

WILDFIRE AMENDMENTS

2023 GENERAL SESSION

STATE OF UTAH

LONG TITLE**General Description:**

This bill addresses wildfire related planning and implementation.

Highlighted Provisions:

This bill:

- defines terms;
- requires plans or explanations regarding wildfires in the wildland urban interface;
- requires reporting regarding the plans;
- authorizes the Division of Forestry, Fire, and State Lands to assist in creating the plans; and
- directs the Division of Forestry, Fire, and State Lands to report on compliance.

Money Appropriated in this Bill:

None

Other Special Clauses:

None

Utah Code Sections Affected:

ENACTS:

65A-8-215, Utah Code Annotated 1953

Be it enacted by the Legislature of the state of Utah:

Section 1. Section **65A-8-215** is enacted to read:

65A-8-215. Wildland urban interface wildfire prevention and preparedness.

(1) As used in this section:

(a) "Cooperative wildfire system" means a system of agreements between the division and local governments under which the state pays the costs of large and extended attack wildland fires in exchange for consideration by a local government, including the local government providing initial attack and implementing prevention, preparedness, and mitigation actions.

(b) "Local firefighting agency" means the entity of a municipality, county, or special district that is responsible for overseeing wildland firefighting for the municipality, county, or special district.

(c) "Wildland urban interface" means the zone where structures and other human development meets, or intermingles with, undeveloped wildland.

(2) The division shall require a local firefighting agency to:

(a) by no later than July 1, 2023, submit a report to the division that includes:

(i) a plan to:

(A) consistent with Subsection 15A-2-103(2), adopt by local ordinance the Utah Wildland Urban Interface Code as a construction code;

(B) map the wildland urban interface within the local firefighting agency's boundary;

(C) enforce the construction code described in Subsection (2)(a)(i)(A), including the appointment of one or more individuals to enforce the construction code; and

(D) conduct wildfire preparedness actions as part of a wildfire prevention and preparedness program applicable to the wildland urban interface; or

(ii) an explanation as to why the local firefighting agency cannot include a plan described in Subsection (2)(a)(i); and

(b) by no later than July 1, 2024, report to the division on the progress in implementing a plan described in Subsection (2)(a)(i) if submitted under Subsection (2)(a)(i).

(3) (a) The division may assist a local firefighting agency in developing a plan under Subsection (2)(a) including the local firefighting agency's mapping of the wildland urban interface.

(b) Notwithstanding the dates specified in Subsection (2), the division may combine the submission of a report under Subsection (2) with a filing required under the cooperative wildfire system.

(4) By no later than the 2024 November interim meeting of the Natural Resources, Agriculture, and Environment Interim Committee, the division shall report to the Natural Resources, Agriculture, and Environment Interim Committee on compliance with this section by local firefighting agencies in the state.