



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**The FireSafe Council Receives \$25,000 from Santa Clara County for  
Early Warning System Thermal Imaging Camera**

*Camera to be used for 360-degree early warning wildfire detection in the Santa Cruz Mountains*

Los Gatos, October 10, 2012 – The Santa Clara County FireSafe Council (SCFSC), a non-profit organization dedicated to wildfire prevention, is pleased to announce it has received \$25,000 from Santa Clara County to purchase a thermal imaging camera to provide early warning wildfire detection in the Santa Cruz Mountains.

Residents of Los Gatos and the Santa Cruz Mountains remember two wildfires that greatly impacted the community. Originally reported as a vehicle fire on Lexington Dam, the 1985 Lexington Hills Fire consumed 14,000 acres, destroyed 42 homes, and required 4,500 residents to evacuate. In 2008, the Santa Cruz Mountains Summit Fire destroyed 35 homes, 64 structures and caused the evacuation of more than 1,600 residents.

The Early Warning Wildfire Camera is a collaborative project between The FireSafe Council and stakeholder organizations and will provide fire officials and residents with advance warning of fires using a wavelength thermal imager with a remote controlled, 360-degree continuous pan rotation, of high fire risk areas.

“The FireSafe Council has worked with fire officials and other stakeholders to complete a Community Wildfire Prevention Plan. We’ve completed - and continue to work on - important fuel breaks throughout the area. We’ve supported efforts to implement evacuation plans and signage,” explains Rick Parfitt, FireSafe Council Vice President. “Our next step is to work on early warning systems to help fire officials spot fire ignitions earlier and alert residents when evacuations are needed.”

Supervisor Mike Wasserman, a long-time Los Gatos resident, initiated the funding from Santa Clara County for the project. As he states, “public safety is my number one priority. For \$25,000 we can have an early wildfire detection system to get fire crews on the scene and residents evacuated sooner. It’s a no-brainer.”

The camera will be one of the first of its kind for Santa Clara County. It is expected to be installed with 24-hour surveillance in 2013.

The Santa Clara County FireSafe Council is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Our mission is “Mobilizing the people of Santa Clara County to protect their homes, communities and environment from wildfires.”

Help us keep our community Green - it’s our Mission

1. Be [careful with equipment](#) that can start wildfires and observe [Red Flag Days](#)
2. Help protect [migratory birds](#)
3. Use [fire resistant, native plants](#) and trees and remove invasive fire prone species
4. [Educate your children](#) - [Smokey Bear](#) teaches kids to prevent wildfires and protect the environment
5. Educate your neighbors – [Defensible Space](#) can mitigate losses from wildfire and positively impact forest life

The council meets at 2:00 PM on the second Tuesday of each month. Interested organizations and individuals are welcome to attend! For more information and meeting locations, see [www.SCCFireSafe.org](http://www.SCCFireSafe.org), e-mail [info@SCCFireSafe.org](mailto:info@SCCFireSafe.org) or call (408) 975-9591. SCFSC appreciates tax-deductible donations of any amount.

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