



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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DRAMATIC INCREASE IN DEFENSIBLE SPACE INSPECTIONS STRENGTHENS WILDFIRE PREPAREDNESS ACROSS MONTEREY, PACIFIC GROVE AND CARMEL-BY-THE-SEA


Monterey, Calif. – In a significant step toward enhancing wildfire resilience, the Monterey Fire Department has almost quadrupled the number of defensible space inspections conducted in 2025 compared to the previous year. The department also conducted an increased number of vacant lot inspections in 2025 to assess defensible space and fuels mitigation.

From 2024 to 2025, the number of defensible space inspections surged from 875 to 3,459 – an increase of nearly 300%. The total number of defensible space inspections conducted across the cities of Monterey, Pacific Grove and Carmel-by-the-Sea now stands at 4,334 over the two-year period.

Defensible Space Inspection Totals

	Monterey	Pacific Grove	Carmel-by-the-Sea	Total
2024	491	189	195	875
2025	1,278	1,116	1,065	3,459
Total	1,769	1,305	1,260	4,334

From 2024 to 2025, the number of vacant lot inspections increased from 55 to 348 – an increase
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of over 500%. Vacant lot inspections provide an important opportunity for property owners to reduce hazardous vegetation which helps to protect neighboring properties and create a more fire resilient community.

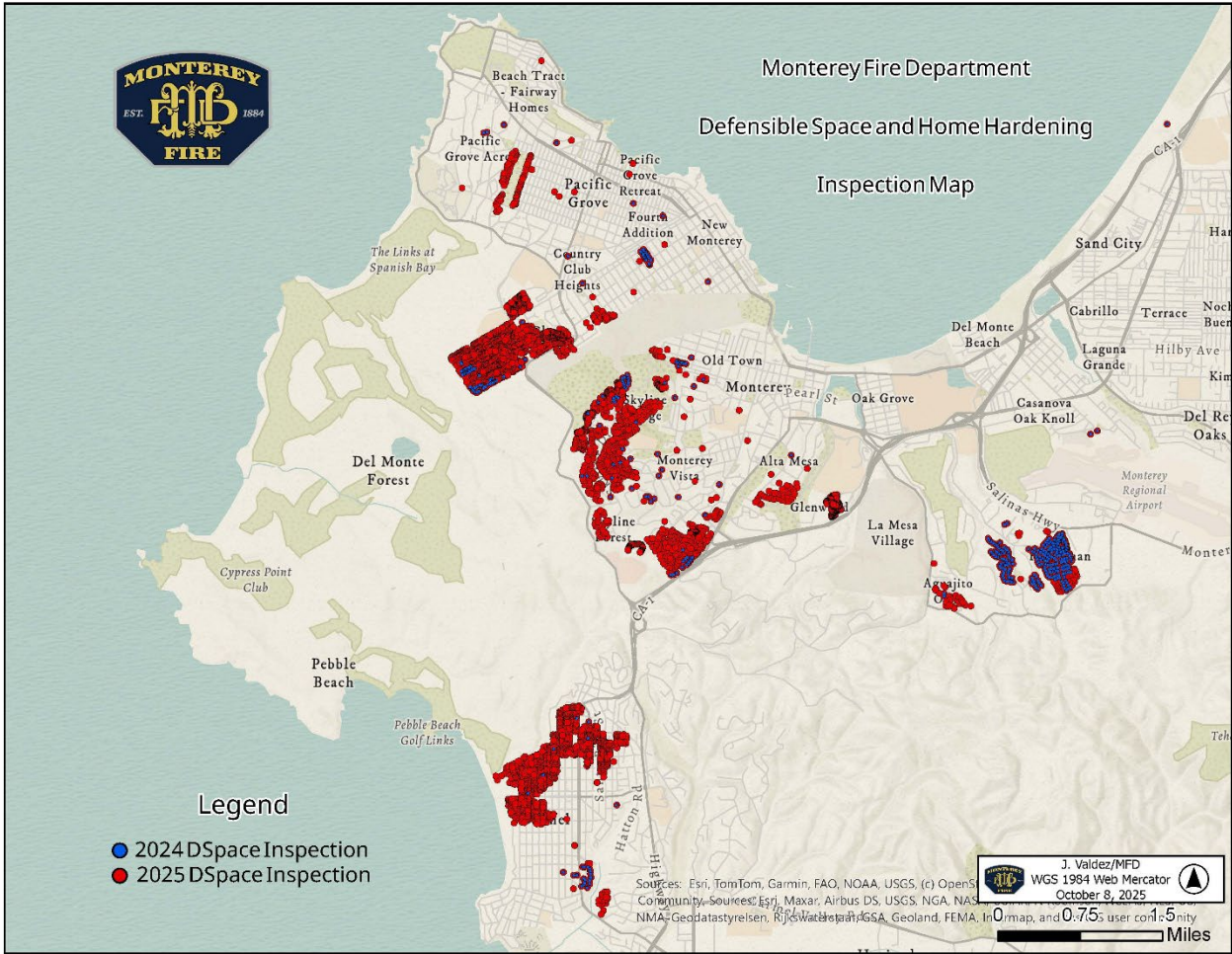
This proactive increase in inspections underscores the Monterey Fire Department's commitment to community safety, fire prevention and vegetation management. Defensible space inspections are a critical component of wildfire mitigation efforts, helping ensure that properties have the necessary clearance to slow or stop the spread of wildfire and to provide safe access for firefighters.

"Led by Jen Valdez, Analyst (Fuels Management), we've made tremendous progress this year in engaging our communities and protecting our neighborhoods," said Fire Chief, Andrew Miller. "These inspection numbers reflect the dedication of our fire prevention team and the growing awareness among residents about the importance of home hardening and maintaining defensible space."

Residents are encouraged to continue preparing their properties by clearing dead vegetation, maintaining proper spacing between plants, and ensuring emergency access routes are unobstructed. Fire personnel will continue conducting inspections and offering educational resources to help homeowners meet state and local defensible space requirements.

For more information on how to prepare your home or schedule an inspection, please visit https://monterey.gov/your_city_hall/departments/fire/defensible_space.php or contact the Fire Prevention Office at (831) 646-3908.

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