list, Page 10. QR code, Page 12*

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## Watching for Flycatchers: When Will They Be Back?

By Charles van Riper III, Ph.D.

The cordilleran flycatchers that migrate to Mt. Lemmon for breeding are preparing for their long journey from Mexico.

Many birds are lost on the arduous migration that takes 23 days to almost a month from Guadalajara to Summerhaven. From sightings of when color-banded individuals were first observed, we have some information on known arrival times.

Flycatchers start arriving the last week in April. These early birds are almost always older males, and many have bred on our mountain in previous summers. They start defining their territories and future nesting location soon after arrival. Females start arriving the first week in May, with most back by mid-May. Younger females arrive later, some not back until the end of May.

Almost all cordilleran flycatchers return by early June, when breeding starts.

Of the birds that bred on Mt. Lemmon in 2022, we can expect about 15% back this year. The lowest return rate was in 2020, a drought year, at 10.9%. In 2021 and 2022,

### Number of cordilleran flycatchers arriving weekly on Mt. Lemmon

April Week 4	2 males, 0 females
May Week 1	23 males, 18 females
May Week 2	14 males, 20 females
May Week 3	3 males, 14 females
May Week 4	0 males, 5 females

the rate was 17% each year.

We know that older breeding cordilleran flycatchers are lost at a higher rate than younger birds, so we expect fewer of the 3-5 year olds to return. Some of the oldest breeding birds - 4 years - that we tracked on Mt. Lemmon were at homes on Wren Lane and in Willow Canyon. Others were on Turkey Run, at the old Zimmerman School, Palisades and Camp Lawton.

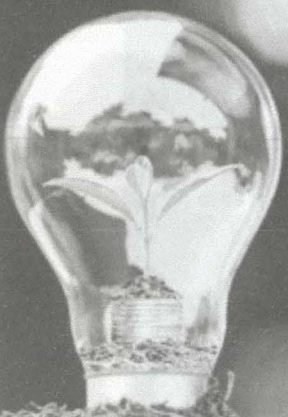
I plan to continue banding birds this summer to better track them. I also will place transmitters on young and adults to determine if they migrate together or separately in the fall.

Residents who want flycatchers banded can contact me at 520 307-1658 or [charlesvanriper3@gmail.com](mailto:charlesvanriper3@gmail.com).



**Cordilleran  
flycatcher**

Dr. van Riper  
is with the  
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Arizona  
School of  
Natural  
Resources  
and the  
Environment.




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## Shhh! Spotted Owls Breeding

Mexican spotted owl breeding season began in March, and the Forest Service instituted noise restrictions so the threatened species isn't frightened away.

Until the end of August, the Forest Service will refrain from using power tools and other equipment that make loud noises.

Owls are sensitive to noise, especially around dusk, and can leave their nests, abandoning eggs and young, something that will further diminish the numbers.

The Forest Service said research has shown that owls can be driven away by sounds up to 315 feet away and as low as 69 decibels, the noise level of a washing machine. Residents are asked to be aware of the noise levels they produce and not to use poison to kill rodents, which are owls' main prey.

Forest Service biologist Neil Dutt said Mt. Lemmon breeding areas have the potential for 40 adult Mexican spotted owls.



## Winter 'Was a Doozy'

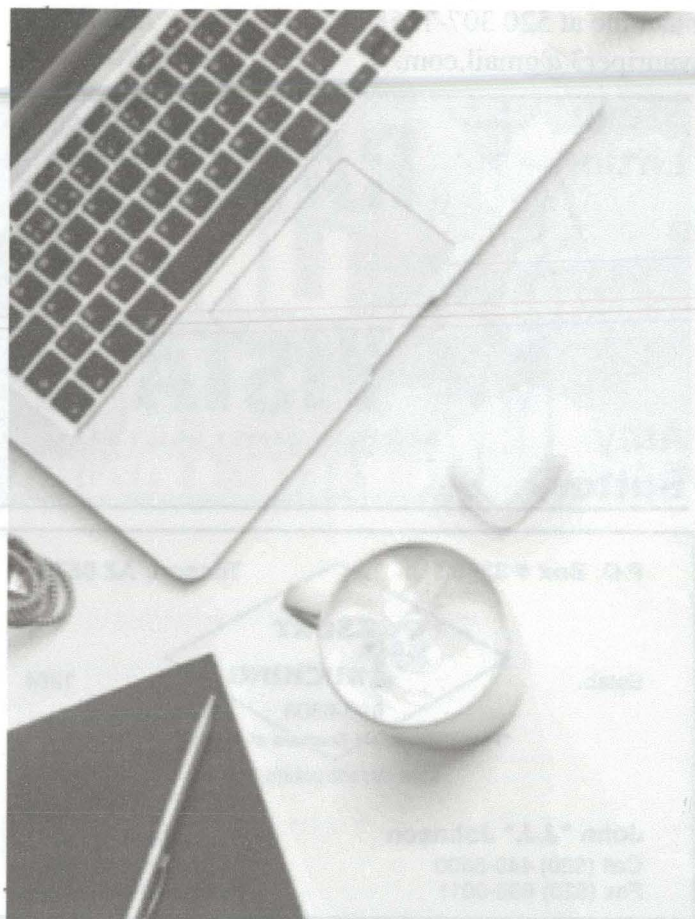
**Continued from Page 3**

During the storms, the power flickered many times and then went off. Summerhaven had outages that lasted from a few hours to a day or more. Soldier Camp and beyond to Palisades and Willow Canyon were left with electricity outages of a week or longer.

Our power was out for 18 hours, then another 36 hours along with the phone service lost in the last storm. We were asked how much snow we received, but at our house it is impossible to measure. The high winds created drifts of 48 inches or more. We were not able to get out of the neighborhood. Prior to the power outages we ran out of propane for about week.

Since we live here full time, we were prepared with more long johns, down comforters, space heaters - if the power was on - and our dog Ellie. So, at times we could have been without propane, electricity, water, access, stuck, trees falling, slipping on ice, buried in a snow drift.

But I still say, this is the very best place in the world to live, and I do mean really live!



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## Snow Plowing Crew Gets Its Just Desserts



**Members of the Pima County crew that kept the mountain's roads plowed in a timely manner were thanked in March with homemade baked goods from Mt. Lemmon residents (Photo by Sally Crum).**

## MLHOA Board Meeting of March 18

**By John Osborne  
Board Secretary**

**Annual meeting:** April 25 at the Doubletree Reid Park. Reservations and payment must be made in advance. Details, Page 11.

**Marshall Gulch parking:** Construction will begin in August, a year ahead of schedule.

**Water District:** A public meeting on increased water rates will be held April 15 at 2 p.m. at the Community Center. Details, Page 1.

**Firewise:** Plan to Firewise your cabin. Firewise captains will be in touch. Details, Pages 6, 10, 12.

**HOA treasurer:** Michael Singervalt volunteered to be MLHOA treasurer, succeeding Anne Skelley-Ross. A vote on the new treasurer will be taken at the annual meeting on April 25.

**Save the date:** Tucson jazzman Jeff Haskell plans a June 10 concert on the mountain.

## Annual Cleanup April 8

The annual trash cleanup for Mt. Lemmon will be April 8, beginning at 9 a.m., sponsored by the Mt. Lemmon Business Economic Association.

Volunteers should meet at the Mt. Lemmon Community Center.

Trash bags and gloves will be provided. Those taking part are advised to dress for cool weather.

## MLHOA Membership Renewal for 2023 Is Due; Use this Form

Renew or start your membership in the Mt. Lemmon Homeowners' Association now.

Your dues pay for a subscription to *The Echoes* and help support your association in its advocacy for the Mt. Lemmon community.

Membership gives cabin owners and leased landholders voting rights on MLHOA issues and association business.

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## Find Your 2023 Firewise Neighborhood Captain's Contact Info Here

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## Reserve Seats for MLHOA Annual Meeting

### When is the annual meeting of the Mt. Lemmon Homeowners' Association?

Tuesday, April 25, 5:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

### Where?

Doubletree Reid Park Hotel, 445 S. Alvernon Way, Tucson.

### Who can attend?

All dues-paid members of the Mt. Lemmon Homeowners' Association and guests.

### What is the cost?

\$55 per person. Use coupon below to make your reservation and payment no later than April 21. No reservations or payments at the door.

### What's on the agenda?

5:30 p.m.-6:30 p.m.: Cocktails, cash bar. 6:30 p.m.-8:30 p.m.: Dinner, speakers, door prizes.

### Who can vote on business that arises?

Dues-paid property owners can vote. Dues-paid renters and friends of the mountain can participate in discussions but not vote.

### What's on the Buffet Menu?

Iceberg lettuce, cotija cheese, chopped bacon, tomato/cucumber, ranch dressing.

Pasta salad.

Chili-spiced pulled pork with ancho chili glaze, warm potato rolls.

Grilled chicken, chipotle BBQ sauce, Sonoran style ranch beans.

Fire-roasted green chili macaroni and cheese.

Yogurt jalapeno corn bread, whipped agave butter.

Fresh seasonal vegetables.

Apple pie.

Coffee or tea.

## Mt. Lemmon Homeowners' Association Annual Dinner

This form and your payment are due by April 21 - \$55 per person

Attendees' names: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Number of guests: \_\_\_\_\_ x \$55 = Amount enclosed: \_\_\_\_\_

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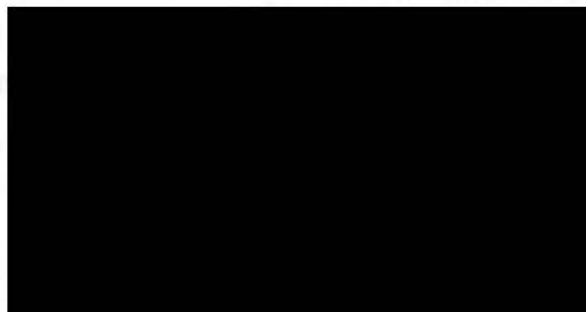
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## **Firewise Connections for Mt. Lemmonites**

Please use the QR code at right to complete the short Connections for Mt. Lemmonites form, giving the Mt. Lemmon Firewise team your phone and email contacts. Use it now and whenever your contact information changes.

By adding your quick contact information to the Mt. Lemmon Firewise database today, you'll make it easier for your Firewise captain to get this spring's new Firewise information to you, and you will enable the Mt. Lemmon Firewise Team to reach you quickly with need-to-know fire and weather conditions, Firewise resources and community events throughout the season.

If you request, the team will forward your quick contact information to the Mt. Lemmon Fire District. Your information will not be shared without your permission.



**Find other important Firewise  
information on Pages 6 and 10.**