



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**October 13, 2003**  
**Contact Information:**  
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**(510) 893-9888 or (510) 981-5579**

*Hills Emergency Forum Annual Meeting*

The Hills Emergency Forum (HEF) invites the public to its 11<sup>th</sup> annual meeting on Friday October 17, 2002 at 10:00 AM to 11:00 AM at the California Room, Double Tree Hotel Conference Center, Berkeley Marina. The annual meeting updates the public and local media on the progress made in managing risks associated with wildland fires the Oakland - Berkeley Hills.

This year the HEF has increased outreach through training courses on media safety and weed identification. Next year, HEF plans to expand these efforts with improve communication about fire hazards and fuel management progress.

“The local agencies and private citizens have been making visible progress in the continuing battle against wildland fire in our region,” states Berkeley Fire Marshal Lucky Thomas, 2003 Chair of the Hills Emergency Forum Staff Liaison Group. "The HEF members are interested in highlighting programs and treatments that have been effective in increasing urban wildland interface fire safety.”

Established after the 1991 Oakland Hills firestorm, the Hills Emergency Forum consists of eight local agencies with responsibility for vegetation management, fire suppression and public-safety education in the Oakland-Berkeley Hills. The forum members (cities of Berkeley, El Cerrito and Oakland, the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, the East Bay Municipal Utility District, the East Bay Regional Park District, the Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory, and the University of California at Berkeley) have continued to meet on a monthly basis to enhance interagency cooperation on fire response and coordinate annual fire safety work plans.

"We encourage the public to attend and learn about our joint efforts, as well as to advise us on how we're doing and what we need to do better," says Berkeley Fire Marshal Lucky Thomas, 2003 Chair of the Hills Emergency Forum Staff Liaison Group. For more information, please call Cheryl Miller at (510) 893-9888 or Chief Thomas at (510) 981-5579.

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**Directions:**

The Double Tree Hotel is in the Berkeley Marina at 200 Marina Blvd. off of University Avenue.