

Political History of
A Homeowner's Guide to Fire and Watershed Management
at the Chaparral/Urban Interface¹

Overview

After approval of Proposition 13 by the voters in 1978 management audits are carried out of departments within the Los Angeles County system at the request of the Board of Supervisors. The audits are carried out as a joint effort by the County's Chief Administrative Office, Department of Personnel, and Auditor Controller. The management audit for the County Forester and Fire Warden (Fire Department), completed in January 1980, recommends the civilianization of 123 positions ranging from Fire Fighter Specialist to Deputy Fire Chief and the deletion of 14 positions for an initial total cost savings of \$1.22 million dollars in 1980 of which \$800,000 would be in salary savings alone for the civilianized positions (in excess of \$2.5 million in total savings in the 1983-84 budget if equipment and benefit savings and the high costs of safety retirement are included). The audit also reviews the work carried out by the Forestry Bureau, one of the five bureaus of the Forester and Fire Warden (Fire Department), and expands on its stated goal of informing the public on wildland fire prevention. It extensively reviews the research work spearheaded by Research Forester Klaus Radtke and recommends to "Establish the completion of the Forestry Bureau's scientific management/fire (loss) suppression projects as a departmental priority." The audit further recommends that some moneys saved in civilianizing positions be earmarked for shoring up the understaffed Forestry Bureau that had already lost over 20 positions (many professional foresters had quit over the last few years because of the relatively comparatively low pay and lack of professional opportunities).

The Fire Chief, having come up in the firefighters Union ranks, apparently has no intention of implementing the audit and apparently decides to eliminate the Forestry Bureau and further decimate the rank of resource professionals to provide funding for positions to be eliminated and civilianized. A reclassification study of Mr. Radtke's research forester's position is initiated by his direct superior, Head Deputy Forester (who is aware of the confidential audit and carries out behind-the-scene struggles with the Fire Chief to save the positions of resource professional). This reclassification is to take Mr. Radtke out of the soon-to-be decimated Forestry Division and move him on a more equal footing into a 'fire prevention chief's position' so that he can work more closely with them and not be perceived as a threat and remain an asset to the County. However, the Fire Chief refuses to accommodate this or sign any reclassification. The Personnel Department therefore offers an entrance level chief's position (Senior Deputy Forster Research) within the Forestry Division (this position was soon earmarked to be cut according to still confidential drastic cuts of the new Division that the Chief apparently visualized). His new position would only require a master's degree (and Dr. Radtke would not be permitted to use his academic title "Ph.D."). It is approved in January 2001 by the Acting Fire Chief when the Fire Chief is out of town on business.

In the meantime Research Forester Radtke writes the then state-of-the-art prepublication information booklet *Living More Safely at the Chaparral-Urban Interface (A Guide to Hillside Property Management for Fire and Watershed Protection)*. In light of a printing freeze imposed by President Reagan on the Forest Service as a budgetary measure, the book is used to showcase the cooperative, practical hands-on cooperative research approach carried out by the Forest Service that can bring immediate financial benefits. The book therefore quickly receives nationwide exposure and support for its printing despite the Fire Chief's apparent efforts to throttle down such exposure. All cooperative research work carried out by Research Forester Radtke is shut down by the Fire Chief, and cooperative agreements with the U.S. Department of Agriculture Forest Service under which he acts as Principal Investigator focusing on fire prediction/fire loss prevention research geared towards fire professionals as well as the public is put on hold. Despite this Research Forester Radtke who receives his Ph.D. from U. C. Berkeley soon thereafter is still able to produce an article titled *Fire History of the Santa Monica Mountains* (with clearly outlines fire prediction/fire management implications) under the expiring Forest Service contract and other fire loss prevention work.

The booklet *Living More Safely...*, if published, and the fire history/fire prediction article presented at the *International Symposium on Dynamics of Fire-type Ecosystems Type Ecosystems* are apparently perceived

¹ The information herewith, with a booklet of copies of documents referenced, and a request to investigate the charges outlined in a cover letter, was forwarded to the County Board of Supervisors in August 1983. Updated information gives a more comprehensive picture. Additional documents and the 1980 post-Proposition 13 audit can be provided on request either in electronic form or CD.

as threatening the legitimacy of the Fire Chief's attempt to shut down the Forestry profession in violation of the intent and spirit of the departmental audit. To forestall any further such work and gain total control of the Forestry profession the Forestry Bureau is quickly eliminated and reorganized as a Division within the Fire Prevention Bureau (renamed Prevention and Conservation), foresters are told that they will be demoted and will largely reduced in rank to the entrance level position. Entrance level position resource professionals, facing the loss of their jobs, are given the 'opportunity' to apply for fireman entrance level positions requiring a high school diploma or equivalent. Intimidation of Research Forester Radtke is intensified within the Department, apparently approved directly by the front office and the Fire Chief and further intensified when he attempts to carry out his research work, with possible results/findings not pre-approved/directed by the front office. Apparently the Fire Chief and his Firefighters Union are fighting the implementation of the audit while members of the Board of Supervisors are attempting to implement it, with Dr. Radtke and professional foresters caught in the middle.

Some members of the County Board of Supervisors apparently are becoming aware of the situation and the desire of the Forest Service to have an abridged version of Living More Safely... published for homeowners under the cooperative research contracts frozen by the Fire Chief. Despite attempts by the Fire Chief to first prevent it being written by Dr. Radtke, then slow down and finally prevent the distribution of the publication to the Board of Supervisors, Dr. Radtke, at the direction of his Head Deputy Forester and with close cooperation from the Forest Service and County Supervisorial staff, nevertheless accomplishes to have the completed homeowner booklet titled A Homeowner's Guide to Fire and Watershed Management at the Chaparral/Urban Interface in the hand of the Board of Supervisors by the beginning of the 1982 fire season.

The Fire Chief and Fire Department top staff are infuriated as they apparently fear a backlash about the way they have refused to implement the audit despite repeated requests to do so by the County's Chief Administrative Officer. Attempts are immediately made to prevent/delay the public distribution of the booklet, remove it from public domain (claiming them as Fire Department publications to be controlled state-wide by the County Fire Chief), and to discredit the book and its author. When this initially fails and state-wide orders are received from public agencies that quickly exceed over 100,000 for the reprinting of A Homeowner's Guide..., attempts are then made by the Fire Chief to further delay and prevent the filling of orders and to further discredit and harass Dr. Radtke and deny his authorship. A mountain resident association therefore reprints needed copies during the height of the fire season with the association president and the printer becoming targets of extensive harassed by Fire Department and other county officials for their actions.

When the County Board of Supervisors demands the swift republication of the public safety information authored by Dr. Radtke, the Fire Chief apparently does everything to even further delay it, claiming to outside agencies that either there is no money to presently reprint, that the County Board of Supervisors require changes (thus the County Board of Supervisors is tacitly blamed for the delays during the fire season) or that these are Fire Department publications requiring his further review. Thus, at the height of the fire season, the Fire Chief is delaying the reprinting in an attempt to impose changes that would bolster his claim of Fire Department 'ownership' as this would wrestle the control of the publications from public domain and would give him the time needed to squash the audit. Members of the public that either come to Dr. Radtke's defense, get involved in favorable public reviews of the book, or its reprinting are also harassed by Fire Department chiefs or members of other County Departments, apparently directed to do so by the Fire Chief and his staff.

A Homeowner's Guide... was described in March 1983 by a local newspaper during an expose of the 'firegate scandal' as "the best book the County ever put out" and "the equivalent of having a fire truck outside the door." In whatever way reading the booklet affected people, it can be said that it gave them the insight to become more aware of their surroundings and the incentive or spark to make their home environment safer. But how about the people who never had the opportunity to read the booklet before fire and flood disasters struck their neighborhood because of attempts by the Fire Department to prevent its timely distribution and the subsequent more limited distribution because it was taken out of public domain? We will never know many of these homes became statistics?

Overview:

Well-publicized research on “fire-resistant plants” was already carried out in the 1960s by the County of Los Angeles Arboretum, perhaps as a way to rationalize development in high fire-risk watershed areas of Los Angeles County, with the County Fire Department getting involved in the late 1960s. In 1970-1971 a grant through a State Agency and efforts spearheaded by Carl Wilson, chief of the Division of Forest Fire Research at the Pacific Southwest Forest & Range Experiment Station in Berkeley, provided the initial seed money to the Los Angeles County Fire Department's Forestry Bureau to further such work on a more structured basis at the County Forestry Research Station and nursery in Malibu, where such plants were evaluated and grown for outplanting tests throughout Los Angeles County.

Starting on March 15, 1973, such cooperative research efforts were funded by the U.S. Forest Service (as Cooperative Research Agreement 21-235) in close cooperation with scientists from their Riverside's Fire Laboratory. The cooperative research grants supported the growing of "Low-fuel Plants," their outplanting in test plots throughout Los Angeles County, their periodic evaluation, and also supported research publications by scientists from the Riverside Fire Laboratory. Research Forester Radtke, uneasy about the public's belief in “fire-resistant” plants and the rationalization that it and the postfire “band-aid” seeding of burned watersheds with ryegrass provided support for development into high fire-risk watersheds, at first helped change the concept to “low-fuel” plants. He followed up with a self-funded research trip to mostly Mediterranean countries of the world (except for Australia) to find such plants, his regular pay being backed through the cooperative research agreement. His trip convinced him that the “fire-resistant” plant concept was a misnomer except in the ecological sense and that it had already been responsible for the loss of homes as witnessed during wildland fires. However, the “fire-resistant” plant concept was already well-publicized by the media and so engrained in the public's mind that it was hard to change, and that a slip-of-the-tongue often led to “fire-resistance” when explaining the concept. Between 1973 and 1977 four progress reports on "low-fuel plants" and their county-wide outplantings were prepared by Radtke under Cooperative Research Agreement 21-235, as well as a book titled *Wildland Plantings & Urban Forestry 1911-1977*. While this work was done with the full cooperation of the retiring fire chief, concerns were already raised by the Head Deputy Forester about the not-too-positive attitude with which the latter was received by the incoming fire chief.

In preparation of *Wildland Plantings & Urban Forestry 1911-1977*, Radtke had worked many evenings at the Los Angeles County Fire Department H.Q. in East Los Angeles with civilian fire mappers who were mapping all recent fires. He compared the fire maps to historic fire information still in the files as recorded by the then-County Forestry Department dating back to 1919, also researching newspaper articles for more historic information. Continuing this work many evenings at home while also carrying out chaparral fuel moisture research with the help of his “drying oven” in support of research carried out by Riverside Fire Laboratory scientists, he combined the fire map data into fire frequency maps and, given a fire start under certain fire weather conditions, subsequently into predictable future fire pattern maps of the Santa Monica Mountains. When (young, idealistic and somewhat foolish) he bought his home in March 1977 in a predictable design-for-disaster firestorm environment, he worked hard to immediately put everything he had learned into practice which barely saved the home when it was overrun and engulfed by the expected firestorm that followed in the fall of 1978.

To qualify the County of Los Angeles through the Fire Department to carry out future cooperative research contracts in fire science, Research Forester Radtke was urged by the Forest Service to at least have a Master's Degree. He therefore quit his weekend part-time teaching job which he enjoyed, as well as his hobby of flying small planes, and in 1975 pursued a Master's Degree in Natural Resources Sciences from Humboldt State University. He focused his Master's Thesis on the annual ryegrass (*Lolium multiflorum*) seeding of the September 25, 1970 Wright Fire burn, where he had served as one of the field inspectors to assure that the aerial seeding covered the watershed at the required 32 seeds/square foot. He had already documented with ground and aerial photos the postfire recovery of chaparral as well as the seeded ryegrass. This document, gathering dust in his files, already questioned the “band-aid” effectiveness of ryegrass to provide an adequate postfire cover as well as its impact on the chaparral ecosystem.

Over the years Research Forester Radtke had also developed a good working relationship with many professionals in the academic field starting with Botany Professor and Fire Ecologist Dr. James Sweeney of San Francisco State University who visited the Malibu research nursery during spring break 1971, inquiring about background historic data for sampling the 1970 Wright Fire burn where Radtke was conducting postfire ryegrass-related research. Dr. Sweeney would lead such graduate botany students on almost a yearly basis back to Southern California. Dr. Paul Zinke of U.C. Berkeley, who had lived in his youth in the Los Angeles area, along with his insight on forest influences, also provided valuable information on past slide problems throughout the area. This assisted Radtke in photo-documenting and evaluating soil erosion, slips, and slides, often driving through the mountains during and after heavy rains. Along with Forest Service Fire Laboratory scientists, Fire Scientist Dr. Ronald Wakimoto of U.C. Berkeley was always furthering cutting-edge research in fire science while also strongly supporting and advancing science-based described burn programs.

Cooperative Research Contract 21-235 was given a new direction in 1977 and was incorporated into the U.S. Forest Service Riverside Fire Laboratory's 5-year research and development program titled "Chaparral and Associated Ecosystems: a 5-year research and development program," spanning the Forest Service fiscal years 1977-1982. Radtke, with an advanced degree, and now qualifying the County of Los Angeles (working for the Forestry Bureau of the Los Angeles County Fire Department) as lead scientist, was to carry out practical research and prepare for publication his work pertaining to living more safely in wildland-urban interface areas.

Prior to completing his Master's Degree work, Research Forester Radtke was then urged by Forest service research staff to pursue a Ph.D. in a fire-science-related field to qualify the Fire Department to continue such research when the present research contract expires in 1982. Radtke, having worked extensively already for years not only with Forest Service scientists but also with professors in Botany, Fire Ecology, Watershed Management and Forest Influences, and Fire Science, was invited to pursue his Ph.D. at U.C. Berkeley.

Choosing the dual fields of Fire Ecology and Watershed Management as his subjects, he enrolled at U.C. Berkeley in 1977 and earned his Ph.D. in 1981.

When being introduced to Berkley in 1977, he was asked by the Livermore Research Laboratory to provide an oral evaluation of the site in relation to fire wildland fire safety. This was a quite interesting site inspection. The 25,800-acre October 23, 1978 Kanan-Dume Fire in the Santa Monica Mountains then provided a sudden and unique opportunity for a challenging Ph.D. thesis. Being familiar with the area and having studied its fire history, Radtke laid out a research design and sampled the first-year post-fire plant species recovery in relation to fire frequency (# of fires since recorded fire history) as well as fire intervals and time periods involved. He was hoping that such cutting-edge work would be accepted as a Ph.D. thesis if he passes other requirements such as course work, field work, written and oral tests.

Having had the opportunity to meet so many experts in their fields, being concerned about the fire and soil erosion and slide problems homeowners faced through runaway development in the mountains, Radtke organized the "Symposium Chaparral, Fire and Man" on June 2-3, 1978 in Malibu. Sponsored by Cooperative Extension, U.C. Berkley, the County of Los Angeles (Forestry Bureau), and the Topanga-Las Virgenes Resource Conservation District, it was an eye-opening learning experience for everyone, thanks to the 17 expert speakers that participated. Lessons learned during and after the symposium assisted homeowners to be more proactive and prepare more effectively for future fire disasters without losing their homes. Mr. Ed Hill, featured in the 1981 "fire booklet" *A Homeowner's Guide to Fire and Watershed Management...*, is one of the examples.

(At the same time a management audit was prepared of the County Fire Department that attempted to cost-effectively streamline it and support the fire-science work of its Forestry Bureau, to be carried out by a new County Fire Chief. He, however, sadly, could not relate to such vision and saw it as a threat, with the results that cooperative research would be shut down within the next two-to-three years and its staff, along with other foresters, drummed out of the fire department.

The following are some of the state-of-the-art public domain publications or articles Research Forester Radtke wrote under the Cooperative Research Program completed in 1982:

1. *Living More Safely in the Chaparral-Urban Interface*

(a state-of-the-art publication guide to hillside property management for fire and watershed protection) Gen. Technical Report PSW-GTR- 67 -Web (reprinted four times but out of print since the mid-1990s and now available as a WEB publication). It was selected by the U.S. Forest Service Pacific Southwest Research Stations as one of their 10 top publications available since the mid-1990s for downloading from their internet source <http://www.psw.fs.us/techpub.html>).

(Because of great concern that urban encroachment into chaparral areas had accelerated the fire-flood-erosion cycle and with it ever-accelerating property losses, a document was needed addressed to homeowners, buyers, developers, architects, planners, and other officials in municipalities that could provide preventive maintenance measures to help reduce such losses. The report therefore described the chaparral environment, how to cope with problems in watershed management, how to landscape for fire and soil erosion control, how to plan for home safety from fire, how to treat newly burned chaparral slopes, and how to safely clear brush around homes.)

2. *A Homeowner's Guide to Fire and Watershed Management at the Chaparral/Urban Interface*

A practical "Fireman in Your Pocket" guide addressed to homeowners that summarizes "Living More Safely..." and can be readily distributed at fire stations and municipal offices and also provided and reviewed with homeowners during property inspections. It is a condensed homeowner's version of the above listed publication. (7th revised and later editions available from L.A. Co. Forester & Fire Warden).

3. *Fire History of the Santa Monica Mountains* (published in *Dynamics and Management of Mediterranean-Type Ecosystems*)

Wildland fire history of the Santa Monica Mountain Range in Los Angeles County was investigated to help in the decision-making process for fire and vegetation management. Fire records for fires over 40.5 ha (100 acres) were analyzed for the fire suppression period 1919-1980. Selected fires were used to demonstrate the predictive effect of land use, climate, vegetation, topography, fuel loading and fire suppression activities on fire patterns and fire behavior.

It was envisioned that taking the *Homeowner's Guide...*(your "fireman in a pocket) "in the field" during property inspections of virtually every home in the mountain fire district, and showing concerns about the well-being of homeowners by working with them on a one-to-one basis and also directly through their homeowner associations, could hopefully immediately reduce the expected future fire losses. However, this was not to be because of a 1977-78, confidential, post-Proposition 13 audit of the Los Angeles County Fire Department. The audit proposed to streamline the Fire Department and make it more responsive to the public needs while at the same time strongly supporting the common-sense wildland fire research carried out by Dr. Radtke with the support of the USFS research contracts, also strongly supporting County Board of Supervisors to educate the public and reduce home losses in future wildland fires. In response to the audit threat, the incoming Los Angeles County fire chief, strongly supported by the firefighter union, shut down all cooperative research with the Forest Service while at the same time attempting to prevent the above-named documents from being published, trying to take credit for it as fitted political needs, and at the same time also shutting down all sharing of public information with other agencies produced under the USFS research contracts.

But has anything really changed over the last 40 years within the fire services while the wildland fire losses accelerated uncontrolled everywhere? Perhaps not, as documented in a *Los Angeles Times* article dated October 21, 2018 and titled "L.A. County Firefighters earn massive overtime pay, busting budgets and raising questions." Overtime for County Fire personnel had skyrocketed again in recent years, perhaps through ongoing "manipulation of the bid system" which allowed some fire captains to earn hundreds of thousands of

1977 Winter – *Living More Safely in the Chaparral-Urban Interface*.

Up-to-date factual information on an integrated approach to living more safely in fire-prone watersheds is needed more than ever after years of research on "low-fuel plants" and outplantings efforts throughout the County of Los Angeles. Research Forester Radtke, strongly supported by the U.S. Forest Service under their new cooperative research agreement with the County of Los Angeles, now focuses on this goal.

1978 January – *Wildland Planting & Urban Forestry (Native & Exotic 1911-1977)*.

The book by Research Deputy Forester Radtke is published under cooperative research agreement between the County of Los Angeles and the U.S. Forest Service as an in-house publication. All fires over 100 acres are summarized on large scale maps (1 inch = 8 miles). The existence of "fire corridors" is recognized, and the

importance of considering them in site selection of future tree plantations is stressed (this concept is of course also applied to siting of homes in fireprone watersheds).

Radtke continues work on fire history and fire frequency and interests other departmental staff in this work. The predictability of fire patterns in chaparral of the Santa Monica Mountains is again graphically demonstrated by the Mandeville Canyon and Kanan-Dume fires which burned the Santa Monica mountain range on October 23, 1978.

1978 – Living More Safely... First rough draft reviewed at U.C. Berkeley.

Radtke's first rough draft of a proposed book later known as *Living More Safely in the Chaparral-Urban Interface* is reviewed by fire and watershed management professors at U.C. Berkeley (winter 77-78). Working closely with Riverside Fire Laboratory and U.C. Berkeley scientists, Radtke then adapts the wildland fire behavior and fire prediction modeling, spearheaded by the U. S. Forest Service Missoula Fire Laboratory, to steeper chaparral-covered watersheds in urban interface areas. At a time when no Fire Department in California required removal of flammable vegetation beyond 100 feet from structures, he clearly demonstrates through state-of-the-art applications of such scientific principles that clearing of flammable vegetation for only 100 feet in steep terrain is inadequate in protecting homes from fire and that this also applies to ornamental vegetation as well as structural fuels. The information is addressed to homeowners, buyers, developers, architects, planners, and other officials in municipalities and agencies as well as fire departments. When later published by the U.S. Forest Service and reprinted by the National Foundation for Environmental Safety, it is widely distributed and also becomes required reading and textbook material in college classes dealing with such subjects.

1979 – Living More Safely...reviewed by over 20 resource professionals.

A green cover draft publication of *Living More Safely ...*, as is standard procedure, was provided by USFS for peer review to over 20 resource professionals. Their occasional comments are incorporated into a final draft copy.

1980 December – Living More Safely ... finalized in a prepublication document.

K. Radtke finalizes *Living More Safely ...* with all the review comments received. Forest Service personnel had asked for format changes and expansion of the ecological aspect of chaparral management so as to make the book a useful guide to homeowners as well as agency personnel. Management principles as well as the fire frequency map of the Santa Monica Mountains are effectively shown with full color sketches. However, the final publication could only be produced in black/white due to budgetary constraints with some of this information eliminated.

1981 March – Living More Safely ... prepublication copies provided to the public.

Living More Safely in the Chaparral-Urban Interface ... is presented by the Forest Service as a prepublication information copy to many agencies and interested homeowner groups. Its subsequent printing is temporarily frozen due to Forest Service budget constraints enacted by President Reagan.

1981 April – Living More Safely... officially provided to L.A. County Fire Chief (who won't acknowledge it).

Living More Safely in the Chaparral-Urban Interface is officially presented by the director of the USFS Pacific Southwest Forest & Range Experiment Stations, Berkeley, to the County Fire Chief. The cover letter states that

“Three years of effort went into the production of this report, and it has been reviewed by more than 20 scientists, practitioners, and specialists in numerous federal, state and local agencies. We anticipate it will generate a high demand for copies.

The Chief ignores and does not respond to the letter.

1981 May 5 – County Fire Chief refuses to sign USFS research agreements in order to shut research down.

The U.S. Forest Service forwards to the County's Head Deputy Forester draft forms to renew the research master agreement, which expires June 30, 1981, for another five years. On May 12, the Head Deputy Forester,

on behalf of the County Fire Chief, returns the agreement as to form (the Fire Chief did not sign it and the Forest Service needed to have the commitment) to the Forest Service stating that “the agreement meets with our approval. Upon receipt of the final document, we will immediately proceed to obtain acceptance by our Board of Supervisors.” The final forms are returned by the Deputy Director of the U.S. Forest Service Pacific Southwest Research Unit on May 19, 1981, but the Fire Chief refuses to sign them (apparently to shut Radtke down) and forward them with his cover letter to the Board of Supervisors for one full year (not until the contract documents are ‘provided to the Board of Supervisors in early 1982 by a third party’ and the Board demands the signed contract to be forwarded to them immediately with the Fire Chief’s signature).

1981 June – Research Forester Radtke earns Ph.D. from U.C. Berkeley.

K. Radtke receives his Ph.D. in Wildland Resource Sciences from U.C. Berkeley, majoring in Fire Ecology and Watershed Management. His Ph.D. dissertation "*The Effect of Fire Frequencies on Species Diversity, Vegetative Cover and Floristic Changes in Chaparral Communities*" focused on the October 23, 1978 Kanan-Dume Fire in the Santa Monica Mountains, and the plant recovery in relation to fire intervals and fire frequencies dating back to the beginning of the century. The study was carried out under the cooperative Forest Service research agreement.

1981 June – Living More Safely in the Chaparral-Urban Interface. Public release by USFS with order forms.

At the International Symposium on Dynamics and Management of Mediterranean-type Ecosystems in San Diego County, the U.S. Forest Service displays *Living More Safely in the Chaparral-Urban Interface*, a state-of-the-art publication to hillside property management for fire and watershed protection as one of their soon-to-be-published documents. Symposium participants are provided with prepublication order forms for this and other Forest Service publications.

Since the Reagan Administration, for budgetary reasons, had put a hold on all USFS printing expenses except for a limited number of priority publications, the Assistant Director of Research at the Riverside Fire Laboratory then asked for public support to print the Radtke document. By spring 1982 letters in support of its publication were received from Fire Departments in Southern California, the mayor of the City of Los Angeles and City Council members, members of the State and Federal Legislature, environmental groups, mountain resident associations, as well as the Department of the Interior. Over 1,000 people living in fire-prone areas of Los Angeles County also signed the petition. Notably absent was the support of the County of Los Angeles Fire Department, as its chief was in the process of dismantling the Forestry Bureau and its research section and did not want any publication on fire safety published that gave any credit to professional forestry and its research section.

At the International Symposium, Dr. Radtke, as principal author, presents the research study and paper “Fire History of the Santa Monica Mountains.” The research was carried out under the cooperative research agreement with the Forest Service and points to the cyclic patterns of large-scale fires, the predictability of such events and burn patterns, and alternative management techniques. The County Fire Department's Prescription Burn Manager, also attending, warns Radtke forcefully that he has no business writing such papers. His only job is “to make the Fire Department look good.” (This is an angry expression of the harassment directed against Dr. Radtke by the Fire Department since the 1979-80 departmental management audit). The Prescription Burn Manager, a former Union V.P., claimed to have been instrumental in getting the Union's support that apparently helped the present Fire Chief [who came up through the Union ranks] get his appointment from the Board of Supervisors). He is also instrumental in having someone impersonate Dr. Radtke “to make the Department look good.” Dr. Radtke and others become aware of such impersonation when it is announced in one of the symposium's summary speeches that “Dr. Radtke” (whom they supposedly met) is a fourth member of the County's Prescription Burn Team, his job consisting of research and resource management, etc. Because of “this scientific approach,” the County Fire Department is publicly praised as one of the top agencies in the field of prescribed burning.

(Facts: Dr. Radtke was never permitted/was prevented from:

- a) being a fourth member of the Prescription Burn Team,
- b) conducting any prescribed burn research,
- c) conducting monitoring.

Prescribed burning at this time was largely used as a public relations plum (“we can burn under/to the eaves of even wood homes”), giving elected officials and wildland residents the mistaken impression that the days of large-scale fires are over and that there is a safety net in place to protect mountain residents and continue development in fireprone areas. Dr. Radtke had been concerned about this approach and had questioned why prescribed burning is conducted with little environmental oversight and why it has largely favored/encouraged the expansion of development in wildland areas (most prescribed burns at this time are being conducted on land earmarked for development).

While all three members of the Prescription Burn Team attend the symposium, the Head Deputy Forester's request to attend was turned down by the County Fire Chief.

Back in Los Angeles, Dr. Radtke intends to file a grievance with the Union over this incident but is warned by the Head Deputy Forester that the County Fire Chief may seek revenge by eliminating the positions of some of the replacement foresters about to be hired (in 1978 some foresters went for help to Supervisor Schabarum's Office after exhausting all internal grievance procedures when the County Fire Chief refused to act upon promotions in a timely manner).

1981 July – Living More Safely in the Chaparral-Urban Interface (“fireman in your pocket”).

The Forest Service suggests that Dr. Radtke produce a 16 to 20-page homeowner version of *Living More Safely in the Chaparral-Urban Interface* under the proposed 1981-1982 cooperative research agreement between the County and the Forest Service while their printing freeze is still imposed, and reference the homeowner version to the unabridged publication. This way it would be quickly available to the general public, agencies, and public officials ranging from Washington to Sacramento that had requested copies of *Living More Safely in the Chaparral-Urban Interface* from the Forest Service. However, work on the booklet cannot be started because of the County Fire Chief's refusal to sign and forward to the Board of Supervisors Amendment #3 to the cooperative master agreement which had reached his desk on May 21, 1981.

Since the County Fire Chief publicly ignores *Living More Safely in the Chaparral-Urban Interface* (but initially tries not to openly oppose it), the Head Deputy Forester authorizes further copies of the "prepublication information copy" to be distributed to resource professionals, fire officials, and elected officials for their comments. Many more additional letters of support for its publication and for lifting the printing freeze imposed on the Forest Service are received.

1981 December

During hillside inspections, foresters continue to receive requests for up-to-date information on fire and watershed safety. Homeowners, told about the unpublished booklet *Living More Safely in the Chaparral-Urban Interface*, call County offices for further details and write letters of support for its publication.

1981 December 23 – Fire Chief opposes the production/dissemination of public safety information.

At a “round table” (actually a long, oval table) meeting at Fire Department headquarters attended by many fire chiefs, a reluctant Dr. Radtke, and a representative of the Fourth District Supervisor, it is pointed out by the representative that the supervisor offices would like to have a fire booklet produced by the beginning of the fire season. Fire Department personnel claim that they do not have the finances nor personnel resources to produce such a book. Dr. Radtke, disbelieving what he hears, points out over the stares of some fire chiefs that this is not the case, as the money is available through the cooperative research agreement with the Forest Service that had been forwarded to the Fire Chief (quite a while ago), just needs his signature, and needs to be forwarded to the Board of Supervisors for approval. There is also no problem with having the condensed version in print by the beginning of the fire season as he could readily write it (on the way home he starts laying out the book in his mind, deciding to pattern it after the *Homeowners Guide for Flood, Debris, and Erosion Control* booklet produced by the Los Angeles County Flood Control District). It is also pointed out that the unabridged version is presently "tied up" because of Forest Service budget reductions for the printing of scientific papers. Expressing support for its publication at the highest level would help.

1982 January 8 – Fire Chief opposes cooperative work with NPS to produce public safety information.

Radtke and other forestry chiefs are requested to write a case study program on their work units for the NACo County Achievement award. In the proposal, dated January 8, Radtke notes that a homeowner's version of *Living More Safely in the Chaparral-Urban Interface* is earmarked to be distributed by the National Parks Service to homeowners throughout the fire zone areas within its jurisdiction. National Parks Service personnel had approached Radtke to write a condensed homeowner's version for NPS and Radtke had agreed to produce it for them free of charge (not on County time if the Fire Chief does not sign a cooperative agreement as requested by NPS). A cooperative agreement is forwarded by NPS to the Fire Chief for Dr. Radtke to produce a homeowner's version. The Fire Chief does not acknowledge it.

1982 January 14 - County Supervisors again request the swift production of public safety information.

The Deputy for the Fourth District Supervisor, whose district includes the unincorporated areas of the Santa Monica Mountains, requests another meeting with Fire Department personnel to discuss the feasibility of producing a condensed version of *Living More Safely in the Chaparral-Urban Interface* and also to find avenues of supporting the printing of the unabridged version. The meeting takes place in the conference room of the Fire Chief. Just prior to the meeting Radtke is again warned by the Prescription Burn Manager “that we need your Ph.D. but not you.”

This meeting is a follow-up of the questions asked by the Fourth District Supervisor representative during the December 23, 1981, meeting regarding the publication of a brochure on hillside property management for fire and watershed protection, and property inspections. In the meantime, the supervisor and his representative had studied the report titled *Living More Safely in the Chaparral-Urban Interface* and had asked for a letter instructing the fourth district supervisor on the step-by-step procedure to facilitate publication of this report by the Forest Service. In addition he noted that a condensed version for free distribution to homeowners was needed.

1982 January 15 – Radtke updates the unsigned research agreement lingering on the Fire Chief's desk.

Radtke rewrites a new work plan and financial plan for the 1981-82 cooperative research agreement which was supposed to have started almost seven months ago if the Chief would have signed the contracts and forwarded them to the County Board of Supervisors for approval. Dr. Radtke subsequently meets with Forest Service officials at San Dimas, Riverside, and the Fire Department's headquarters to finalize the work plan. Forest service officials both in Riverside and Berkeley are extremely cooperative in processing the work plan.

1982 January 18 – Fire Chief again ignores Board of Supervisor request for producing a “fire booklet.”

The Head Deputy Forester updates the Fire Chief in a memo on the January 15 meeting (the Chief Deputy was representing the Fire Chief at the meeting). “To refresh your memory the steps needed to have the Forest Service publish the chaparral reports include:

1. Forward Amendment No. 3 to Master Agreement No. 21-4.36 to the Board of Supervisors for approval.
2. Request the Board of Supervisors as well as yourself to write letters soliciting support of the unabridged state of the art version to be published by the Forest Service.”

He also states:

“This meeting is a follow-up of the questions asked by the Fourth District Supervisor representative during the December 23, 1981, meeting regarding the publication of a brochure on hillside property management for fire and watershed protection, and property inspections. In the meantime he had studied the report titled Living More Safely in the Chaparral-Urban Interface and had asked for a letter instructing him on the step-by-step procedure to facilitate publication of this report by the Forest Service. In addition he noted that a condensed version for free distribution to homeowners was needed ”

The Fire Chief ignores the Board of Supervisor's request and also tells the Head Deputy Forester that Radtke cannot use the title Ph.D. or scientist in any publications but only the title Senior Deputy Forester, as he insists that everything produced by Radtke under the cooperative Forest Service research agreement with public funds will be/is under his personal control and not public domain information (even if produced with public funds).

1982 January 31 – County Forestry Bureau demoted- Forbidden public contact w/o prior approval.

By the end of January the County Fire Chief had suddenly demoted the Forestry Bureau (one of the five bureaus of the fire department) to a division within the Fire Prevention Bureau (now called Prevention and Conservation Bureau), with the Head Deputy Forester losing his ability (forbidden) to have direct public contact with public officials without the approval of his new superior, a Deputy Fire Chief. Forestry Chiefs are not informed about the demotion of the Forestry Bureau and find out about it from clerks.

1982 February 11 – A Homeowner's Guide to Fire and Watershed Management at the Chaparral/Urban Interface – Update by Dr. Radtke.

“Update Re Book on *A Homeowner's Guide to Fire and Watershed Management...* Coop. Agreement with USFS.”

Because of the very negative attitude from the front office and concerns that the Fire Chief would perhaps attempt to prevent the book from being written, published, and distributed in a timely manner if it could be produced at all, no matter what the County Supervisors and the Forest Service desire, Dr. Radtke addresses a memo to the Head Deputy Forester (since the front office does not want to have anything documented, such memos have to be carefully written so as not to be considered reasons for disciplinary measures).

The memo reviews the actions taken by the Forest Service and Board of Supervisors to have the booklet written by Dr. Radtke and the steps and timetable to be taken to have the booklet ready for printing. Radtke also discloses that he has been working on the booklet and that it will be ready by March 5 for Forest Service technical review. The complete text is given below.

"As a follow-up to the meeting with Peter Ireland, field representative to Supervisor Deane Dana, which took place in the conference room at the LAO on January 14, the following items are noted:

1. Head Deputy Forester Arthur Arndt updates the Fire Chief in a memo dated January 18 about the meeting. The memo informed the Chief that Peter Ireland had requested that a letter be sent to Supervisor Deane Dana directing him to write a letter to the Forest Service supporting immediate publication for sale of the unabridged version of the state-of-the-art publication on hillside management for watershed and fire safety. This book was produced by me under previous cooperative agreements between the Fire Laboratory and the County. A prepublication information copy was sent to many agencies and interested homeowner groups in March of 1981. Its subsequent printing was temporarily frozen due to Forest Service budget restraints enacted by President Reagan.

2. In the early summer of 1981 the Forest Service suggested that I produce a 16-20-page homeowner version of the book under the proposed 1981-82 cooperative agreement between the County and the Forest Service. Work on the booklet was not started because of Chief Bragdon's reluctance to sign and forward to the Board of Supervisors Amendment No.3 to the master agreement which reached his desk on May 28, 1981. As agreed in the January 14, 1982 meeting with Peter Ireland, I immediately rewrote the work plan and received the approval of the Fire Laboratory. Under the work plan, the County would pay my wages (\$10,000) and the Forest Service the publication cost (\$10,000) as well as additional support for writing the book, such as travel, incidental expenses, etc. Since January 18, 1982, this new work plan to the cooperative agreement is awaiting approval by the Chief and subsequently by the Board of Supervisors.

3. Should the County approve the agreement, the PSW research staff has stipulated that the homeowner version of the book on watershed and fire safety be treated like any other research publication done under cooperative agreements (public domain).

a. I wrote the book with technical assistance, such as word processing, etc., provided by Fire Laboratory personnel (Serena Hunter).

b. The final draft will receive technical peer review by at least three persons.

c. The book receives final technical approval (sign-off) by the Assistant Director/ Director of Research, USDA-PSW western U.S. region, prior to publication.

This identifies it as an interdisciplinary, scientific paper where contents have been reviewed for technical accuracy.

4. Since I have not received official word as yet to work on the book (but since we have committed ourselves to Peter Ireland and he committed himself to the Supervisor that the booklet can and will be in print by the beginning of the fire season if the cooperative agreement is approved), I have been working on

it already, on and off the job in the last week, and will continue to do so unless ordered not to work on County time. I will have the first copy ready for technical review by March 5 for the staff of the Riverside Fire Laboratory and hopefully by the end of the month for peer review.

5. Peter Ireland in our January 14 meeting suggested that if the County cannot help to publish the book cost-effectively or without cost (now made feasible provided by the cooperative agreement), I should investigate avenues to publish it.

Should the latter become necessary for some unforeseen reason, I, as author and scientist, will pursue avenues for publication and will turn over any profits to the County. The latter is made possible only if both the County and the Forest Service relinquish their publication rights of the present version of the book.

6. The need for the above publications on fire and watershed management safety is shown by the wide support being received by the Forest Service in support of publishing the book for sale."

1982 February 26 – Malibu Township Council supports foresters at its public meeting.

The Fire Department front office, furious about continuous support being received from public agencies and citizens groups for printing of the Forest Service publication *Living More Safely in the Chaparral-Urban Interface*, launches an internal investigation after the Malibu Township Council openly discusses support for forestry at its public meeting, which is reported to the Fire Chief the next morning by insiders. The Chief is infuriated and foresters are intimidated. The Head Deputy Forester is ordered to investigate if foresters made contact with the Township Council as this would be insubordination and cause for demotion or dismissal. The Head Deputy Forester, in directing a memo to the Chief Deputy (future County Fire Chief in 1984-88) states that his foresters deny any knowledge of such communication and that Bob Chandler of the Federal Parks Service (Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area) could have made comments in support of the fire booklet and concerns about budget cuts at their last Board meeting. It is known that requests for the "release of funds for the printing of the booklet and pamphlet of the state-of-the-art publication *Living More Safely ...*" are circulating and that the federal parks is also supporting it (note: Federal parks wanted to publish/assist in publishing a condensed version of it which was opposed by the Fire Department).

Rumors within the department now have it that the Fire Chief refuses to have the fire booklet and other fire related research published because as (soon to be nominated) Director of the California Department of Forestry, he wants to publish such information under his name and give the fire service credit for its origination. Some County Supervisors also want to get rid of him. However, while the County Fire Chief had apparently applied for the position of Director of the California Department of Forestry and was one of the three finalists for this job, in March Governor Deukmejian, a Republican, appoints another more visionary and less controversial applicant.

1982 March 31 – Living More Safely in the Chaparral-Urban Interface soon to be published.

Robert Z. Callahan, Director, Pacific Southwest Forestry and Range Experiment Station, "To our Readers," announces *Living More Safely in the Chaparral-Urban Interface* as a soon-to-be published Forest Service document.

1982 July 30 – Living More Safely in the Chaparral-Urban Interface finalized for printing.

Klaus Radtke works with PSW staff (confidentially) in finalizing the document for printing and May Huddleston informs him "I think this winds down everything except for the picture captions"

1982 March 5 – A Homeowner's Guide to Fire and Watershed Management...Draft completed by Dr. Radtke.

Draft booklet is completed by Dr. Radtke and forwarded to the Forest Service scientists for their peer review as per contract proposal. Their comments are incorporated in the booklet before it is provided to the County Fire Department for review.

1982 March 16 – A Homeowner's Guide to Fire and Watershed Management reviewed by Fire Dept.

Review comments returned by the County of Los Angeles Fire Department's Public Information Officer (PIO) on stationery with County Fire Department logo state: "Good reading! I have made a few comments which probably have been picked up by your other faithful 'editors.' Thanks for giving me the chance. It is a much

needed guide.” These comments are incorporated into the final version of the booklet, none of which are detrimental of roof sprinklers. Other members of the Los Angeles County Fire Department provide oral review comments, but when later pressed to disclose such sources ‘to save his job,’ Dr. Radtke declines to do so out of concern that their careers may be ruined by the Fire Chief. Radtke could not provide these comments to the Chief or his group because it would have never left his desk and the project would have been stopped.

1982 March 16 – Fire Chief denies Radtke to travel/contact with Forest Service to finalize “fire booklet.”

In light of the soon-to-be-approved research contract by the Board of Supervisors, Dr. Radtke requests to travel to Berkeley (travel is stipulated in the research contracted and funded by the Forest Service) to finalize the booklet with editorial review by the Forest Service. Travel is denied by the Chief ‘since no contract has been signed’ (contract is still sitting on his desk).

1982 March – Streamline Fire Department. 14.7% cut in non-firefighting uniformed personnel still proposed.

The County Chief Administrative Officer, in an effort to streamline the County Fire Department, still proposes a 14.7% cut which, however, does not affect foresters. Instead, the Fire Chief proposes a 42% cut in the new forestry division he created along with the elimination of its research section.

1982 March-June – Living More Safely in the Chaparral-Urban Interface. Support from throughout US.

Throughout the spring the Forest Service in Riverside and Berkeley continues to receive many letters from fire agencies, professionals in resource management, elected officials both in Washington, Sacramento, and the Southwest, as well as thousands of homeowner signatures of support for the publication *Living More Safely in the Chaparral-Urban Interface*, whose printing efforts are still temporarily frozen by the Federal government. Draft letters to the County Board of Supervisors as well as U.S. Forest Service are prepared for the Fire Chief's signature as early as February for support of the publication and for the approval of the research contract by the Board of Supervisors. The Fire Chief ignores them and refuses to sign them.

1982 April – Demoted Forestry Division cut 42%. Control directed to nonprofessionals/chief supporters.

Apparently still feeling threatened by foresters and the public safety research being conducted by Dr. Radtke, the County Fire Chief proposes further budgetary measures of reducing the "Forestry Division" after having previously reduced the Forestry Bureau (one of the five bureaus within the County Fire Department) to a Division within the Fire Prevention Bureau (renamed Prevention and Conservation) and run by the Chief of Fire Prevention. Later confidential documentation shows that this severe cut would have basically eliminated the profession within the department because the cuts, based on seniority, would accomplish the following: layoff of over 42% of the forestry personnel, reduction in rank of many Deputy Foresters (including 20-year professional veterans) to the entrance position of Forestry Assistant, a greater control of the profession by non-graduate personnel to forestry chiefs (started as laborers but promoted up the line and grandfathered as professional foresters), the elimination of the Senior Deputy Forester-Research position (Dr. Radtke), but no reduction of any other forestry chiefs.

1982 April – Supervisor offices again inquire from Fire Chief about research contracts and “fire booklet.”

Personnel from the Fourth District Supervisorial office inquire from the Fire Chief about the progress of the condensed version *A Homeowner's Guide ...* and the whereabouts of the research contract and letters, but he ignores them.

1982 April 3 – Fire Chief states his doctrine: the fire department is in control of resource management, etc.

County Fire Chief states his doctrine: a) County Supervisors don't run the Fire Department, b) only research that makes the fire department look good should be done/will be tolerated, c) the Fire Department is in control of resource management.

1982 April – Fire Chief tries to prevent finalizing of “fire booklet.”

In early April all travel requests by Radtke such as meeting with USDA Forest Service Riverside scientists and others working on the cooperative research agreement are again denied by the Fire Chief, apparently to prevent him from writing and finalizing the fire booklet. However, unbeknown to the Fire Chief, the draft “fire

booklet” had been written by Radtke in his Malibu Camp 8 field office whenever he had extra time, with the work products being taken home on a daily basis so as not to leave a trace should his office be inspected or searched in his absence. When at fire department headquarters, he also carried out his research and reviewed departmental files, photographs, etc., often assisted by Public Information Officer Dick Friend and the department's photographer.

1982 Mid-April – USFS research agreements confidentially forwarded to County Supervisor.

A copy of the unsigned cooperative research contract with the Forest Service PSW which would pay for the development and printing (labor and printing costs, etc.) of *A Homeowner's Guide to Fire and Watershed Management...* (the “fire booklet”) along with proposed updated contract changes to have it in print by June 30, 1982, was apparently confidentially forwarded through the Head Deputy Forester to the Malibu supervisor office along with information on how to contact the Forest Service officials to receive an updated contract. The Forest Service PSW Station then sent duplicate signed contract documents back to the supervisor’s office as well as to the county Fire Chief along with a cover letter stating that the contract had not been signed to date because of problems with the Fire Chief. At Fire Department headquarters the Chief was furious, blaming internal misunderstanding for the delay. Supervisor Dana's office then called him the same day, demanding that he sign the cooperative research agreement along with a cover letter and immediately forward it to the Board of Supervisors (the Fire Chief would have risked dismissal if he would not have done so, as he would have been openly in contempt of his bosses, the Board of Supervisors).

1982 April 30 (Friday) – Forest Service provides contracts to Supervisors. Fire Chief ordered to sign them.

The 4th District Supervisor, whose area includes Malibu, receives the research contracts from the U.S. Forest Service upon his request and immediately orders the Fire Chief to forward to the Board the contracts signed by him by the following Monday.

In the accompanying letter to the Fourth District Supervisor, the Deputy Director of the Pacific Southwest research stations in Berkeley states on April 30:

"As requested enclosed are Supplement No. 1 confirming the agreement between the County Fire Department and the Forest Service to postpone research until October 1, 1981 due to administrative delays within the Fire Department."

Copies of the letter dated Friday, April 30, and of the contracts (which were in the Fire Chief’s possession since May 1981) are also mailed to the Head Deputy Forester and principal cooperator Radtke.

In addition to publication of the fire booklet which is to be published by July 1, 1982, the extension of the cooperative research agreement also provides a new work plan for further work such as:

1. To analyze post-fire soils for nutrient values and low-fuel plants for use in practical applications.
2. To develop and disseminate information on watershed and fire safety at the urban interface as presented in the Department of Forester and Fire Warden publication *Living More Safely in the Chaparral-Urban Interface* (Radtke, K.). (Note that Fire Department added the words "in the Department of Forester and Fire Warden publication" over the objections of Dr. Radtke when they knew that in fact it was a Forest Service research document in public domain.)
3. To develop a study plan for evaluating the ecological effects of prescribed burning in coastal and associated chaparral ecosystems. (It was added to allow Dr. Radtke, at least on paper, to have an input in guiding ‘environmentally sensitive prescribed burning efforts’ in Los Angeles County. However, this hoped-for result was never permitted and therefore not accomplished under the agreement).

1982 May 3 (Monday) – Fire Chief signs research contracts. Hand-delivered to Board of Supervisors.

The Fire Chief is furious but has no choice but to immediately forward the contracts with a cover letter to the Board of Supervisors for approval, stating that “County Counsel has approved Amendments and the Supplement as to form.” However, the Chief also makes an inaccurate claim by stating “develop and disseminate information on watershed and fire safety ... as presented in the Department of Forester and Fire Warden publication *Living More Safely in the Chaparral-Urban Interface* (Radtke, Klaus).” As he knows very well, the above-named publication is a soon-to-be-published document by the research section of the U.S. Forest Service and this wording was added to the contract over Dr. Radtke's objections and he was forced to agree to it or else. The Fire Chief, however, does correctly identify Radtke as the author.

Dr. Radtke's written requests to travel to the U. S. Pacific Southwest and Forest publishing headquarters in Berkeley to finalize the layout and editing of the booklet is again repeatedly denied by the Fire Chief as 'not having been resubmitted' as required after denial (red tape is continuously used to stop publishing the booklet).

1982 May 11 (Tuesday) – Contracts approved by a 5:0 vote by Board of Supervisors. Print “fire booklet.”

The items are immediately added to the May 11 Board agenda where the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors unanimously approves the research master agreements and supplements with the U.S. Forest Service at the first Board meeting after receiving the contracts (regular Board meetings are held on Tuesday). Dr. Radtke's request to travel to Berkeley is still denied even though expenses are to be reimbursed through the Forest Service Research contract.

1982 May 13 (Thursday) – A Homeowner's Guide to Fire and Watershed Management at the Chaparral/Urban Interface, now called the “fire booklet.” The Fire Chief orders: stop producing the “fire booklet.”

Dr. Radtke is ordered by the Deputy Chief of Fire Prevention (Prevention and Conservation) to immediately return from the Riverside Fire Laboratory, where he is working on *A Homeowner's Guide to Fire and Watershed Management...* (the condensed version of *Living More Safely in the Chaparral-Urban Interface*), for a personal face-to-face meeting. The Head Deputy Forester, Radtke's immediate superior, is off sick for the day (apparently recovering from ongoing harassment) and can therefore not witness nor protect Radtke from the ensuing harassment. Radtke is intimidated, screamed at and grilled about any contacts with the County Board of Supervisors and their staff and told, as per the Fire Chief, that the County Supervisors do not run the Fire Department (and that he should get this through his thick head). Additionally he is told that:

1. *Living More Safely in the Chaparral-Urban Interface* belongs to the County Fire Department. (It is apparent to Dr. Radtke that the Fire Department will do anything to prevent this publication from being printed and will also prevent the timely writing and publication of the condensed version that he titled *A Homeowner's Guide ...* and is working so feverishly on.)

2. The Fire Chief is displeased about the Forestry logo being on the front cover of *Living More Safely...* and forbids the use of the forestry logo (no other comments were made about displeasure, if any, of the book's contents).

3. That, while acknowledging Radtke's expertise on the subjects, the Fire Chief would like “the courtesy” to review the front and inside cover (this is the credit section of the booklet).

Radtke points out that the publication *Living More Safely...* is a Forest Service publication and he has no control over it and that the Forest Service is doing everything to assist in the publication of the condensed version (*A Homeowner's Guide ...*) with proper credits to the County but with the Forest Service and County logo on their publications over which Radtke has no control. Radtke then asks for a timetable (a meeting with the Fire Chief, a timetable for return of the book or the front and inside cover, etc.) to assure that it will not be lost or OBD (On Bragdon's Desk), so that it will not hold up the printing. He is told that such assurances cannot be issued but that the Fire Prevention Chief will try “to have it returned in time” to meet its contract publication deadline of July 1, 1982 (Radtke wonders again if the Fire Chief really wants to have the book published at all, if he wants to exclude the County seal in favor of the fire hat seal, and what are the reasons behind the Department's attempts to shut down public safety information from being disseminated to the general public?).

1982 Mid to end of May – Confidential meetings by Radtke with USFS editors, completing “fire booklet.”

Radtke is initially requested by Riverside Fire Laboratory supervisors and scientists to meet at the Berkeley headquarters of the Forest Service Pacific Southwest Forest and Research Experimental Station for the final layout and manages to confidentially travel there on his own time and own funds. He is quite concerned that, in the Forest Service lay-out of the front cover, his name is clearly shown as author of the booklet and requests that it be moved to the inside cover as he is aware of the revengefulness of the Fire Chief and has been the recipient of intense harassment lately. However, he is told that it is a standard layout procedure as the name of research scientist authors is always shown on the front cover and this booklet and its research has been funded and was produced under contract with the USFS. It will be produced within the deadline set by the County board of Supervisors under the cooperative research agreement.

Since the Fire Chief continued to prevent Dr. Radtke from flying to the U.S. Forest Service research headquarters in Berkeley even on his own time to finish the *Homeowner's Guide...* manuscript with the Forest Service editor (and he is closely watched so that he cannot do it anymore on his own time, taking suddenly off on vacation for a couple of days which would require prior approval), the Forest Service editor flies then on several occasions to Los Angeles, staying in a local hotel. Thanks to that editor and the total cooperation of the Forest Service in assisting Dr. Radtke to circumvent Fire Department 'red tape,' the book can be completed and printed on time. County Supervisor offices were aware of this arrangement as they wanted the "fire booklet" in print by the beginning of the fire season (July 1).

1982 May 20 – *Living More Safely in the Chaparral-Urban Interface* public support also continues.

The Board of Supervisors receive a letter from a Malibu group naming themselves "Concerned Residents For Living More Safely at the Chaparral-Urban Interface" with over 1,000 signatures in support of the publication of the book with the same name and related safety information. The letter also states:

"The experience of the Forestry Bureau (of the Fire Department) in fire safety, watershed management, erosion concepts, etc., are vital to us. Their preventative maintenance programs are essential in the mountain areas.

Their counsel aided us to design home(s) with fire-proof roofing, stucco siding, an independent water supply, an emergency power generator, quickly installable window shutters, and an erosion drainage system to protect us from threat of flood damage."

1982 June 2 – Assistant Director-USFS-PSW releases "fire booklet" for printing, public distribution.

The head of the Riverside Fire Laboratory (Assistant Director-USFS-PSW) writes to Radtke about the book *A Homeowner's Guide to Fire and Watershed Management*

"As far as the PSW Station is concerned, this manuscript is ready for publication and distribution to the public." This letter, the Forest Service logo on the booklet's front cover, and the use of public funds for its printing, identify it as an interagency publication in public domain. The County Fire Chief will insist that it is a Fire Department (or his) publication.

Forest Service personnel again express the desire that an "outside printer" be chosen so that anyone who wants to republish the book has ready access to it. Since the Fire Chief has forbidden the use of the County Forestry logo, Forest Service personnel had requested to balance agency logos (US Forest Service-Los Angeles County) on the book's front cover. This had met with approval of supervisorial offices as they prefer the County seal over the Fire Department seal. Since the County Fire Chief never forwards the cooperative resource agreement with the National Parks Service to the Board of Supervisors for their approval, the NPS logo is not used on the front cover. This leaves a conspicuously blank space.

All parties involved (including the Head Deputy Forester), with the possible exception of the County Fire Department top staff, desire the speedy publication of the booklet so that it can be distributed to the public by the beginning of the fire season. An outside printer as recommended by the Forest Service is chosen. The business is located near the County of Los Angeles boundary line, thus providing easy access to other agencies desiring to reprint it, assuring that:

- 1.the booklet will remain in public domain and can be speedily printed, reordered and reprinted by anyone desiring it.
- 2.a good quality product can be produced within just a few weeks.

Fire Department top staff is apparently aware that the "fire booklet" is going to press (as now being watched over by the Supervisor offices and the Forest Service) but hopes to prevent or control its distribution.

1982 June 23 – Radtke: Research contract can not be carried out under the Fire Chief.

In a memo to be routed to the Fire Prevention Chief, Radtke offers his resignation from all further cooperative research contracts at the expiration of the present contracts. He gives the following reasons:

"Cooperative (research) agreements require that I act both as Senior Deputy Forester and research scientist.

The latter position requires that I think and act more independently than Departmental policy permits, especially when I am faced with seemingly insurmountable obstacles and still have to meet contract deadlines in order not to embarrass our profession, the Department, the Board of Supervisors.

“In view of the Departmental red tape ... I, of course, will see the present contracts to completion ...

“Under the terms of the contracts, the county agreed that I, as principal cooperator, would provide the following services or products by these deadlines:

May 15 – Progress Report

July 1 – *A Homeowner’s Guide to Fire and Watershed Management* (condensing the book *Living More Safely in the Chaparral-Urban Interface*).

Provide updated and re-edited version of the above book (*Living More Safely ...*) for publication by the Forest Service.

August 1 - Study plan for evaluating the ecological effects of prescribed burning in chaparral ecosystems.”

After receiving this memo, the Fire Prevention Chief requests that he be informed about the publication date of *A Homeowner’s Guide...* as he knows that the Supervisor offices and the Forest Service are guiding the printing efforts and apparently does not want to give the impression that the Fire Department is openly interfering with the Board. The books apparently can always be confiscated before they leave the printer's office.

1982 June 23 – Research budget has been modified by USFS to pay for printing of the “fire booklet.”

The Deputy Director for the U.S. Forest Service writes to the Head Deputy Forester (with cc: to the County Board of Supervisors): “In response to Principal Investigator Klaus Radtke's request, approval is granted for modifying the budget to carry out the research under supplement No.1 to Agreement No 21-436.” This clarified and assured the speedy printing of *A Homeowner's Guide....* paid for by United States Department of Agriculture-U.S. Forest Service under the agreement.

1982 June 28 – Chief Radtke delivers “fire booklets” to Hall of Adm. in “his” county utility pick-up (no radio).

Personnel from the Fourth District Supervisorial offices call the USFS Riverside Fire Laboratory on the morning of June 28 to inquire about the above-named books. They want to have them delivered to their offices at the Hall of Administration “as soon as they are available.” Radtke, at the printer by late morning to pick up the books and deliver them to the US Forest Service Riverside Fire Laboratory for their distribution to the County, is told about the message when checking with Riverside. When the Fire Prevention Chief can not be reached for verification of this request, Radtke proceeds to the Hall of Administration and officially delivers 5,000 of the 7,000 copies printed under the contract, the remaining copies being delivered to the Forest Service with some withheld for the Fire Department. He is directed to park at the rear service elevator and proceed to the supervisor offices, not taking the regular elevators so that he would not be confronted by any fire chiefs asking what he was doing at the Hall of Administration and being ordered to return to Fire Dept. H.Q.

The Fourth District Supervisor is elated about the quality of the product and tells Radtke that he has not put the book down since he first picked it up to glance at it (in the meantime Dr. Radtke had gone down to his county car parked in the basement of the Hall of Administration to supervise the unloading of the second load of books). The Supervisor expresses his appreciation “that the Fire Chief completed the project in a timely, professional manner” and states that the supervisors desire to distribute the book to interested parties and will be in charge of all further (County?) printings (they are apparently afraid that the Fire Chief would control the plates and reprinting but do not really understand that the book is in public domain and should be freely available for reprinting orders received by an outside printer). This is confirmed in a later telephone conversation between the County Fire Chief and the Fourth District Supervisor.

The Fire Prevention Chief calls the Head Deputy Forester and Radtke into his office for a quick late afternoon meeting prior to rushing off to another meeting. Seemingly not fully understanding the telephone messages that Radtke left with his secretary and not being aware that the Fire Department can not gain control of the printed books anymore, he tells both foresters that this time he will overlook the printing of the book (and the ‘independent actions’ that went along with it). A memo by Radtke about its publication had

been placed in the Chief's "in box" prior to the meeting and it was not clear if the Chief had read the memo. Chief Radtke and the Head Deputy Forester were "living on the edge."

1982 June 29 – "All hell breaks loose" at Fire Dept. H.Q. as County Supervisors are in control of "fire booklet."

Early Tuesday morning, June 29, 1982, the Acting County Fire Chief receives a phone call from the supervisor offices to be present and be honored at the public release of the booklet at the board meeting. "All hell breaks loose." The Acting Fire Chief informs the Fire Prevention Chief of this, requesting to receive a copy of the booklet which had been sitting since the previous day in his "in box." The Fire Prevention Chief loses his temper and composure (again), screaming at Dr. Radtke when he realizes that the supervisors have gained control of the book and will be distributing it and that its distribution can therefore not be prevented by the Fire Department.

1982 June 29 – News Release: "Fire Prevention Booklet to Aid Hillside Homes, Property Owners"

The immediate news release by the Fourth District Supervisor titled "Fire Prevention Booklet to Aid Hillside Homes, Property Owners" states:

"The booklet...was written by Klaus Radtke, senior deputy forester under a joint contract... We have received widespread support for preparation of this booklet from residents in the county and even fire departments in other Southern California counties. In a very real sense, this booklet can help save homes and lives in the years ahead, and with it, millions of dollars and the heartaches that arise from the tragedy of fire and flood."

On June 29, the day after the release of the booklet, Radtke is home sick (officially taking a day of accumulated time instead of sick leave) and recuperating from the pressure, ill feelings, and even open harassment directed against him by the Fire Prevention Chief.

Fire Department top staff, knowing they can not openly undermine the Board of Supervisors, focus their wrath on Radtke. The Head Deputy Forester, under great pressure and quite concerned and apprehensive, calls Radtke at home to tell him that the Fire Chief is outraged and that the department is looking for anything against Radtke. Under great pressure himself, he requests that Radtke phone the Fire Chief immediately to apologize but is not told what to apologize for (for writing the book, for delivering them to the offices of the Board of Supervisors, or ...?). Radtke sees the developing case as a "political fight" and declines to get involved or choose sides. He is then asked to answer questions about the printing of the book. He declines, stating that he is sick but will return the next day to headquarters to answer questions and clear up any misunderstanding. The Fire Prevention Chief, who is unofficially leading the investigation against Radtke (unbeknown to the Head Deputy Forester), will later file an additional charge of 'insubordination' against Dr. Radtke for not answering questions on the phone when off duty.

1982 June 30 – Chief Radtke's intimidation and harassment are accelerated. No protection from the union.

Returning to work on June 30th, Chief Radtke is called into the office of the head of the (Fire) Prevention and Conservation Bureau and the new boss of the demoted Forestry Bureau. While Radtke is forced to stand at attention in a paramilitary fashion, the higher-ranking Deputy Fire Chief loses his temper and screams at him from the top of his lungs, threatening and intimidating him. Chief Radtke leaves the office without replying or getting into an argument. The Deputy Fire Chief later apologizes to his secretaries who witnessed his outbursts but not to Chief Radtke.

1982 July 1 – Fire Chief prohibits Fire Dept. personnel to distribute "fire booklet" to the public.

As scheduled, Dr. Radtke attends the annual meeting of the Sunset Mesa Homeowners Association at the Getty Museum and follows up on it with a memo dated July 8. He mentioned that, on June 30, he inspected the proposed prescribed burn areas with Mrs. Jansen, chairman of the Association's fire safety committee, and also inspected the community for obvious deficiencies that may increase the damage from wildfire and intensive winter rains. He explained the concepts, possible costs and liabilities of prescribed burning, and mentioned that it would be neither cost-effective nor safe to burn just a few acres on steep slopes on which homes with wooden roofs are located. Also, portions of the slopes showed evidence of past soil-slip problems. Overall, the community (except for the wood-shingle-roof homes) is fire-safe because their CC&R's

call for continuous maintenance programs of any vegetation that may obstruct someone's view. Since fire personnel were not permitted to publicly provide *A Homeowner's Guide...*, as per the Fire Chief's order, none were made available at the meeting but Dr. Radtke provided a personal copy to Mrs. Jansen. When Mrs. Jansen met Dr. Radtke on July 7 for advice on her fire safety article and wanted to include in the association newsletter a statement that *A Homeowner's Guide...* is available at the local fire stations, Dr. Radtke had to advise against it (as per Departmental order), stating that it is available from the County Supervisor offices but not yet from the fire stations. Mrs. Jansen expressed her concerns that the book should be made available for her community's safety at the fire stations.

1982 July – Top fire chiefs ordered to discredit/prevent distribution of the “fire booklet.”

Tension at Fire Department headquarters is mounting as top chiefs, initially pleased with the professionalism of *A Homeowner's Guide...* (as expressed to Radtke privately), are told to find ‘inaccuracies’ that would justify the Fire Chief's attempt to prevent the distribution of the fire booklet. Members of the Fire Department even visit supervisorial offices in an attempt to gain support for such a move. No fire official acknowledges the supervisor press releases of the booklet, but some Fire Department officials (gold badges) approach Radtke “confidentially” to receive their personal copies. While Radtke provides them, they are also told that the books are openly distributed by the Board of Supervisors and the Forest Service; however, they can not ask openly for the book or show their face there as it could affect their careers.

1982 July 8 – County Forestry Division personnel public contact scrutinized: Don't release “fire booklet.”

The Forestry Secretary calls the offices of the Fourth District Supervisor to receive a copy of the press release “so that we can better understand our responsibilities in providing the booklet” in response to telephone calls received. Subsequently she sends out 25 copies to Fire Station 70 in Malibu. The Acting Deputy Fire Chief of Fire Prevention is upset about the contact. He orders the books not to be released to the public.

1982 July 9 – Official memo that Fire Department personnel are forbidden to distribute “fire booklet.”

As documented by the Head Deputy Forester in a memo dated July 14, the Acting Deputy Chief gave verbal direction on Friday, July 9, to hold and not distribute *A Homeowner's Guide...*

1982 July 9 – Present County prescribed burning to justify/promote development in fireprone watersheds?

As previously scheduled, Dr. Radtke represents the County Fire Department (The Forester & Fire Warden) as a member of a steering committee whose aim it is to produce a Vegetation Management Primer for Southern California that should reflect the united voice of all agencies. While some members want to slant the primer strongly toward prescribed burning, Dr. Radtke (also concerned that this is being done to justify further development in high-risk fire areas) points out “mosaic burning as recommended throughout Southern California should be closely monitored because its ecological effects are presently based more on concepts than on research. While prescribed burning is an excellent tool for the land manager, we must be careful not to bill it as the tool that eliminates all fire problems.” The revised work plan funded by the cooperative research contract with the Forest Service permits/requires his involvement in the Forester and Fire Warden's (Fire Department's) prescribed burn program. George Roby, representing the Riverside Fire Laboratory, also points out that “We can not present prescribed burning as a finished state of the art because we are still in the learning phases.”

1982 July 14 – Fire Department to officially oppose the “fire booklet.”

It is now rumored that the Fire Department will officially oppose the booklet because of the roof sprinklers shown in one of the sketches. Radtke questions the Acting Fire Prevention Chief on the issue (the sketch is the same as shown in the 1981 unabridged edition on the Fire Chief's desk since April 1981) and is told that this is a recent policy. When Radtke requests documentation of this policy change, he is told that no official memo exists but that letters to the public exist in which the Fire Department opposes roof sprinklers.

1982 July 15 – County Fire Dept. desperately tries to discredit “fire booklet.”

A Malibu newspaper is the first within the news media to review the booklet *A Homeowner's Guide to Fire*

and Watershed Management... with a front-page headline that reads:

“*New County Booklet Should Be Required Reading for Every Malibuite*” and starts its in-depth, impressive article by stating “A booklet every Malibu resident wants to read has just been published.” The paper's editor is immediately visited by County fire chiefs who question her about the article.

A Los Angeles County Deputy Fire Chief calls the Assistant Director at the U.S. Forest Service office in Berkeley and attempts to block the Forest Service release of *A Homeowner's Guide to Fire and Watershed Management at the Chaparral/Urban Interface* (the “fire booklet”) through apparent intimidation. The Forest Service release is temporarily halted until a letter is received from the Fourth District County Supervisor identifying the book as an official publication of the County of Los Angeles (the County Supervisor had apparently no understanding that their actions would perhaps remove the booklet from public domain, or no choice but to take it out of the public domain at least temporarily in order to safeguard it from confiscation by the Fire Chief).

1982 July 20 – Fire Chief: foresters can not be honored by Supervisors for contribution to public safety.

The Fourth District Supervisor whose area also includes the unincorporated areas of the Santa Monica Mountains inclusive of Malibu, attempts to recognize the Forestry Division with a plaque to be presented to the Head Deputy Forester during a board meeting, with Dr. Radtke requested to be in attendance. The Fire Chief is apparently outraged about this and claims that giving recognition to Fire Department employees is his prerogative and opposes this move. The Supervisor apparently backs down and the plaque is never publicly presented but provided to the Head Deputy Forester at his home a few months after he is forced out of the County Fire Department before the end of 1982.

The Fourth District Supervisor, to the surprise of many, then makes a motion during a Board of Supervisors meeting to add \$300,000 to the Forestry budget specifically earmarked for fire-related research. The Fire Chief is outraged about it and the motion does not pass.

1982 July 20 – County Fire Chiefs request dismissal of Forest Service scientists that assisted “fire booklet.”

Dr. Radtke asks in an internal memo for direction from the Fire Department:

"Are we to let the public know that we are not allowed to release the booklet (*A Homeowner's Guide to Fire and Watershed Management...*) through the Fire Department? In light of the Fourth District Supervisor's News Release of June 29 [finally obtained by Radtke], can copies now be officially forwarded to homeowners as well as agencies within and outside California that had requested it?"

An Assistant Fire Chief addresses a memo to the Fire Prevention Chief requesting the services of Radtke to assist in identifying areas in the Palos Verdes Peninsula that present a fire hazard due to the concentration of wood shingle homes. He is strongly rebuffed. Radtke can not perform these services while on duty but carefully visits the area on his own time.

Forest Service research scientists later confide in Dr. Radtke that the County Fire Chief himself called the director of the Riverside Fire Laboratory, demanding the firing of scientists that helped in the publication of *A Homeowner's Guide to Fire and Watershed Management at the Chaparral/Urban Interface*. The director declined.

1982 End of July – Fire Chief's 42% budget cut of Forestry Division reduced to 27% through public pressure.

While the Fire Chief had publicly announced that foresters within the County Fire Department will be cut 42% in next year's budget, community leaders in mountainous areas, writing to the Board of Supervisors in opposition to the drastic cuts, had it reduced to about 27% with laid off foresters immediately rehired as County firefighters if they so desire. The County Fire Chief himself attempted to call persons that wrote to the Board of Supervisors about the budget cuts and also had letters of replies drafted in his name and the name of County Supervisors (these letters were not sent out when it becomes clear that the County Supervisors would not sign them).

Radtke, as principal cooperater of the Forest Service research contract, has an S&S (Services and Supplies)

account in his name for contract expenses up to the amount authorized and reimbursable to the County. The Fire Department's Accountant II, who is handling the bills, routinely pays them on the Head Deputy Forester's approval. He is ordered by the Fire Prevention Chief to reject the bill for printing of *A Homeowner's Guide to Fire and Watershed Management...* even though the funding is stipulated in the Forest Service research contract.

The Fire Department again claims that the book is unauthorized because it was not edited by their personnel (not true; Public Information Officer and others reviewed it). This gives Fire Department officials time to gather support within the County system to have the book declared unauthorized so that payment to the printer is officially rejected while department personnel are on record as requesting payment.

Radtke is informed by friendly insiders that he can not be demoted through the budgetary process without a hearing (as the Fire Chief intended) because a Forestry Chief and strong Union organizer (whom the Fire Chief would not reduce in the budgetary process) is being demoted (temporarily) for an ongoing hit-and-run and finally leaving the scene (walk away) drunk, driving in his chief's car (totally stoned). Subsequently the 'Fact Finding Committee,' composed of fire chiefs that would have been affected by the post-Proposition 13 audit, forward 'allegations' against Chief Radtke that make it possible to launch a full-scale investigation and more intensive harassment of him (and the Head Deputy Forester) for the writing and publication of the booklet. However, since Radtke is now still a chief within the Fire Department, they now have to go through the motion of an investigation of him in an "open fact-finding meeting" with many other high-ranking chiefs and asking questions which Radtke then has the opportunity to answer and defend himself. This is something that the Fire Chief apparently did not want. Dr. Radtke is subsequently ordered to attend such a very intimidating interrogation hearing without representation (the Union lawyers were not truly on his side but pretended to represent him).

A fire chief from the Los Angeles (City) Fire Department visits the headquarter forestry offices located in the Fire Department's downtown H.Q. and requests a copy of *A Homeowner's Guide to Fire and Watershed Management...* for the City Fire Chief. He receives several copies from Dr. Radtke despite orders to the contrary and is appalled about what is happening within the County Fire Department. (Dr. Radtke had assisted City Fire Department staff in the past in analyzing fire hazard and fuel modification requirements). Subsequently the City Fire Department airs its own booklet *A Guide for Homeowners in the Mountain Fire District* along with *A Homeowner's Guide to Fire and Watershed Management...* as tools to assist the homeowner in the upcoming fire season. The booklet reviews receive good TV coverage on Channel 11.

1982 July 26 – Bowing to public pressure, Fire Prevention Chief declares "fire booklet" legal.

Bowing to Board of Supervisors, public pressure, and the fact that they have "not broken" Dr. Radtke to finger members of the Board of Supervisors and their staff in having had "illegal contacts" with him and others, and trying to save face for the Fire Department and Fire Chief, the Fire Prevention Chief issues a memo to Bureau Chiefs, Assistant Fire Chiefs, and others. The memo titled "Distribution of Departmental Publication—*A Homeowner's Guide to Fire and Watershed Management...*" states:

"The above subject Departmental publication recently produced by the Research Section of our Forestry Division is in the process of being distributed to the public.... The Fire Department recommends the full utilization of this publication not only for public relation purposes, but also as a means of which we continue our fire safety, public education efforts.... It is recommended that purchasing commitments be pursued by the Assistant Fire Chiefs from those cities or organizations seeking additional copies. In order to properly address the questions we may receive about this publication, an area of conflict concerning Departmental policy for roof top sprinklers is found on page 13.... This portion overlooked in the review process will be revised in the next edition."

The truth is that the "fire booklet" is not a "departmental but public domain document produced by the Forestry Bureau which was demoted to a Division under the Deputy Fire Prevention Chief so that the Head Forestry Chief (Head Deputy Forester) would/could not have any more public contacts and the Fire Prevention Chief could make any public statements (right or wrong) as ordered by the Fire Chief. There was also no

Departmental policy forbidding roof sprinklers. Are homeowners not allowed to install roof sprinklers, while new construction is forced to have interior sprinklers? (K.R.)

Radtke is confidentially told that this memo accomplishes the Fire Department's control of reprinting efforts and takes it away from public domain, prevents the public from reprinting it on their own (as envisioned by the Forest Service), and accomplishes future changes that benefit the Department politically. While Radtke did forward memos on a regular basis to document the Department's moves, it must be remembered that these memos can only state factually what is allowed without being insubordinate or being overly critical (Radtke was charged with being critical of the Fire Chief).

Oral and written requests to reprint *A Homeowner's Guide...*, inclusive of initially 25,000 copies by the California Department of Forestry (CDF), are received by foresters and Fire Department officials and exceed 100,000 before the end of summer. The Fire Chief controls everything and makes no attempt to comply with the requests. However, he nevertheless mails the books personalized with his cover to fire officials, resource professionals, etc., in Southern California.

A Malibu Battalion Chief distributes 25 copies of the booklet *A Homeowner's Guide...* to Malibu fire stations. An attached note states "This is all you are going to get for a long time. Additional requests should be referred to Topanga Las Virgenes Conservation District, Topanga Township Council, the Fourth District Supervisor's Malibu deputy, Malibu Civic Center, Building & Safety, or Library at Civic Center."

1982 August – Public distribution of “fire booklet” still curtailed within fire department.

The public distribution of the fire booklet at County fire stations is still curtailed by the Fire Department despite the fact that it received as many copies from the Supervisor offices as all the Supervisors combined had retained. The Santa Monica Mountains Residents Association therefore contacts the printer about ordering additional copies at its cost. The Forest Service continues to provide the fire booklets throughout California, as public support for the booklet keeps spreading.

Intense harassment and intimidation is directed by Fire Department officials against Radtke and his top boss, the County's Head Deputy Forester, as Radtke nevertheless documents the internal fire booklet scandal. Further pressure is put on him not to attend any public meetings even on his own time and not show his face anywhere so as not to be able to publicize the fire booklet. He is directed not to attend the upcoming County Fair even on his own time. Radtke nevertheless attends the County Fair on his own time while other foresters are being paid to participate in it.

1982 August 9 – Fire Chief prevents distribution of fire history/prediction data to National Parks Service.

The Fire Chief gives direct orders not to furnish any further information on fire history in the Santa Monica Mountains to personnel of the National Parks Service even though some of this information has been prepared with the help of research grants from the U.S. Forest Service. When National Parks Service personnel arrive at the Fire Department headquarters by previous appointment, information which has been prepared for them can not be handed over. Radtke states in a memo to the Fire Prevention Chief, "While it is not my business nor prerogative to know confidential information, I am concerned as to the possibility of becoming involved in any act that can be construed as withholding public safety information that may fall under the Freedom of Information Act. Please clarify my duties as a County employee."

Homeowners, attempting to receive the *Homeowner's Guide...* at the fire stations, are told that there are differences/disagreements between the Fire Chief and the Board of Supervisors. Sometimes they are told that the books are not available.

As per request to furnish some booklets, Radtke calls a field office of the Third District Supervisor. Radtke is told that the Fire Prevention Chief told staff that the books are available through the Fourth District Supervisor who ended up with 5,000-6,000 copies. He is also told "that the matter is being handled."

The Fourth District Supervisor sends individual copies of the booklet to constituents who request them.

stating: “I am pleased to make this important booklet available to you. The response and support this booklet has generated from the community has been overwhelming....” Books by supervisor representatives are also distributed to city councils, homeowner associations, etc. Forest Service distributes individual copies on request.

1982 August 30 – Watershed Fire Council of Southern California to spearhead reprinting of “fire booklet.”

The Watershed Fire Council of Southern California is chaired by the retired Fire Chief of Los Angeles County, who, along with other council members, is a strong supporter of *A Homeowner's Guide...* and wants to spearhead a drive to reprint it, as the present Fire Chief had apparently told council members privately that the County did not have the money for reprinting. However, the present Fire Chief and his top staff, while being forced to distribute the present supply of books because of public pressure and the County Supervisors' strong support, want to prevent its reprinting, apparently fearing that it will lend support to professional foresters and legitimacy to the management audit of the Fire Department that wanted to streamline the department and recommended civilianization of uniformed fire personnel in non-firefighting positions. The legislative chairman of the Watershed and Fire Council and retired Supervisor of the Angeles National Forest, on August 30, 1982, therefore addresses a letter to the Fire Chief, stating:

“Los Angeles County and the Forest Service should be commended for producing a product that provides the homeowner with specific, factual information on what can and should be done to help mitigate the fire and flood problems in the foothill watershed areas. The rather detailed inclusion of the background information on the chaparral ecosystem, planting evaluation, and slope relationships is important. It should help secure better public understanding of the importance of sound planning in this area.

“Please convey my thanks to Dr. Klaus W. H. Radtke for a job well done.”

The legislative chairman thereafter uses the booklet in his contacts with legislators in Sacramento and other public officials throughout the state to affect changes in policy.

During the one-month vacation of the Head Deputy Forester, the Acting Head Deputy Forester prevents Radtke from having any input in the reorganization of the Forestry Division and keeps him out of all meetings with Forestry chiefs and the Fire Prevention Chief. His justification is that "the Fire Prevention Chief has studied all past performance evaluations of Forestry personnel and will make all personnel-, headquarters-, and vehicle-assignments" (thus favoring Union supporters and former forestry aides with no professional background or degrees). (For example, Dr. Radtke is not allowed to point out or put in writing that many of the performance evaluations had been written to protect or advance close in-house personnel favored by the front office. At times even the Head Deputy Forester thought this front office pressure unprofessional and provided blank evaluations forms to be filled out by such personnel themselves. When Dr. Radtke was also provided such blank performance evaluations he refused to fill them out for himself as he also viewed this as unprofessional; knowing that, as the alternative, he would receive mark-downs as this was required of his superiors to keep things in balance and would also make it easier to perform his job without too much front office ‘political’ interference. Performance evaluations were generally required to be based on how you performed your job based on your own ability to perform. Unfortunately, such performance evaluations were then used as a basis to advance less-qualified people into ‘over their head’ positions).

Thereafter the Fire Prevention Chief will be leaving for vacation and the Head Deputy Forester, returning from vacation, will be responsible for implementing these changes without being able to provide any management input on his own. Radtke notes in a memo to the Fire Prevention Chief on communication that “I am very much concerned about the present management of the Forestry Division which apparently discriminates against me from having an active input... It is difficult to carry out an effective program in such a way.”

1982 September – Fire Chief tries to prevent payment to printer for the June printing of the “fire booklet.”

As per request to furnish some booklets, Radtke calls a field office of the Third District Supervisor. Radtke

is told that the Fire Prevention Chief told staff that the books are available through the Fourth District Supervisor who ended up with 5,000-6,000 copies. He is also told “that the matter is being handled.”

The Fire Prevention Chief forwards to the Chief of the Purchasing and Stores Department a cover letter for the requisition for payment to the printer (printing bill for *A Homeowner's Guide...*), outlining “the details involving the failure to follow County procedures in securing printing services for the subject publication.” Nowhere does it acknowledge the nature of the cooperative research agreement and the interagency efforts in producing it in a timely manner. It also does not acknowledge the fact that the Fire Department purposely precipitated the “problem” by ordering the department's Accounting to reject payment for the invoices.

1982 September 21 – Board of Supervisors unanimously votes to reprint 25,000 copies of “fire booklet.”

When the Fire Chief states in a September 17 interview with the *Los Angeles Herald Examiner* that there was no money for reprinting of the (Radtke) fire booklet, the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors surprised and angered him four days later by passing a unanimous motion to reprint 25,000 copies of the fire booklet because “... demand from communities has been overwhelming and supplies have been exhausted.” However, the Chief will not allow reprinting of the booklet unless he is in control of it and makes changes, signifying that it is a Fire Department only publication inclusive of removal of Dr. Radtke as the author. He further prevents timely payment of the initial June 1982 printing of the booklet from Forest Service funds through the cooperative research agreement approved by the Board of Supervisors, despite the fact that it was distributed by supervisors.

Because of the County Supervisors’ order to reprint the booklet and the Fire Chief’s attempts to stop it, tensions are high and fears and rumors are circulating within the Fire Department. Everyone tries to protect his job and is not quite certain from where the wind will be blowing. Dr. Radtke states in a memo:

“The rumors I have heard in the field since June 29 also do not reflect well on our Department. For example the rumor that the Chief is personally opposed to the booklet, to the logos, to the credits, to the introduction, to me, or Forestry, etc., and that possible changes contemplated in the technical section of the booklet, are to mask these other proposed changes.... To date, I have not heard of any possible changes and have also not found any written policy or policy change within the last three years regarding roof sprinklers. If the County printing proceeds without any change, the booklet will continue to have state-wide appeal.” (Meaning that it was written as an interagency publication for general appeal and not for the political advancement of one Fire Department or individual.)

A Santa Monica Mountains homeowner's group contacts Radtke about the name of the printer to personally fund the immediate reprinting of the booklet. They have heard about the recent board motion to publish the booklet, but upon contacting the supervisor offices, could not confirm a printing date. The printer and costs are provided.

In a meeting called by the Forest Service between Forest Service personnel and Dr. Radtke, concern is expressed by Forest Service personnel that the County Fire Chief is apparently shutting down the state-wide reprinting of *A Homeowner's Guide...* He is questioned as to what can be done about it but does not have the answers. Radtke is told that everything (including the above book) he writes supported by federal project money is a public document once it is printed and can be claimed under the privacy act. Additionally, the booklet has no copyright and no statement prohibiting its reprinting.

1982 September – Demotion of Chief Radtke continued since he refuses to “finger” Supervisors, others.

On the Fire Chief’s insistence, the demotion procedure of Chief Radtke is continued with an investigative disciplinary hearing in front of chief officers at departmental headquarters. Dr. Radtke was requested to finger his boss (the Head Deputy Forester), other members of the Fire Department, members within the County supervisor offices, as well as the supervisors themselves for infraction of county policy for making the fire booklet possible, but he keeps silent and takes responsibility for his actions. Among other infractions, he is also charged with not contacting Fire Department headquarters on his chief's county car phone for instructions on where to deliver the fire booklets when he picked them up from the printer. To the astonishment of many

chiefs, he points out that the department refused to give him either a chief's car or a chief's badge so that he cannot be prosecuted for this perceived insubordination. He wins a few silent friends among chief officers while most of them side with the County Fire Chief (so as not to risk their careers) in going forward with "making life in the fire department a living hell on a daily basis" for him.

During a break in the hearing, Radtke dashed to the adjacent coffee room to get a cup of coffee. Many chief officers kept awake with their cups of coffee while none had been offered to him. To his astonishment several of the chiefs jumped quickly up from their seats at the long, oval table and tried to beat him to the coffee room door, telling him in the process that they would bring him coffee, etc. Somehow Chief Radtke, suspecting something, manages to open the door first and comes face to face with the Assistant Fire Chief pouring himself a cup of coffee. Later, Radtke is told by a friendly fire chief that the conference room is "bugged/recorded" so that the Chief can sit in his office unbeknown to the people attending a hearing or accused of department infractions and can listen to what is going on and also may get an understanding of who is supporting him or is against him. So, unbeknown to Radtke, at least the Assistant Fire Chief (future fire chief 1984-1988) was listening in the Chief's office during Chief Radtke's demotion proceedings. No wonder that chiefs wouldn't speak up. They had to find Radtke guilty, start demotion hearings and discredit him as demanded by the Fire Chief.

Firefighters in the California Department of Forestry (CDF), without County Fire Chief Bragdon as their head, nevertheless join the Firefighter's Union.

1982 September 30 – Fire Chief continues to prevent payment for printing of June 1982 "fire booklet."

End of Forest Service contract year. U. S. Forest Service personnel from the Riverside Fire Laboratory call at 11:20 a.m. to inform Dr. Radtke that the U.S. Forest Service has not received the billing due today (for the "fire booklet") nor the budget adjustment for the printing requested by the County on July 30 and immediately approved and directly forwarded by the Forest Service to the Fire Chief on August 7. All such billing documents must have today's date or about \$16,000 in funding will be lost by the County.

1982 October 6 – Homeowner group reprints 25,000 copies of "fire booklet," infuriating the Fire Chief.

The chairman of the "Concerned Residents for Living More Safely at the Chaparral-Urban Interface," in informing the Fourth District Supervisor that the booklet is being reprinted by them, states

"Our group has raised funds for additional printing of 25,000 copies. As privileged homeowners in the Santa Monica Mountains, we wish to help pay for our own services as much as possible. Thanks to the support of the Board of Supervisors, we are enthusiastically working to make this valuable homeowner's guide available to others throughout California."

Additionally, signatures from more than 1,100 homeowners are presented to the Board of Supervisors requesting the reprinting of the book.

1982 October 8 – Fire Chief continues to claim that "fire booklet" is "his" publication.

Dr. Radtke comments to the Deputy Fire Chief in a memo on the publication *Living More Safely in the Chaparral-Urban Interface*, the parent publication of *A Homeowner's Guide*.... He points out that the Fire Chief, in his letter to the Board of Supervisors (May 3, 1982), requesting the approval of the cooperative research agreement with the Forest Service, made the inaccurate statement that the book "is a publication of the Department of Forester and Fire Warden."

1982 October 9 – Wildfire sweeps Malibu. Homeowners claim "fire booklet" helped save their homes.

On October 9, 1982, the 42,540-acre Dayton Canyon Fire swept out of Northridge, across the 101 Freeway and through Malibu's Trancas Canyon in a predictable pattern on its way to the beach, burning 85 homes. It was the first fire that had crossed the freeway on its way to the ocean since the freeway barrier had been constructed. While the community was again unprepared for such a rapid moving fire, mountain residents who had studied the fire booklet claimed that what they learned in the booklet saved their homes.

When the harassment and character assassination become too much to bear, Chief Radtke sets up a meeting with Firefighters 1014 Union officials in an attempt to stop the harassment (hopefully also being able to meet

the Chaplain), and file an official complaint against the Fire Chief and his top staff. Before leaving for the meeting, he is cautioned by a friendly chief "The Union is not your friend." While at this point still not aware of the confidential 1979 audit that elevated his fire prediction research as the highest priority within the Fire Department while at the same time severely affecting the future pay and promotions of some other Fire Department employees, he immediately becomes aware that he is apparently just a pawn in a much bigger 'chess game' of an all-out behind-the-scenes war fought by the Fire Fighter's Union and the County Fire Chief against the Board of Supervisors. The Union official, with a wave of his hand towards the distant direction of the Fire Department headquarters, tells Chief Radtke that all charges filed against him could be dismissed immediately (with a phone call) and everything could go back to normal (i.e., no further harassment, character assassination, etc.) if he would divulge all contacts he had with members of the Board of Supervisors and their staff, etc., so that they could be targeted by the Union. He is specifically told that the County Supervisors of the Fourth and Fifth District (they are named) are bad people causing harm to the Fire Department (and the Union) and that the Union had decided to use its resources to defeat them in the next election, but needed more concrete evidence on how they interfered with the Fire Department. The two supervisors in question were known to have strongly supported overall budget reductions and were known to have supported the implementation of the 1979 post-Proposition 13 audit. While Dr. Radtke does not agree with the pro-development philosophy of the named supervisors as it pertained to development in highly fire-prone areas, he nevertheless will not bear false witness against anyone and will not destroy peoples' careers and reputations for personal gains. Just to get out of the meeting and because he believes the meeting may be taped, Chief Radtke agrees that he would think it over but, of course, has no intention to return.

Back at headquarters, harassment of Dr. Radtke intensifies even further as it becomes clear to the Fire Fighters Union and the Fire Chief that Dr. Radtke would not "finger" anyone under further pressure (as he also had already previously refused to finger and lay blame on his boss, the Head Deputy Forester, or other members of the Department when encouraged/pressured to do so "to save his job"), would not divulge names and contacts (if any), and also would not succumb to the Fire Chief's demand to renounce his authorship of *A Homeowner's Guide...*. Time was running out on the Fire Department as the Board of Supervisors was passing another motion for the reprinting of the book and the Fire Chief and Fire Department apparently wanted to wrestle it from the public domain, control the reprinting, and claim it as their own.

1982 October 12 – Board of Supervisors again passes motion to reprint the "fire booklet" without delay.

Another motion is made by the Fourth District Supervisor at its Tuesday Board meeting and is approved unanimously by the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors, requesting the immediate reprinting of 25,000 copies of *A Homeowner's Guide to Fire and Watershed Management*.... This second motion states:

"1. In June of this year the Board, in conjunction with the Forester-Fire Warden and the U.S. Forest Service, distributed 7,000 copies of the booklet A Homeowner's Guide to Fire and Watershed Management at the Chaparral/Urban Interface. The first printing having been distributed, I moved on September 21, 1982, that an additional 25,000 copies be printed for distribution. However, these booklets have not been printed and made available for distribution...."

"Therefore I move that, 2. Further, that the Board of Supervisors request the booklet entitled A Homeowner's Guide to Fire and Watershed Management at the Chaparral/Urban Interface be reprinted without further delay, for immediate distribution throughout the area...."

1982 October 13 – County Fire Chief again distorts the facts to local newspapers.

A major Los Angeles daily newspaper, interviewing the County Fire Chief, among other comments, states:

"The County Fire Chief later explained that the free booklet was printed and distributed by the county under a federal grant which paid for only 7,000 copies. The Fire Chief announced that there may still be copies of the original available."

This was another public face-saving gesture by the County Fire Chief, distorting the facts.

To further justify his previous refusal to print the booklet as previously ordered by the Board of Supervisors, the Fire Chief is now forced to invent excuses such as using employees in other County departments to declare the "fire book" "illegal and unauthorized, requesting that changes be made prior to its printing."

1982 October 18 – Had people known about the “fire booklet,” they could have saved their homes.

An editorial in a Los Angeles County newspaper, commenting on the Topanga-Las Virgenes Resource Conservation District, notes:

“Had more people known what it was doing, chances are they would have been ready for the Dayton Canyon Fire that swept through their area last weekend It’s all in the 32-page booklet titled A Homeowner’s Guide to Fire and Watershed Management. And it’s been available free since summer.... For most of us, it’s not too late to get a copy. For some, it is too late, unfortunately.”

The Fourth District Supervisor requests from the County Purchasing Agent the immediate reprinting of *A Homeowner’s Guide to Fire and Watershed Management*.... “If printed as directed by the Board of Supervisors it could have been available to homeowners before the 1982 Dayton Canyon Fire.” The County Purchasing Agent replies that the version for which reprinting is requested by the Board of Supervisors is an unauthorized version. The Fire Chief has requested important changes. Proper bidding procedures will commence, etc., and, in any case, it could not have been made available prior to the 1982 Dayton Canyon Fire (the Fire Department will further delay the reprinting until March 1983, at which time they are in total control of the printing as well as distribution).

The Santa Monica Mountains Residents Association (SMMRA), the group that had *A Homeowner’s Guide*... reprinted at its cost (with the full knowledge and approval of the Forest Service), is distributing it at cost throughout the western United States. While the County Fire Chief and Fire Department are furious when they find out about it and try to suppress its distribution as it undermines their claims, enthusiastic response is received from many public agencies for reprinting of the book, including fire services throughout California.

The Los Angeles County Fire Department top staff sends its "Internal Investigation Team" (consisting of an entourage of several fire chiefs in their red cars) to question the president of the Santa Monica Mountains Residents Association. The team has already questioned, in regards to *A Homeowner’s Guide*..., members of: the press, outside agencies, the County Supervisor offices, the author of the booklet, the printer, etc. The president agrees to the first interrogation but refuses a second one because he considers it harassment and an invasion of his privacy.

The Fire Chief became further infuriated when it was discovered by the Fire Department that SMMRA was advertising in widely distributed publications such as *Sunset Magazine* the sale of the official Forest Service “fire booklet” at its cost of 50 cents/copy.

1982 October 15 – Fire Chief requests “fire booklet” bibliography w/o Dr. Radtke as author.

The Head Deputy Forester ‘requests’ from Radtke a “bibliography” of *A Homeowner’s Guide*..., the request initiating from the County Fire Chief. However, Dr. Radtke is at the same time cautioned that the request is a disguised legal means to later claim that Dr. Radtke took undue credit for the booklet and for justifying removing him as author and for having the booklet revised in the Chief’s favor, without Forest Service and Dr. Radtke's input.

(Having removed Dr. Radtke as author of *A Homeowner’s Guide*..., the Fire Chief could also perhaps more easily pressure the Forest Service into removing his name from its soon-to-be published unabridged Forest Service version *Living More Safely*... and claim it also as his/a Fire Departmental publication as was later documented).

Time was of the essence because of questions raised in public about the Fire Chief’s handling of *A Homeowner’s Guide* ... in light of the October 9, 1982 Dayton Canyon Fire, the Board of Supervisors' repeated demands to have it reprinted, and the public's impatience with the bureaucratic attitude of the Fire Department. Therefore:

1) the Fire Department was— behind-the-scenes—finalizing re-editing *A Homeowner’s Guide*... by removing Dr. Radtke's name as author as well as removing every reference to the soon-to-be published Forest Service unabridged version *Living More Safely*..., also written by Dr. Radtke (to assure that both booklets would

stay in the public domain, the Forest Service had made sure that every chapter within the booklet *A Homeowner's Guide...* referred to *Living More Safely...* as providing more in-depth information (than this abridged version could provide).

2) the Fire Chief was about to make a written announcement to the Board of Supervisors that Dr. Radtke was not the author and that *Living More Safely...* was also a County Fire Department book, (thus effectively 'stealing' the authorship from Dr. Radtke as well as the unabridged version from the U. S. Forest Service).

1982 October 25 – Dr. Radtke ordered to deny authorship of “fire booklet” but refuses.

When replying nine days later (the request gave a ten-day deadline), Radtke replies: “As requested, following is the bibliography of the booklet *A Homeowner's Guide to Fire and Watershed Management at the Chaparral/Urban Interface*.

"Radtke, Klaus W-H

"Living More Safely in the Chaparral-Urban Interface (A Guide to Hillside Management for Fire and Watershed Protection).

“Klaus W.H. Radtke

"Please note that this information is listed on page 1 of the *Homeowner's Guide...* It also incorporates state-of-the art knowledge”

He then also states:

“The fact that the Board became aware of the importance of this publication and recognized the need to expedite the contract resulted in an ongoing investigation of me by the Fire Chief immediately after the booklet was published. You have witnessed the negative attitude toward me from this investigation and the fear it caused as well as the intense pressure put upon us. In short, I have been intimidated and threatened and my reputation has been undermined by the Department. At times the work atmosphere was intolerable because of this. Now, I feel I am requested to deny my scientific background and involvement in producing an original document into which I also put a lot of personal time and finances. This I cannot do....”

1982 October 25-27 – Dr. Radtke attends CAL-Nevada-Hawaii Fire Council under “Supervisor protection.”

Dr. Radtke is urged to and interested in attending the October 27-28 California-Nevada-Hawaii Fire Council Conference in Reno but is afraid to attend and participate even on his own time because of possible reprisals by Fire Department top staff. The Fifth District Supervisorial representative to the conference encourages Radtke to attend, offering “protection” from possible repercussions. Radtke attends on his own time, displaying *A Homeowner's Guide...* and updating conference members that the booklet is now also available through a private organization. He is told by personnel from the California Department of Forestry that the County Fire Chief let it be known that their reprinting requests could not be expediently complied with because the "County Board of Supervisors wanted to make changes in the book." (Not true.)

1982 October 28 – Forestry Chief Radtke put under “house arrest” by Deputy Fire Prevention Chief.

At his Malibu field office the day after attending the conference, Chief Radtke is ordered by the Fire Prevention Chief to immediately report to Fire Department headquarters. After arriving there, he is officially transferred to headquarters, assigned to a windowless room without a telephone (under “house arrest”), forbidden to have any contact with the public (forbidden to use a departmental telephone, stripped of the county car and driven home after work so that he can use his own car the next day to report to H.Q. He is offered a ride home through a Battalion Driver if he cannot make his own arrangements during the day. The meeting was witnessed by the Acting Head Deputy Forester, whom the Fire Chief, after harassing Radtke and the present Head Deputy Forester out of the department by the end of the year, would ‘temporarily’ be promoted to Head Deputy Forester (before advancing his Union supporter, who had testified against the Head Deputy Forester and who was temporarily demoted in rank for hit-and-run drunk driving in a chief’s car, into this position). Radtke is also informed that his skelly letter, for which he is waiting and has already postponed his vacation, would be forthcoming the following week (A skelly letter is a letter informing the employee what disciplinary measures will be taken against him in order to demote him). Radtke has stated since the beginning of the harassment against him, and restates it again, that he will fight any disciplinary measures in civil service and the courts, if necessary.

When Radtke requests an explanation for the action which he views as a harassment disguised as disciplinary measures, he is told that it is management prerogative (within the Fire Department) and none would be given.

1982 November – Chief Radtke, under “house arrest,” continues to disseminate public safety information.

Agencies and homeowners looking for Dr. Radtke are now referred to Fire Department headquarters where his in-house (even whom he meets in the bathroom) as well as public contact and phone communication can be closely monitored as well as prevented by Fire Department personnel. Nevertheless, thanks to a thoughtful and sympathetic secretary, despite orders to the contrary, Dr. Radtke has occasional unmonitored use of the telephone. When contacted at Fire Department headquarters by members of the Orange County Fire Department and others who are looking for information about obtaining large quantities of *A Homeowner's Guide...*, he can therefore still guide them to the outside printer (as intended by the Forest Service) who can have the booklets printed within two weeks, and to the Santa Monica Mountains Residents Association which has purchased a set of plates from the printer. While Fire Department Union attorneys had told him that “Radtke must follow orders right or wrong to save his job,” he feels that he has a duty to provide and not withhold public safety information at any time but especially during critical emergencies such as the height of the fire season and also has no right to withhold any information in the public domain.

1982 November 1 – Chief Radtke forced to cancel public safety meetings.

Dr. Radtke, while taking a day of sick leave to attempt to recuperate from the intensive harassment, nevertheless writes a memo to Fire Department Chiefs titled “Homeowner Meetings - Public Contact” in order to minimize the harassment he knows he will receive when he returns to work the following day. In this letter he documents that after his removal from public field contact, he has cancelled (read: was forced to cancel) his present commitments inclusive of advising homeowners in the Dayton Canyon Fire area during a special meeting scheduled at 8:00 p.m., November 3. He notes “My stern, swift removal from public field contacts, especially after life-threatening emergencies of fire and flood, raises questions in the public’s mind as to my own and my Department’s professional integrity and may lead to confrontations with the Department if I volunteer my services.”

1982 November 2 – Republican candidate wins gubernatorial election. Fire Chief unlikely to advance.

The Republican candidate wins the gubernatorial election by a slight margin over the Democratic candidate. The appointment of the County Fire Chief as the new Director of the California Department of Forestry is in trouble (he is one of the top candidates), as the new governor will appoint the new director and is unlikely to appoint the Chief.

1982 November 2 – County Fire Chief tries to discredit “fire booklet” with Supervisor on vacation.

A meeting is quickly held in the offices of the Fourth District Supervisor as he is on vacation. According to the County Purchasing Agent, the meeting is attended by him, the County Fire Chief and his assigned County Counsel, the County's Assistant Administrative Officer, and the supervisor’s Chief Deputy who can be pressured by the Fire Chief.

1982 November 2 – Chief Radtke ordered to provide info. about all contacts with outside agencies.

The Deputy Fire Chief himself orders Dr. Radtke to immediately provide written explanation pertaining to his contacts with outside agencies (even contacts carried out after work on his own time) that pertained to distribution of *A Homeowner's Guide...* (as the Fire Department apparently considers it a crime worthy of disciplinary action and dismissal).

1982 November 2 – Chief Radtke answers deceptive accusations, upsetting the Fire Prevention Chief.

Since Dr. Radtke is now confined to headquarters without a telephone but has a typewriter, it is expected that he reply immediately to all charges hurled against him. In replying he notes that he is proud of the homeowner booklet.

1982 November 4 – Chief Radtke files charges against the Fire Chief and Fire Prevention Chief.

Dr. Radtke files grievances against the Fire Chief of the County of Los Angeles and the Chief of Fire Prevention, stating discrimination, harassment, not releasing public safety information in a timely manner, etc.

1982 November 4 – Fire Chief's deceptive changes to "fire booklet" forwarded to County Purch. Agent.

The County Fire Chief forwards to the County Purchasing Agent revisions for *A Homeowner's Guide...*, stating, "The revisions are limited primarily to typographical changes, including some additional material necessary to clarify the information presented. There are also some minor changes to line diagrams." Chief's signature attached.

These changes include the deletion of acknowledgements by the author of forestry professionals, the deletion of all forestry logos (both County Forestry Division and USFS research logo), deletion of the author's name on the front cover, deletion of the author's scientific title, deletion of references to the forestry profession or outside agencies, listing the author as editor (Radtke was forbidden to see any proposed changes as they were done in secrecy) and, most obviously, the rewriting of the introduction. Very important to the Fire Department, the revised version attempted to eliminate the references in each chapter of the booklet to the unabridged version *Living More Safely in the Chaparral-Urban Interface* which the Forest Service was in the process of printing but which the County Fire Chief had also claimed as his own to the County Board of Supervisors. (Here, apparently the Chief by far overreached his authority, apparently hoping that he could also suppress the Forest Service printing of this book as this would enhance his claim that Radtke was not the author but just an editor.)

When the Fire Chief addressed a letter to the Board of Supervisors on November 15 (three days after forcing Dr. Radtke from his job), presenting these changes and claiming that Dr. Radtke was the editor and not the author, the Forest Service when contacted, and members of the Board of Supervisors who had been aware of the scandal, apparently did not back down. Forest Service scientists were apparently particularly insulted by the Fire Chief's attempt to not only remove the author's name from a publication they had participated in, but also to attempt to insinuate that it was a compilation of the knowledge of many other people without any original input by the author (this was a direct slap in the face of scientists and authors anywhere).

(In the March 1983 revised reprinting of *A Homeowner's Guide...*, the Fire Chief had to back down and include references to *Living More Safely in the Chaparral-Urban Interface* as being written by the same author, and list Dr. Radtke as the author [but strongly objecting to any reference of "academic titles such as Ph.D."]. A compromise was made by listing him by his official Fire Department title "Senior Deputy Forester Klaus W. H. Radtke." This was required because the Fire Chief had failed in his hard-fought attempts to demote Dr. Radtke to Deputy Forester and further to Forestry Assistant when Radtke continued to document the department's suppression of public safety information and not follow orders "right or wrong").

As far as the Forest Service publication *Living More Safely in the Chaparral-Urban Interface* is concerned, the County Fire Chief was able to delay the printing of the book for another year after forcing Radtke and his boss from County service by the end of December 1982 and insisting that the book had to be reviewed by his staff and could not be printed until the revisions would be returned to the Forest Service research staff. However, when the "face-saving revisions" were not forwarded to the Forest Service in a timely manner, Forest Service staff gave a deadline and told the Fire Chief that the book would be published without his input unless suggested additions/revisions were received by a certain date, as the publication date had already been listed as 1983 since the publication freeze had been removed by President Reagan. However, additions/suggested changes/compromises to "save the Fire Chief's face" were not received in a timely manner. When finally received, they were quickly reviewed by Forest Service scientists and then quickly forwarded to Dr. Radtke at his home for his final input. *Living More Safely in the Chaparral-Urban Interface* was finally published the next year even though the intent of the Forest Service was to have it published at about the same time as an unabridged version of *A Homeowner's Guide...* so that it could be used as a reference book. This was clearly stated throughout *A Homeowner's Guide...* through constant references such as "For more detailed information refer to *Living More Safely in the Chaparral-Urban Interface*."

1982 November 4 – County Purchasing to President of SMMRA: Stop distribution of "fire booklet."

The County Purchasing Agent immediately writes the president of the Santa Monica Mountains Residents

Association a letter stating that "The first printing of *A Homeowner's Guide...* was distributed without proper editing and, therefore, is not an approved publication of the County of Los Angeles. They (the Board of Supervisors) did not specifically approve the printed version.... The County Fire Chief assured that the edited version, which contains a number of significant changes from the first text, will be delivered to me today or tomorrow.... I believe I speak for the Fire Department, the Chief Administrative Office and County Counsel in suggesting to you that you suspend your efforts to distribute the booklets which you now have.... At least two Board offices have indicated an interest in distributing the revised booklets."

1982 November 5 – Chief Radtke receives his official demotion letter which he fights immediately.

Timed by the Fire Chief to further discredit Dr. Radtke, he receives his skelly letter with intent to demote (insubordination, not following procedures, criticizing the County Fire Chief, embarrassing him with the publication of *A Homeowner's Guide...*, and other charges to discredit his good name). He lets it be known that he will fight all charges in Civil Service, and if necessary, in the courts. Firing as well as discrediting him to prevent public exposure at this time may have been viewed as the only alternative open to the Department.

1982 November 9 – Fire Dept. tries to gain control of, destroy old printing plates of "fire booklet."

At the request of the Fire Prevention Chief, the Fire Department's Procurement Officer writes a memo to the printer stating, "As of this date Mr. of Typographic Services Co. confirms that he will release the negatives as soon as he finishes the job." When the memo is delivered to Radtke, he does not honor the request to "borrow" the plates from the printer because the Fire Department's intentions are clear to him. Plates could be lost or could be 'accidentally' destroyed, as he is being told privately. Fire Department chiefs again call the printer to gain release of the plates but the ex-Marine printer stands his ground against the harassment by fire chiefs.

1982 November 10 – Dr. Radtke's attorney to Board of Supervisors: "Stop harassment of Dr., pay printer."

Dr. Radtke's personal attorney brings the matter to the attention of the Board of Supervisors by addressing the subject of "Failure of County Fire Department to comply with the Board's directive of September 21, 1982 to reprint 25,000 copies of *A Homeowner's Guide to Fire and Watershed Management at the Chaparral/Urban Interface.*" The letter outlines the actions taken by the County Fire Chief against Radtke in the Chief's attempt to suppress and rewrite the book and states: "The 'plates' needed to print the 25,000 copies of THIS BOOK are at the printer, and cannot be used to print more books until the printer is paid."

1982 November 12 – Chief Radtke declines to comply with Fire Prevention Chief's threatening orders.

Dr. Radtke is ordered by the Fire Prevention Chief, who is outraged about the attorney's contact with the Board of Supervisors, to call the printer to have the color films (plates) released immediately. Radtke declines on advice of his lawyer, pointing out that it is now a legal matter. The Fire Prevention Chief angrily points out that, since Radtke worked on the book on County time, the color films are the property of the Fire Department. This is a reversal of the comments of days earlier when the Fire Department just wanted to "borrow" the films. The Fire Prevention Chief then again erupts in a rage, screaming, pushing the telephone receiver into Radtke's face and again orders him to phone the printer immediately for release of the plates. When Radtke again declines, he is given 5 minutes to make up his mind and is told that immediate grave consequences will result if he does not comply with the direct orders. Radtke, in a daze, is guided out of the Chief's office by the Head Deputy Forester. Upon being ushered into the room about ten minutes later, Radtke declines to call the printer. The Fire Prevention Chief then expresses "that he has had it with the foresters" and makes it clear that the refusal is disobedience of a direct order and further charges would be filed against Radtke (however, he is not dismissed on the spot).

1982 November 12 – Harassment exceeding capacity to absorb anymore, Radtke sees doctor, takes off sick.

After work, Dr. Radtke sees a doctor to be able to cope with the extreme harassment and pressure hurled against him on a daily basis. He takes several days of sick leave thereafter. But the extreme harassment continues nevertheless. The fire chiefs of the "Internal Investigation Team" then repeatedly visit his home in an attempt to serve him with further charges. Often arriving in separate cars, they are refused entry into

Radtke's home by his wife, including at one point, a late-night almost 'forced' entry. Radtke's doctor recommends that he not return to work as harassment would continue relentlessly.

1982 November 13 – President of SMMRA to County Purchasing Agent: “Go fly a kite.”

The president of the homeowner's group replies to the County Purchasing Agent:

“I have never seen a Purchasing Agent with such far-reaching jurisdiction. Congratulations!... As spokesman for the County of Los Angeles and the Board of Supervisors you are no doubt aware of publications in three local newspapers praising and enthusiastically endorsing this booklet by the Supervisors. You must know the Fire Chief circulated (with his attached interoffice memo!) this same booklet to his own fire stations, as well as members of Planning Departments, Watershed Committees, Regional Planning Departments, City Councils, City Mayors, etc., etc. I have no intention of withholding this highly praised valuable booklet from distribution to homeowners anywhere it may be useful and wanted. cc: County Board of Supervisors....”

1982 November 15 – Attempted theft of authorship along with lies by County Fire Chief.

Attempted theft of authorship along with lies: The County Fire Chief addresses a letter to the Board of Supervisors stating: “In order to clarify the events and circumstances experienced by this department concerning the above subject publication (*A Homeowner's Guide...*), the following is respectfully submitted.” Starting with May 11, 1982, and not addressing the issues leading to the Board approval of the contract to write the booklet, the Fire Chief states:

“This publication represents a compendium of resource information submitted by over 100 various contributors, and edited by our Departmental employee.” [This comment is to justify why the chief ‘stole’ Radtke’s authorship and removed Radtke as author of his edited version. Radtke as the so-called “editor” was never allowed to see any editorial changes.] The letter goes on:

“...this Department was refused the opportunity to review the publication.” [Not true, as the Fire Department Public Information Officer reviewed it and provided written comments.]

“County Counsel has since advised us that our proposed editorial revisions, although seemingly minor, are significant in relation to application of Fire Department policy and requirements” [what are these?]. “In response to your Honorable Board’s request to Purchasing and Stores ... this Department has submitted the recommended revisions. Purchasing and Stores has completed the necessary typesetting, and we are attempting to assist them in procuring a set of photographic negatives required to expedite the order.”

(The revisions were withdrawn later by the County Fire Chief when it became clear that County Counsel or the Board would issue payment to the printer and the County would then acquire a set of films. In the final revisions, not forwarded to the Purchasing Agent until January 1983 [the reprinting was therefore held up for several months by the Fire Chief after the County received a set of the films], Radtke is again listed as the author but stripped of his academic title Ph.D.)

The letter continues for four pages and seems to be designed to discredit the author of *A Homeowner's Guide...* and to tell the Board of Supervisors to keep out of departmental matters, and show that the Fire Chief is powerful and has the support of County Counsel and other high ranking County employees within other County departments.

1982 November 16 – Chief Radtke files for temporary occupational injury due to harassment.

Dr. Radtke files for occupational injury and temporary disability, citing acute depression “due to undue pressure and harassment at work” while performing “regular job duties in research and as section head.” He lists that the accident was caused by “superiors in the Fire Department, specifically the Fire Prevention Chief and County of Los Angeles Fire Chief.” Harassment continues nevertheless as telephone calls to his home continue and Radtke is requested over the phone to listen to further charges against him. When he declines, his telephone rings twice again, once for over twenty times, the second time for over thirty times. Thereafter, a Los Angeles County Fire Department helicopter circled the slopes adjacent to his home at house level.

1982 November 17 – Harassment continues: Fire Prevention Chief hurls further charges against Radtke.

In Radtke’s absence, the Fire Prevention Chief charges him in writing with further charges of insubordination, stating “... on November 12, 1982 you were ordered by me to immediately provide this Department with a set of negatives for the recent Departmental publication Your refusal to comply with my order is duly noted,

and constitutes an act of insubordination on your part.”

1982 November 17 – Fire Chief’s threat, intimidation, harassment of printer (a retired Marine) fails.

The same day the above letter is written, the printer of *A Homeowner’s Guide...* meets with the Fire Chief and the Purchasing Agent at Fire Department headquarters. Their attempt to wrestle the plates from the printer, despite threats of being redlined from further County job bidding, fails. The next day the Purchasing Agent, in a letter to the printer, states:

“This morning I spoke with the Fire Chief’s attorney in the County Counsel’s office and I understand that the Board of Supervisors will be asked to authorize a lawsuit against Dr. Klaus Radtke to force him to give up the pictures and/or the set of negatives which you provided to him.” [The Purchasing Agent does not disclose that Dr. Radtke paid for the color films in excess of \$700.00]. *“The County Counsel is also considering an injunction against the president of the Santa Monica Mountains Residents Association to prevent the distribution of his version of the pamphlet”* [again the Purchasing Agent does not state that this is the same version as publicly distributed for many months and ordered reprinted by the Board of Supervisors September 21 and October 12]. The Purchasing Agent then closes the letter by threatening *“I thought you might wish to discuss these documents with your attorney.”*

The printer is subsequently audited by the Franchise Tax Board.

1982 November 18 – County Purchasing Agent threatens president of SMMRA and printer.

The County Purchasing Agent replies to the president of the homeowner's group and falsely states:

“I am aware that the text of the booklet was never reviewed by the Fire Department nor by the Board of Supervisors.” He also claims that the publication is unauthorized simply because *“I refused to authorize such payment.”* He then threatens *“that the County is asking the Board to authorize an injunction against you and the Santa Monica Mountains Residents Association to prevent distribution! I am also contacting the Board of Equalization since your flyer indicates that the price you are asking includes sales tax....”*

(Since oral threats followed pertaining to confiscation of the "unauthorized" books, they were distributed among mountain homeowners for safeguarding and further distribution.)

The County Fire Department's "Internal Investigation Team" has continuously called the printer of *A Homeowner’s Guide...*, has visited him, and otherwise interrupted his business in order to get hold of the printing films (plates) without payment of the invoice for the *Homeowner’s Guide...* After the printer, a Vietnam veteran, stands firm on not releasing the color films to Fire Department chiefs directly but is willing to loan them on “Dr. Radtke's request,” the Fire Prevention Chief attempts to pressure Radtke into gaining control of the plates for the Fire Department. Radtke agrees to borrow the plates if he receives a written request from the Fire Chief stating that they will be returned upon completion of the reprinting ordered by the Board of Supervisors. This is angrily rejected. Next Radtke offers to loan his personal set of duplicate films but only to the Board of Supervisors or County Council, as he can trust their word that they will be returned. This is also angrily rejected (Radtke had quietly ordered a duplicate set of films from the printer in August of 1982 at his own cost in excess of \$700.00, to safeguard them and keep them in public domain). At the time it was feared that the Fire Department would wrestle the original plates from the printer without payment in order to destroy them or totally suppress or control all reprinting efforts. These plates are looked upon by supporting community leaders as public property and can be loaned to anyone requesting them.

1982 December – Fire Department forced to deliver County of Los Angeles-issued check to printer.

Fire Department personnel meet with the printer's representative. The check from the County of Los Angeles for the June 1982 total printing costs of *A Homeowner’s Guide...* is turned over to the printer's representative in exchange for a set of the color films of the booklet. A December 10 letter from the Fire Chief’s County Counsel then advises the printer:

“This letter will confirm that the County of Los Angeles hereby and herewith waives any and all legal recourse against you and/or your printing business for any acts arising to date in relation to the printing of the above-referenced pamphlet.”

A few weeks thereafter, the printer's representative receives a notice from County Counsel that his request for payment has been rejected despite the fact that payment had been made weeks earlier by representatives of the Fire Department (they could not get their act together).

1983 January 12 – Public agencies will continue to purchase at cost, distribute “fire booklet.”

At the regular January 12, 1983, meeting of the Topanga-Las Virgenes Resource Conservation District, the Board discusses the continued distribution of *A Homeowner's Guide...* received from the Fourth District Supervisor (despite intensive behind-the-scenes pressure by the Fire Department to discontinue its distribution) but is concerned that it is running out of copies without more being available. The president of the Santa Monica Mountains Residents Association offers to provide more copies at the 50 cents per copy printing cost incurred by the Association. The Board agrees to continue to make the *Homeowner's Guide...* available, even at minimal cost. The president of the Residents Association states that he will make inquiries with respect to the copyright of the booklet (to assure that it will stay in public domain). He is subsequently assured by Forest Service personnel that the original booklet is in public domain and can be reprinted through an 'outside' printer.

1983 March – A Homeowner's Guide... (“fire booklet”) finally reprinted now under Fire Chief's control.

In the latter part of the month the Fire Chief finally resubmits his final draft of the Fire Department's version of *A Homeowner's Guide...* The County's highest-ranking forester, the Head Deputy Forester, had been forced by Fire Department top staff into early retirement by the end of 1982 (be demoted or quit) and cannot respond to nor review these changes. The new Head Deputy Forester Chief will do/has to do what the Fire Chief orders.

A Homeowner's Guide... is finally reprinted under the control of the County of Los Angeles Fire Chief. The County Fire Chief now mails his new version to outside agencies stating in the attached letters: “These copies are a revised printing, which in addition to making necessary corrections to the first printing, contain additional information...”

1983 March – Newly elected California governor does not appoint County Fire Chief to higher position.

The newly elected California governor does not appoint the County of Los Angeles Fire Chief to head the California Department of Forestry, even though he had received much oral and written backing, as County Supervisors wanted him to leave and had even recommended him. Instead, a professional forester, educator, and professor of forestry economics is appointed. Attempts are immediately made to discredit him and prevent his confirmation. This fails.

1983 April 22 – Extreme harassment of Chief Radtke is publicly documented.

In a taped statement during one of three major fundraising and fact-finding parties held by mountain residents to defend Dr. Radtke against the Fire Chief's relentless charges and to forward charges against the Fire Chief for his dismissal by the Board of Supervisors, retired Head Deputy Forester Arthur Arndt emotionally states: “There was harassment of me for supporting Dr. Radtke and there was really—I don't know how to say this—but the harassment against Dr. Radtke was—I don't think any of you would have taken it—it must have been pure dedication on his part to take it the way he did...”

Dr. Radtke can not defend himself effectively against the County Fire Chief and his untrue claims and assertions brought forth in-house and in the media because he is warned that people within the Department who are suspected of being his sympathizers may suffer serious job consequences (their promotional opportunities and careers would be finished to say the least, especially if he publicizes the post-Proposition 13 audit). In a sad reflection of this, Dr. Radtke, perhaps absentmindedly, attempted to shake the hand of what he considered a friendly chief during a fire safety fair in Malibu. The chief, visibly afraid and disturbed, sidestepped him and ‘fled the scene.’ Sadly, this person was skipped over in subsequent promotions and finally left the Fire Department.

1983 July 7, 10, 17 – “Storm over Fire Book” breaks out in newspapers. Dismiss Fire Chief.

“Storm over Fire Book.” With headlines such as these in newspapers and messages that “pro-development groups and conservationists line up behind top fire expert who, say supporters, may be too smart for the Fire

Department,” such groups ask for the suspension of the Fire Chief while their investigation continues. After intensive investigations, hillside community leaders request the firing/dismissal/resignation of the County Fire Chief and present documented charges against him over his handling of the “fire book” (as it has become known) and for endangering public safety during times of public emergencies such as fires and floods. Specific charges are that the Fire Chief:

1. Neglected to prepare the public and his department for predictable wildfires.
2. Opposed and undermined recommendation of a recent tax audit.
3. Caused the harassment of private citizens as well as public employees.
4. Refused to educate the public adequately and in a timely manner on wildfire safety, at a time when fire hazard was extreme.
5. Has been insubordinate by refusing to obey mandates for public safety dictated by the Board of Supervisors.
6. Carried out such work for personal recognition and political considerations.

1983 August 4 – Delegations from 5 community associations bring charges against the County Fire Chief.

In a response to a news release by the SMMRA pertaining to the publication of the *Homeowners Guide...*, the firegate issue surrounding the County Fire Department, and the demands to investigate and remove the County Fire Chief, its president was contacted by Chair of the County Board of Supervisors for a meeting to resolve the case. Delegations from 5 community associations from the Santa Monica Mountains as well as Palos Verdes attended. Documents on the firegate scandal were presented and the group officially requested an investigation of the issues and the suspension of the Fire Chief during the investigation. Additionally, they asked for dismissal of the trumped-up charges against Dr. Radtke by the County Fire Chief for writing and bringing to press the “fire booklet.” Investigations had disclosed that the Fire Chief had effectively used the county bureaucracy as well as many of the chiefs in his own department (collusion) to fabricate charges that would be costly to overturn in Civil Service proceedings and would endanger the careers of County employees if Radtke would disclose the names of people that guided and helped him in publishing the booklet, as had been ordered by the Board of Supervisors. Supervisor staff was very sympathetic and recognized the charges against Radtke as “uncalled for and without merit.” They, therefore could be readily dismissed. However, the Fire Chief scandal is a totally different issue because he is very powerful, “a fixture at city hall,” and seemingly untouchable by the county supervisors. Staff, however, expressed a willingness to look into the case and get back with Dr. Radtke’s attorneys within about a week for a possible meeting. They asked “to tone things down” in the interim as it would be difficult for the County Fire Chief to leave office (gracefully) if such public disclosure continues.

Dr. Radtke let it be known that, in order to protect the careers of other County employees and the safety of private citizens, he would only testify on the firegate issues to the Board of Supervisors and in a Court of Law. However, he would continue to be uncompromising on public safety issues and would be available to the Board of Supervisors to defend public safety.

1983 July 29 – Special interest bill to change name of California Department of Forestry is vetoed.

Special Southern California unionized fire interests had been attempting to take control of the California Department of Forestry throughout the summer. After the state's firefighters were unionized, a bill was introduced in Sacramento which proposed to change the name of the Department of Forestry to Department of Forestry and Fire. Known as the Keenan bill, it dies in committee. The official name of the Los Angeles County Fire Department is Forester and Fire Warden. This department was founded in 1911 as the County Forestry Bureau. The County Fire Chief (Forester & Fire Warden, but no experience in forestry) was looking for support to be appointed as Director of the California Department of Forestry as he felt pressure from the Board of Supervisors to turn in his resignation and leave the County of Los Angeles. He applied for the position of Director and placed among top three candidates. On January 1983 AB 2081 (Floyd Bill) had been introduced to perhaps assist him with getting this position. It proposed to change the name of the California Department of Forestry to Department of Fire and Forestry. Assemblyman Floyd comes from Gardena; neighboring Lawndale’s fire protection is handled by the County Fire Department. The new governor did not select the Los Angeles County Fire Chief as State Director of Forestry (March 1983) and vetoes AB 2081 on July 29, 1983.

1983 August 10 – *A Homeowner's Guide...* = public domain.

A Homeowner's Guide to Fire and Watershed Management... is a public domain publication. USDA Forest Service Pacific Southwest Forest & Range Experiment Station, Berkeley Information Services, advises its readers in writing that their supply of *A Homeowner's Guide...* has been exhausted but that copies are still available from the National Foundation for Environmental Safety.

1983 – *Living More Safely in the Chaparral-Urban Interface* – Fire Chief still claims it as his publication.

After Radtke and the County Head Deputy Forester are forced from their jobs by the end of 1982, the County Fire Chief tries to stop/censure the publication *Living More Safely in the Chaparral-Urban Interface*, claiming it is also a Fire Department publication and even if to be published by the Forest Service, it first needs his review and required changes. Members of the Fire Department had already reviewed it in 1979 and 1980 and it had been sitting on the Fire Chief's desk for over a year for his review. Clearly irritated by this attitude, Riverside Fire Laboratory scientists finally set a deadline for having the publication returned to them with any proposed changes for review or it would be published as finalized through earlier peer review this year.

1983 December – *Living More Safely in the Chaparral-Urban Interface*. Fire Chief makes political changes.

The County Fire Department finally releases (is forced to release) the manuscript back to the Forest Service for printing with changes unbeknown to the author Radtke. These changes included replacing all references to the (State) Department of Forestry with the word Fire Department, research discussions not supporting County Fire Department policy had been changed, and the introduction eliminated in favor of a foreword by the County Fire Chief.

1984 August – *Living More Safely in the Chaparral-Urban Interface* returned to Dr. Radtke for final review.

In the final print-ready review of PSW-67 (*Living More Safely in the Chaparral-Urban Interface*) forwarded to Radtke at his home by the Forest Service after the County Fire Chief had resigned in March rather than being fired, these politically-inspired changes had finally been largely eliminated along with the forward by the County Fire Chief since it was not his department's publication. While Radtke was given only three days for the turn-around review since it apparently had to be printed by the end of the month, he was able to accomplish it, hoping that nothing had been overlooked by him.

1984 September 11 – *Living More Safely in the Chaparral-Urban Interface* print-ready review.

USDA FS PSW printing staff at Berkeley forwards the final print-ready document *Living More Safely in the Chaparral-Urban Interface* to Dr. Radtke at his home after having wrestled it earlier again from the Los Angeles County Fire Department. Vince Dong of PSW states “The date of the publication shown in the proofs is correct. Earlier, we had assigned that serial number (PSW-67) to your manuscript, and the date June 1983 corresponds to that number.” It could therefore have been printed earlier if the County Fire Department would not have taken control of the publication, actually attempting to prevent its printing. Dr. Radtke responds “I appreciate the dedication of the PSW staff for bringing it to a successful conclusion and for eliminating policy opinions by L.A. Co. F&FW I had objected to previously. While this at times required compromises, they are acceptable. Your staff has done an excellent job...”

1984 October – *Living More Safely in the Chaparral-Urban Interface*. Printed and distributed by USFS.

Living More Safely in the Chaparral-Urban Interface is ready for distribution as Gen. Tech. Rep. PSW-67 of the Pacific Southwest Forest and Range Experiment Station, Berkeley, CA, and is advertised as such in its quarterly publication lists.

1983 September (back to 1983)

Radtke files a lawsuit against the County Fire Chief and Deputy Fire Chief of Fire Prevention. Subsequently the acting Fire Chief makes contact with the Head Deputy Forester Arndt (who had been forced into early retirement in December 1982) and Radtke through a subordinate chief and tells them that the Forestry Bureau would be reestablished and that arrangements would be made to have them speedily back on the job as soon as the Fire Chief leaves town. However, Arndt and Radtke are cautioned against making any moves

(such as serving and publicizing the Radtke lawsuit) that would make it impossible for the County Fire Chief to get his new job. Thereafter Radtke is periodically informed by phone of the Fire Chief's progress in his attempt to secure a new position through appointment or confirmation (such as attempting to become head of the National Fire Protection Association or FEMA).

1984 February

Dr. Radtke is told that his return to his job as Senior Deputy Forester (or somewhat similar position) could be imminent as the Fire Chief will be leaving soon (apparently the Board of Supervisors and others had found him another face-saving job). However, he would have to accept a hand-slap to "save face" for the County Fire Department. No guarantees are suddenly offered that harassment would not continue or how harassment could be kept in check or that the Forestry Bureau would be reestablished and that he would be allowed to continue his job (unbeknown to Radtke, the Chief had apparently already outlined the job qualifications for his successor which would virtually disqualify other applicants and would assure that the Board of Supervisors would have to appoint the Assistant Chief ["breadth and length of managerial experience" within the Department is rated as of particular interest], thus not changing the status quo of strong management-union ties and covering up of the many internal scandals). Dr. Radtke emphasizes that he can not be part of a cover-up and that, before he can return, changes and accountability within the Fire Department system are required that allow a dialogue that permits open and ready dissemination of public safety information, precludes future harassment, and assures that he and cooperative research results would not be a pawn in future Fire Department struggles with the Board of Supervisors. He can not just return to 'save face' for the Fire Department and then face the same harassment all over again.

1984 March – County Fire Chief to be fired by Board of Supervisors unless he resigns ASAP.

Dr. Radtke receives a phone call at home from friendly insiders within the County Fire Department informing him to look Sunday in the *L.A. Times* as the Fire Chief will resign. He had just received a phone call from the County Supervisor offices informing him to resign or a motion will be made at next Tuesday's public meeting of the Board of Supervisors to have him dismissed/fired as County fire chief, as the Board of Supervisors now firmly has the three votes to do so (there are five County Supervisors). As is protocol, the Chief announces his retirement, which is published in the *Los Angeles Times* and other newspapers by the weekend prior to the regular Board of Supervisors meeting scheduled for the following Tuesday. Sadly, in a face-saving gesture for him, the County Board of Supervisors also gave him a "Golden Handshake" (two years' extra retirement benefits available for top management for excellence in service). It shows how powerful the firefighter unions are. Apparently the County Board of Supervisors had found him a new job.

Soon after, the County Board of Supervisors loses the struggle for change within the Department and appoints the Assistant Fire Chief, who had received strong support from the Union, as new County Fire Chief. It is apparently impossible for Dr. Radtke and Head Deputy Forester Arndt to return to their jobs without facing new harassment from the new Fire Chief and the Union. Promises made in February are not kept.

Dr. Radtke had won his disability lawsuit against the County of Los Angeles and the Fire Department largely on the strength of experts hired by the County of Los Angeles who sided with Dr. Radtke and against the County despite their expressed concerns that they may not receive any future business from the County. However, he refuses to sign the legal papers initiating his retirement pay because he wants to effect changes within the County system and the County Fire Department.

1984 April 18 – "Retired" Los Angeles County Fire Chief nominated Administrator of USFA.

"President Reagan announced today his intention to nominate Clyde Bragdon, Jr., to be Administrator of the United States Fire Administration, Federal Emergency Management Agency. He would succeed Bobby Jack Thompson. Since 1977 Mr. Bragdon has been serving as county forester, fire warden, and fire chief for the county of Los Angeles.

"Fireman Glendale (California) Fire Department, 1952-1956. Fire engineer Los Angeles County Fire Department, 1956-1960, captain, 1960-1964, battalion chief, 1964-1970, assistant fire chief, 1970-1973, deputy fire chief, 1973-1977, county forester and fire warden, fire chief, 1977-1984. Member International

Association of Fire Chiefs, Metropolitan Fire Chiefs (board of directors 1982-84), California Fire Chiefs Association.”

It seems to be standard procedure for fire chiefs that have to leave their jobs for various reasons to be given face-saving new positions. For example, a former Los Angeles City Fire Chief surprised the community by questioning the department’s historic position on banning fireworks within the city. As reported in the *Los Angeles Times*, after his sudden (forced?) retirement as fire chief, he apparently took on a new position as administrator of the National Fire Protection Association’s new research foundation. The newly appointed City Fire Chief reiterated the department’s strong opposition to the sale of fireworks within the city. Subsequently, the *Los Angeles Times*, covering the public corruption trial of convicted fireworks magnate Moriarty, reported that allegations had been raised that the retired City Fire Chief had accepted large sums of "no interest loans."

October 1984 – Living More Safely in the Chaparral-Urban Interface.

The National Foundation for Environmental Safety (NFES) enters into a cooperative agreement with the USDA Forest Service pertaining to supporting its scientific information on fire protection and management of wildlands at the urban-wildland interface in southern California, contributing \$750 for this endeavor. In return the Experimental Station provides NFES with 1,000 copies of the publication *Living More Safely in the Chaparral-Urban Interface.*

1984 October 20 -- Conference: “Living in the Chaparral of Southern California.”

A conference and workshop sponsored by the National Foundation for Environmental Safety and the National Park Service is held at the Los Angeles County Museum of Natural History on October 20, 1984. As program organizer and with the director of the State Department of Forestry (CDF) as keynote speaker, Dr. Radtke coordinated the presentations of experienced professionals in their fields that included such wide-ranging subjects as Land Use and Planning, Development and Public Safety, Wildland Fire and Watershed Management, Flood and Erosion Control, Geology, Fire Ecology, Insurance Coverage & Cost, Disaster Preparation & Assistance, and Disaster Psychology.

1985 – Conference book published: *Living in the Chaparral of Southern California.*

A more technical publication, *Living in the Chaparral of Southern California: An Integrated Approach to Public Safety*, is published in 1985 by the National Foundation for Environmental Safety in cooperation with the National Park Service, Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area. It is a natural extension of the two publications *Living More Safely ...* and *A Homeowner's Guide ...* and summarizes the proceedings of the conference and workshop held at the Los Angeles County Museum of Natural History on October 20, 1984.

During the mid to late 1980s, Dr. Radtke gives many free seminars in Los Angeles County, other areas, and also the University system (UCLA, UCB, San Luis Obispo) on living more safely in fire-prone environments. He writes fire history and fire prediction articles for local newspapers which are published along with maps and is requested to provide his expertise on these subjects as shown below.

1985 December 30 – City of Santa Barbara fire concerns.

Sheila Lodge, Mayor of the City of Santa Barbara, after learning that Dr. Radtke will speak to the members of the Botanical Garden Society in January 1986, requests that he provide his expertise to a local citizens group (Firescapes) developing a “Wildfire Landscaping Demonstration Garden.” She writes:

“Your expertise in the area of wildfire and flood protection is highly regarded in this area by landscape architects and wildfire managers. I would therefore like to invite you to meet with members of Firescapes for the purpose of analyzing their plans for obtaining any recommendations.

“I want to express my appreciation for the significant contributions your efforts have made in protecting the residents of Southern California from fire and flood. I look forward to the opportunity of meeting you in person.”

1986 – Fire Dept. will not change. Dr. Radtke officially retires from County services

Dr. Radtke, after collapsing during a dinner with his wife, finds himself mesmerized in the intensive care unit of a local hospital for heart patients. Luckily it was just stress. His attorney, who immediately rushes to the hospital, chastises him for being very stubborn and attempting to effect changes within the County Fire Department where changes are not possible, and for putting the financial future of his family in continuous jeopardy by refusing to sign his retirement papers, with fatherly advice “forces” him to sign his retirement papers while being flat on his back. Thereafter, Dr. Radtke is contacted by County agents to participate in retraining programs that would cost the County taxpayers up to \$50,000 in order to qualify him for new jobs. Dr. Radtke declines, stating that he was harassed out of the County system by the Fire Chief and, with a Ph.D. from U.C. Berkeley, he would stand on his own two feet, not accepting the charity of the County to save face for the Fire Department and its new chief.

1986 March – Dr. Radtke recognized by California Department of Forestry.

Upon continuing his independent career focused on furthering public safety education, Dr. Radtke is recognized by the Director of the California Department of Forestry (now California Department of Forestry & Fire) as a national authority on vegetative fuel and wildland/urban interface fire management. Additionally, commendations by the Director state: "Dr. Radtke has broken new ground with his popular state-of-the-art publications which are used by public and professional resource agencies throughout the southwestern United States."

After having attempted to spearhead the public's concern for a more integrated approach to conservation of natural resources, the public planning process, and to living more safely in fire-, slide-, and flood-prone environments within Los Angeles County and its Fire Department through such state-of-the-art publications as *Living more Safely in the Chaparral-Urban Interface* and *A Homeowner's Guide to Fire And Watershed Management ...*, Dr. Radtke also continues such work as nonpaid volunteer director of the National Foundation for Environmental Safety and president of Geo Safety, Inc., the company he founded. He appears on radio, in numerous newspaper articles, and on television inclusive of Good Morning America. In addition to his Ph.D. from U.C. Berkeley, Dr. Radtke also holds lifetime teaching, supervisory and administrative credentials with the California Community College System, qualifying him as a Community College administrator.

1986 September 13-18 – Denver National Wildland/Urban Fire Protection Initiative (Conference).

The US Forest Service, through its 5-year 1977-1982 Chaparral Research and Development Program, had already strongly supported finding solutions for reducing the ever-increasing structural losses in watershed fires as development encroachment into wildland areas was also greatly limiting its mandate of effectively managing the country's public natural resources. It had therefore been at the forefront of expanding such work into a country-wide awareness of the problems and working with agencies in finding effective solutions. Partnering with the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) and the U.S. Fire Administration administered by FEMA, in 1985 it therefore called for a National Wildland/Urban Fire Protection Initiative. The initiative was put in place in April 1986 by first forming a task force of 30 national leaders in their field inclusive of the Director of the California Department of Forestry (now Cal Fire). He had already been in the forefront of such efforts such as being the keynote speaker at the joint National Foundation for Environmental Safety (NFES) and National Park Service symposium and workshop *Living In The Chaparral of Southern California* held October 20, 1984, at the Los Angeles County Museum of Natural History. It brought together more than 20 public agencies and private organizations and had been organized by Dr. Radtke as NFES' then volunteer Executive Director.

The goal of the April 1986 task force workshop was to find ways to reduce the losses of life, property, and natural and economic resources from fires occurring in the wildlands/urban interface. Its strategies were to assemble principal organizations and individuals concerned with the wildland/urban fire problem: to exchange views and to recommend actions addressing the problem. Objectives were to a.) Assess the current status of the wildland/urban fire problem; b.) Identify factors contributing to the problem; c.) Identify ways to mitigate contributing factors; d.) Produce a report recommending a course of action that will lead to a national focus in developing and implementing solutions by government, private interests, and the public to the wildland/urban fire problem.

Its specific outputs were to plan for a NATIONAL WILDLAND/URBAN FIRE PROTECTION CONFERENCE (then set for September 15 - 18, 1986) that could produce a report for public use that defines the fire problem and recommends a course of action for problem resolution by government, private interests, and the public. In preparing for the conference, the task force was to further:

- a.) gather information and information sources for development of a national wildland/urban fire protection problem statement;
- b.) provide guidance for planning a National Wildland/Urban Fire Protection Conference that will assist in the selection of conference topics and priorities for conference attention.
- c. identify individuals and organizations willing to commit resources to assist in the development of problem solutions.
- d. identify individual and organizations with a potential role in the development of problem solutions.

The September 1986 NATIONAL WILDLAND/URBAN FIRE PROTECTION CONFERENCE that followed was based on the concerns that “the 1985 wildfire season was one of the worst in United States history with more than 1,400 structures and dwellings fire-damaged or destroyed, 44 fire-related deaths, and 3 million acres of Federal, State, and private land burned. This problem is caused both by wildland fires threatening developed areas as well as the threat that development poses to the wildland environment. The final figure in all likelihood will exceed \$500 million of private and taxpayer funds.”

The questions were asked: Who is responsible for the solution, the fire protection agency, the homeowner, the county planner?

In answering this question, it was acknowledged that the responsibility for fire protection cannot be relegated to a single element of society but calls for the combined efforts of governmental agencies, the private sector, and individuals. Just a few of the groups that share in the responsibility include: a) Homeowners; b.) Fire protection agencies; c.) Local and regional planners; d.) Media and communication experts; d.) Insurance carriers; e.) Builders, contractors, and architects; f.) Training and Motivational experts

Broken up into 12 working groups, conference participants provided meaningful recommendations to end “Management by Crisis” through planning and development guidelines. Being a “Boots-on the-Ground” activist, and having worked with homeowners, homeowner associations as well as agencies, I strongly stressed the following:

- A. There is public concern about fire risk at the wildland-urban interface.
- B. Statewide minimal standards for zoning, building codes, hazard reduction ordinances along with mandates for regional and local enforcement are needed.
- C. CC&R requirements for all new development have to be established that include public safety and fire hazard regulations for the long-term maintenance of the development to be paid through homeowner assessments as stated in the CC&R’s.
- D. Ongoing education & training of professionals as well as the public in local communities is needed.
- E. Updating of plans, codes, regulations to incorporate present technology and future needs.
- F. Delineation of hazardous areas after providing effective definitions of hazards.

So, what went right and what went wrong over the last 30-40 years. The \$500 million wildfire related damage throughout the country in 1985 seems to be just a “drop in the bucket” compared to the accelerating fire losses in California alone. The 2017 Santa Rosa “design-for-disaster” fire burned about 4,800 largely wood-roof homes in the city alone, with firebrands jumping the 101 freeway as if it did not exist, resulting in a huge urban renewal project. The 2018 “design-for-disaster” Paradise Fire in Northern California and also to some extent the predictable path of the Woolsey that burned at the same time in Southern California continued this destructive path. Large fires burning at the same time or fires, predictably, reburning the same area years later are part of the fire wind (devil wind, or Foehn wind) patterns that are more common in Southern California.

Have any lessons been learned? Perhaps not. Money talks? The Oakland Tunnel Fire of 1991 in Northern California burned only 1,500 acres but destroyed 2,843 single-family dwellings, 437 apartment and

condominium units and killed 25 people. Its economic loss in 1991 USD was estimated at 1.5 billion. As evaluated in July 2019, a somewhat similar disaster on a perhaps smaller scale could happen any time under similar fire weather conditions as hazardous fuels have increased in some of the fire area along with continuous buildout of the remaining fire and slide-prone lots. Will the fire-related costs of fires fanned by “Santa Ana winds” now regularly exceed 1 billion USD because of the accelerating estate prices?

In response to the National Wildland/Urban Fire Protection Initiative fire agencies throughout the country largely tried to respond quickly by providing updated or new brochures on minimum brush clearance/hazardous materials clearance requirements along with proposed minimal access and building code recommendations. However, often they could not agree, acknowledge, along with public officials, that landscape vegetation could be just as flammable as native vegetation while initiating hazard mitigation projects inclusive of prescribed burning. But these efforts seemed to be just “A Drop in the Bucket” compared to the proliferation of development in fire-, flood- and slide prone watersheds. Often, local officials, in approving such new development to increase the local tax base and also please special interest groups, provided variances or ignored meaningful codes and ordinances. While there was continuous public outcry about fire losses and the question of who should pay for them, meaningful changes were generally hard to come by as they would encroach on the freedoms and life-styles of people living in such disaster-prone environments.

Apparently there were also turf problems within agencies that undermined even productive public safety efforts. So, let us just take one example and learn from it. The Los Angeles County Fire Department, in response to its 1979 post Proposition Management audit that proposed to streamline the department by 14% and at the same time focus some of its resources on practical research and applications for reducing fire losses in wildland watersheds, shut such research down and squashed the audit. This also sent a strong message to its public officials: “Don’t mess with the fire unions.” Fast forward to 2018. The *Los Angeles Times*, as it had done many times before, disclosed further mismanagement in government agencies. This time it pointed out that despite the yearly over \$1 billion budget for the Los Angeles County Fire Department, its overtime had increased by about 35% in the last five years with some fire captains making almost \$300,000 in overtime alone in 2017. This uncontrolled, great increase in overtime endangered other social service projects and also, of course, effective resource management. One does not have to be a mathematician to realize that if the department would have been streamlined as was suggested in the 1979 audit, at least \$1 billion could have been saved in the last thirty years, and about \$100 million presently every year. What about the thousands of homes lost after all wildland fire safety research was shut down? Is this also a reflection of how other agencies work?

The above is now “water under the bridge.” Perhaps we can not change all agency behavior and won’t be able to get everyone working together for the common good despite what was proposed in the 1986 Denver conference. However, I truly believe that there are still ways to greatly reduce the present wildland fire losses by depending on the individual and living by example.

If every firefighter living in fireprone watersheds would set an example of how to live more safely by creating a fire-safe environment within his or her property, and also every public servant following suit along with public building being maintained in a fire-safe state, the community would pay attention. Seeing is believing and understanding. It is just like a child looking up to a parent, watching and wanting to learn. Neighbors would follow the example and it would carry into the community. So, let us all work together.

A somewhat embarrassing “carrot before the horse” approach would be to publish a full color brochure of properties of fire personnel and public officials within fireprone communities. Many do not live a fire-safe example. Google documentation could assist with such a project. This would be a more extreme but perhaps more effective case of protecting life and property and more quickly reducing the all too predictable fire losses.

On the other hand we have to give credit to those “Boots-on-the-Ground” fire chiefs that try to stand their ground with obstinate owners that want to have it their own way, thereby endangering themselves and the community. One such chief, as the story goes, had placed red stones adjacent to the driveways of owners that kept dragging their feet with complying even with minimum fire safety standards. When one of the homeowners

inquired what the red stones were all about, he told him that he had instructed his staff to bypass these homes in a wildfire as he did not have enough resources to defend these homes.

While every situation is different, another approach would be to train willing homeowners the “art of protecting their home.” Many homeowners in high risk fire areas are willing to attend and pay for wildland fire training courses to learn how to live in a fire environment and how to prepare for and save one’s home. For example, after the November 2, 1993 Old Topanga Fire in the Santa Monica Mountains, NFES also asked homeowners the following question pertaining to the fire which almost every single, physically able homeowner answered in the affirmative.

“Would you support a certified (40-hour) citizen training course (with bi-annual re-certification) that would teach you how to make your home and neighborhood more fire-safe and how to protect your home in a wildfire provided your certificate would allow residents access in fire closure areas (under most situations) if your house and neighborhood meets certain fire safety standards?”

The positive outcome of the post-fire Volunteer Fire Panel established in December 1993 by concerned homeowners was that they were invited to participate in the following courses for firefighters. Today experienced retired fire personnel also offer similar courses geared towards homeowners. Professional fire departments are encouraged to positively support such efforts as part of their policy and not oppose them. This would go a long way to saving homes and reducing the loss of life in wildland fires.

MALIBU RESIDENTS (1994)

SURVEY: FIRE EDUCATION AND TRAINING

For those of you who want to join others in forming the Malibu Volunteer Fire Fighting Company, please contact

FSTEP: FIRE SERVICE TRAINING AND EDUCATION PROGRAMS

The FSTEP courses are designed to provide residents and volunteers with hands-on training in fire fighting, extrication, rescue, vehicle and pump operations. These courses are delivered through registered instructors and are designed for weekend and evening presentation. At the end of each course, you will receive a California State Fire Marshall's certificate of completion from the instructor. There is a minimal fee for books and materials. Please indicate those programs which interest you on page 3, and return your selection by mail.

In Malibu, residents are encouraged to consider the following minimum three courses: Fire Control 1, 2 and 6.

Fire Control 1

Basic Fire Chemistry

Hours: 16

Description: A basic overview of fire chemistry and fire behavior.

Includes: Classes of fire; fundamentals of heat transfer; fire characteristics of materials; products of combustion; hazardous and explosive materials; extinguishing agents; sizeup; and exposure protection.

FIRE CONTROL 2

Basic Operations - Structural

Hours: 16

Description: A hands-on course which provides information, methods and techniques for operating basic fire fighting tools and carrying out basic fire fighting evolutions. Includes: Hose, nozzles and fittings; ground ladders; self-contained breathing apparatus; pump operations in theory and in the field; and the use of fire extinguishers.

FIRE CONTROL 6

Wildland Fire Fighting Essentials

Hours: 16

Description: This wildland fire fighting course provides information methods and techniques for the utilization of: The California Fire and Rescue Mutual Aid Plan, Incident Command System, wildland fire fighting strategy and tactics, structure triage, terminology, survival skills and operating safely in a wildland fire fighting incident.

1987/88 – NFES republishes *Living More Safely in the Chaparral-Urban Interface*.

NFES receives permission from USDA Forest Service PSW to republish *Living More Safely in the Chaparral-Urban Interface* at its own expense and receives the original plates on loan. A second printing had already

been done in February 1985 after the copies from the 1983 (actually 1984—see above) printing had been quickly exhausted due to public demand. A fourth printing was done at a later date.

1988 – County Fire Chief ordered to resign or be fired by Board of Supervisors.

Under the leadership of the new Union-supported in-house County Fire Chief, scandals are publicly surfacing but Dr. Radtke declines to get involved. The Fire Chief is asked to resign in news editorials, etc.

Dr. Radtke receives a phone call at home informing him that the County Fire Chief received a phone call from the Board of Supervisors informing him that he would be fired at next Tuesday's Board meeting unless his resignation is on their desks before that. As is protocol, the County Fire Chief announces his retirement, which is published in the *Los Angeles Times* and other newspapers by the Friday before the following Tuesday's Board of Supervisors meeting.

Radtke receives phone calls at home from within the County Fire Department offering a possible consultant position or a higher rank chief research position working directly with the new fire chief in support of in-house candidate(s) for the position of fire chief, as an outsider was one of the final candidates. Radtke lets it be known that he believes that the Board of Supervisors would appoint an outsider this time to break up the close ties of union and management (and wants to let him do his job). The new Fire Chief appointed by the Board of Supervisors is the first outsider chosen in the history of the Department.

1990 – New County Fire Chief from Texas open-minded. Looking for solutions.

Starting with the 1990 County Fire Department reprintings of *A Homeowner's Guide...*, Dr. Radtke's name as author as well as any reference to the unabridged version *Living More Safely...* have been totally removed, bringing the book more in line with the confidential changes the former Fire Chief prepared in 1982 and were subsequently rejected by the Board of Supervisors. Dr. Radtke declines to mix into departmental politics as he believes that the new Chief was told to make these changes, not knowing the past history. He desires that the new Chief be given a chance to turn the department around and find avenues for more effectively using foresters and associated resource professionals, even though it is apparent that some foresters closely tied to the union had been and will continue to be appointed as Head Deputy Foresters irrespective of their qualifications, and that the new Fire Chief is not being properly briefed on the issues involved in developing the “booklet” or the background of some of his staff. When Dr. Radtke discusses the issue with him, the new Fire Chief states that he has no objection to giving him credit as author, but Radtke does not pursue the issue any further as some of the old “dinosaurs” are still around and influencing the new Chief.

1991-92 – Dr. Radtke assists in documenting the predictable Oakland Tunnel Fire disaster.

Oakland Tunnel Fire—As expert witness for the survivors of the wrongful death plaintiffs, Dr. Radtke and his team meticulously document pre-fire vegetation. Dr. Radtke presents findings at the one-week settlement conference in front of a settlement judge. Clients win their cases.

1993 November 2 – “Fire booklet” principles save homes in the Malibu/Old Topanga Fire.

The Malibu/Old Topanga Fire burns many houses in the mountains and along the beach-facing slopes. The home of the president of the Santa Monica Mountains Residents Association (the homeowner group that in 1982 republished *A Homeowner's Guide ...* despite threats of retribution against their group and its president disseminated through the County Fire Chief) survives, attended by a friend, in a “fire-trap” situation in the eye of the fire storm. It is featured in the *Los Angeles Times* as an amazing story of preplanning and perseverance. Basic fire-safe procedures featured in *A Homeowner's Guide ...* had been incorporated into the home when building it and had been maintained throughout the years to protect it in the event of a fire.

1993/94 – Risk reduction: CA insurance carriers extend clearance limits.

As expert witness for Fair Plan (insurance carrier pool for high-risk areas), Dr. Radtke documents that fire losses in a particular area of the fire are closely related to lack of proper ingress and egress and lack of adequate maintenance for existing ingress and egress by the County of Los Angeles. County officials contact the California legislature, and Fair Plan is told not to proceed with the lawsuit or repercussions will result relating to their ability to raise rates in the future. Lawsuit is halted.

Insurance carriers, realizing that fire losses are also related to the lack of serious commitments by local

governing agencies to provide fire-safe environments (lack of proper land use and planning, lack of adequate and safe ingress-egress, not siting of homes in less high-risk topography, lack of adequate laws or codes on home design and exterior building materials, not declaring landscape vegetation as additional fire risks, etc.), decide to extend clearance limits much beyond what local fire departments require in order to reduce their risk.

1994 – Wildfire Safety Panel investigating the disastrous November 2, 1993 Malibu/Old Topanga Fire.

Radtke participates as invited observer in the Los Angeles County Fire Department's 1994 Wildfire Safety Panel investigating the disastrous November 2, 1993 Malibu/Old Topanga Fire. True change is hard to come by because of objections by industry and County bureaucrats, despite appeals by the new County Fire Chief for meaningful changes in increasing ingress and egress requirements and home fire safety.

A Homeowner's Guide to Fire and Watershed Management at the Chaparral/Urban Interface (the Radtke publication with his name now removed as author) is subsequently identified by the 1994 Wildland Fire Safety Panel as the basis for developing definite guidelines for vegetation management plans in Los Angeles County (and other counties in California). It is also acknowledged that continuous education programs are necessary to mitigate hazardous situations. The former head of the County prescription burn team, now a fire consultant in private practice and who had strongly opposed Dr. Radtke's public safety efforts ("your only job is to make the Fire Department look good"), approaches him and offers to restore his name as author of *A Homeowners Guide ...* ("I and the Fire Chief can fix it as he listens to me") provided Dr. Radtke is willing to rewrite the book with him and include him as co-author. Dr. Radtke declines to get involved.

A party is given by the Fire Chief at Fire Camp 2 after the panel completes its work. The County Fire Chief, open-mindedly and attentive, himself takes notes on implementing fire-safe procedures around fire camps and fire stations when Radtke points out the numerous instances around the camp where public safety, fuel modification, or oak tree ordinance requirements are not complied with. A lower rank Fire Chief thanks Dr. Radtke privately for his work. He states that during the 1993 Old Topanga Fire, he based personnel at night at the eastern flank of the fire along Topanga Canyon in an area where, according to the fire prediction models developed by Radtke (for the central and western Santa Monica Mountains), a fire could be contained because of the generally young-age classes of woody chaparral vegetation found there. Despite the doubts of others and his own apprehension, he was able to hold the fire front there and prevent it from crossing the canyon and burning into Pacific Palisades.

1995 – Did City of Malibu learn from fire and flood “disasters?”

Dr. Radtke writes to the City of Malibu and addresses his disappointment regarding the City's responses to the 1993 Fire and the 1994 to 1995 floods, stating this was a case of local government “largely succumbing to political pressure by special interest groups.” He points out that “man-made calamities” should not be continuously confused with “Acts of God,” as “the lifestyle of people living in slide-, flood-, and fire-prone communities” and the attempt of most local governments to “rationalize away disasters and, with public assistance, often create another design for disaster” contribute to future disasters, whatever the nature of their origin. The letter is analyzed in local newspapers and excerpts are published.

During the 1990s the USDA Forest Service Pacific Southwest Research Station Public Distribution section establishes a web page (<http://www.fs.fed.us/psw/publications/gtrs.shtml>) for general technical reports published. *Living More Safely in the Chaparral-Urban Interface* (Gen. Tech Rep. PSW-GTR-67) can be downloaded now for free.

1997 May – Fire origin investigation.

San Bernardino—At trial, CDF and other plaintiffs win their cases and receive reimbursements for losses incurred during the 1993 Mill Creek Fire. As expert fire witness, Dr. Radtke and his team meticulously and independently document pre-fire vegetation at the fire origin based on intensive field work and pre-fire photo documentation.

1998 – Sunset Magazine.

Dr. Radtke is honored by *Sunset Magazine* in its 1998 100th Anniversary Issue as one of the top 25 people in the last 100 years in the field of horticulture for his achievement in introducing in the 1970s an integrated concept of fire safety that incorporated landscaping against fire (“out of the ashes”).

1998 – Continuously opposing development in high-risk wildfire watersheds.

The former Prescription Burn Manager and the former Los Angeles County Fire Chief (who left the Department in 1982), as experts for the developer, support a proposed subdivision in highly fire-prone, steep watershed areas in the Encinal Canyon area of Malibu. They describe the proposed project as “the safest development ever proposed in Malibu,” patterned after the fire and flood safety principles outlined in Dr. Radtke's *Homeowner's Guide...*, thereby also implying that Dr. Radtke supported it. Dr. Radtke volunteers his time on publicly opposing this development as not being safe and environmentally sensitive and addresses his concerns in letters and testimony to the Board of Supervisors. While already previously approved by them (and therefore can not be denied), the County Board of Supervisors nevertheless re-reviews the project as part of a court-imposed settlement and agrees to scale it down to address some of the most serious safety and environmental concerns. Homeowner groups drop their further legal challenges to the scaled-down but still ill-conceived development proposal in a quid-pro-quo agreement to have Charmlee Park transferred from The County of Los Angeles to the City of Malibu as a deed-restricted natural preserve (not a 'for profit' park).

2002 – Fire start investigation.

Ventura - Fire experts from the local fire department ‘document’ that the 2000 Rincon Ranch Fire started in the rancher's burn pile. Based on meticulous field work and evidence collected by the rancher and himself, Dr. Radtke documents that it is more likely that the fire started through upwind eucalyptus tree-powerline contact. California Department of Forestry and Fire Prevention investigators then conclude that the fire could have started in either location. Just prior to trial, Dr. Radtke requests plaintiff's attorney to procure documents from the local fire department about a fire that had burned in the same area about 15 years earlier, as he hypothesizes that the origin of both fires could have been the same eucalyptus tree-powerline contact. Documents received from the local fire department indicate that, as Dr. Radtke had hypothesized, the earlier fire had started at the same location (the same eucalyptus tree-powerline contact) in a fashion similar to what Dr. Radtke had described for the 2000 fire. The case is settled in favor of plaintiff. Dr. Radtke requests that eucalyptus trees on the ranch under powerlines be removed by the rancher so that they do not resprout.

2004 May – The elderly are at greatest risk in wildland areas.

In a lawsuit apparently aimed at taking the home away from an elderly couple in their 80s, a neighbor claims \$1,000,000 in damages due to extreme fire hazard conditions allegedly created by the elderly couple on their property, endangering the plaintiff. For the elderly couple there is apparently no way to win the lawsuit as they do not have the means to hire an expert lawyer. The plaintiff's expert witness, the former County Fire Department Prescribed Burn Manager, has involved uniformed L.A. County Fire Department forestry personnel (they apparently were innocent members of such a scheme) to bolster his claim and intends to use them as witnesses in the upcoming trial in June. The elderly couple is packing and is resigned to losing their home. Dr. Radtke is called in at the last minute by professional associates, is surprised to meet uniformed County Fire personnel near the defendant's property during his evaluation of the property and defense of the elderly couple, and invites/challenges them to step on the defendant's property for a factual review of the allegations. He then further greatly improves the fire safety of the property. During the trial no testimony by active County Fire Department personnel is presented, claims by the plaintiff's fire expert are found to be unfounded by the judge, plaintiff's claims are withdrawn, and the elderly couple keep their home.

2004 Aug.-Oct. – Updating for public domain *A Homeowner's Guide to Fire and Watershed...*

Dr. Radtke dedicates his own time and resources to updating the original June 1982 publication *A Homeowner's Guide to Fire and Watershed Management at the Chaparral/Urban Interface*. Natural resource professionals and members of the general public had requested for years that this be done so that the booklet can again be in public domain. Fire safety and environmental groups who, after the 2003 disastrous

wildfires, had meticulously reviewed public safety guides for reprinting to fit their needs and had come to the conclusion that the 1982 *Homeowner's Guide...* is still the best publication available. They therefore contact Dr. Radtke for assistance as the author of the original June 1982 Forest Service-sponsored public domain booklet. While the guiding 'state-of-the-art' principles still remain the same as Dr. Radtke had explained them over twenty years ago, he spends considerable time in reviewing, revising, and updating the book, drawing on the information from *Living More Safely...*, his own in-depth experience as a homeowner living for almost 30 years in fire-prone watersheds, and professional experience as a field scientist. He deeply appreciates all the help and encouragement he receives for this endeavor and hopes that the remaining County of Los Angeles Fire Department 'dinosaurs' will not attempt to again derail another public safety document in public domain.

2004 October 15 – *Homeowner's Guide to Fire and Watershed Management...* downloadable from Web. A revised and updated *A Homeowner's Guide to Fire and Watershed Management at the Chaparral/Urban Interface* is reprinted by the Water Department of the City of San Diego and introduced at San Diego's Museum of Natural History opening of its one-year exhibit titled "Earth, Wind, and Wildfire." The exhibit is put together in remembrance of the 2003 Southern California firestorms and to teach California's residents that wildfire is a necessary part of nature's cycle of renewal. The booklet is introduced as a publication that shall remain in public domain, can be downloaded from the Web, and is being made readily available as such at no cost to residents of the Pacific Southwest and public agencies desiring its public domain reprinting. Printable CDs are provided free of charge to anyone wishing to reprint the revised booklet for local needs.

(Forest Service personnel in 1982 expressed great concern that the Los Angeles County Fire Chief at that time was apparently shutting down the state-wide printing of *A Homeowner's Guide ...*, claiming it as his Department's publication. They made it clear that everything that Dr. Radtke had produced and written was supported by federal project money, is therefore a document in public domain once it is printed, and can be claimed under the privacy act. Additionally, the June 1982 first publication of *A Homeowner's Guide ...*, as approved for printing by the Forest Service, had no copyright designation and no statement prohibiting its reprinting or requiring permission for its reprinting from anyone. For this reason the Forest Service had also insisted that an outside [not County] printer be chosen to print it.)

November 2, 2004

Mr. Arthur Arndt
Head Deputy Forester, retired
Los Angeles County Forester & Fire Warden
xxxx Chula Vista Avenue
Dana Point CA 92629

Dear Art:

Re: *A Homeowners' Guide to Fire and Watershed Management at the Chaparral/Urban Interface*

It was a great feeling to hear your voice and talk to you after so many years. It also brought back many memories. I was privileged to have worked for a man with such great integrity as yourself for fourteen years and still appreciate the opportunities you provided me throughout the years of our professional relationship despite the severe limitations placed upon you by the Department. One of those opportunities you gave me was to write the original *Homeowners' Guide...* in 1982, have it printed, and have it safely delivered to the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors.

At the request of the Fire Recovery Network and the Conservation Action Committee that worked so diligently on finding solutions to the disastrous 2003 Southern California wildfires, and with the assistance of the San Diego Water Department, I have now updated the booklet *A Homeowners Guide to Fire and Watershed Management at the Chaparral/Urban Interface* which I had written over 22 years ago with your help to assist the public and agencies in designing more fire-safe environments. As you may remember, the original booklet had been reprinted many times by homeowner groups as well as the County of Los Angeles and had been circulated throughout the Pacific Southwest.

When updating the booklet I wanted to make sure that it stays in public domain and is readily available to anybody. It can therefore be downloaded from the web pages of the City of San Diego Water Department as shown on the back cover

(www.sandiego.gov/water), the City of San Diego web page, and soon other web sites as well. The news media, public agencies, homeowner associations, and nonprofit groups can also download, list it on their web site or print their own copies from printable CDs. Such a CD is enclosed. It includes a complete layout version for professional printing (HOGFW for Vendor), a page-by-page version for home printing (HOGFW to Print), and a version for downloading to the computer and to a WEB site (HOGFW to WEB). Additional CDs can be requested free of charge from the San Diego Water Department. A Spanish translation will also be available within a few weeks and I will also provide you with a copy. As was done in the original publication, principles of plant evaluation for fire safety and erosion control cover the range of native plants in natural environment to ornamental plants in more urban areas.

Klaus Radtke, Ph.D.
Wildland Resource Scientist
