


 Click to Print

[SAVE THIS](#) | [EMAIL THIS](#) | [Close](#)
[More Metro news](#)
S.D. COUNTY WILDFIRES

Feinstein introduces package of fire-protection bills

By Dana Wilkie

COPLEY NEWS SERVICE

November 17, 2007

WASHINGTON – Cities and counties would get more federal money for firefighting if they incorporate national fire-prevention standards into their local building codes, under legislation introduced yesterday by Sen. Dianne Feinstein.

To help prevent the kinds of fires that recently raced through San Diego County and other parts of Southern California, the California Democrat introduced a package of bills that also would help fire victims pay their mortgages and rents, boost FEMA aid to those whose insurance policies don't cover rebuilding costs and track arsonists with registries posted on the Internet.

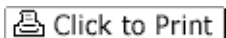
“The risk of catastrophic wildfire for California is not going away,” Feinstein said in a statement. “We are a tinder-dry state, we have extended droughts, and global warming is only making the risks greater. . . . So we must plan in advance to protect homes and communities from these massive fires.”

One of the senator's bills would provide cities and counties with financial incentives for adopting a national standard for building new houses.

Fire experts indicate it can be difficult for the state and federal governments to dictate to local governments how they should build on their own land – or to mandate building codes in housing developments that are pushing farther and farther into areas prone to fires.

Feinstein's bill directs the National Institute of Standards and Technology to create a model law for communities to follow – one that suggests how much water supplies new housing should have, what construction materials and techniques should be used and the sort of “defensible space” – or vegetation-cleared areas – should surround the housing.

The bill, called the “Fire Safe Community Act,” would encourage communities to adopt the new model by having the federal government reimburse up to 90 percent of a city's or county's firefighting and emergency service expenses, up from the current 75 percent.

Find this article at:
<http://www.signonsandiego.com/news/metro/wildfires/20071117-9999-7m17firedifi.html>

 Click to Print

[SAVE THIS](#) | [EMAIL THIS](#) | [Close](#)
 Check the box to include the list of links referenced in the article.