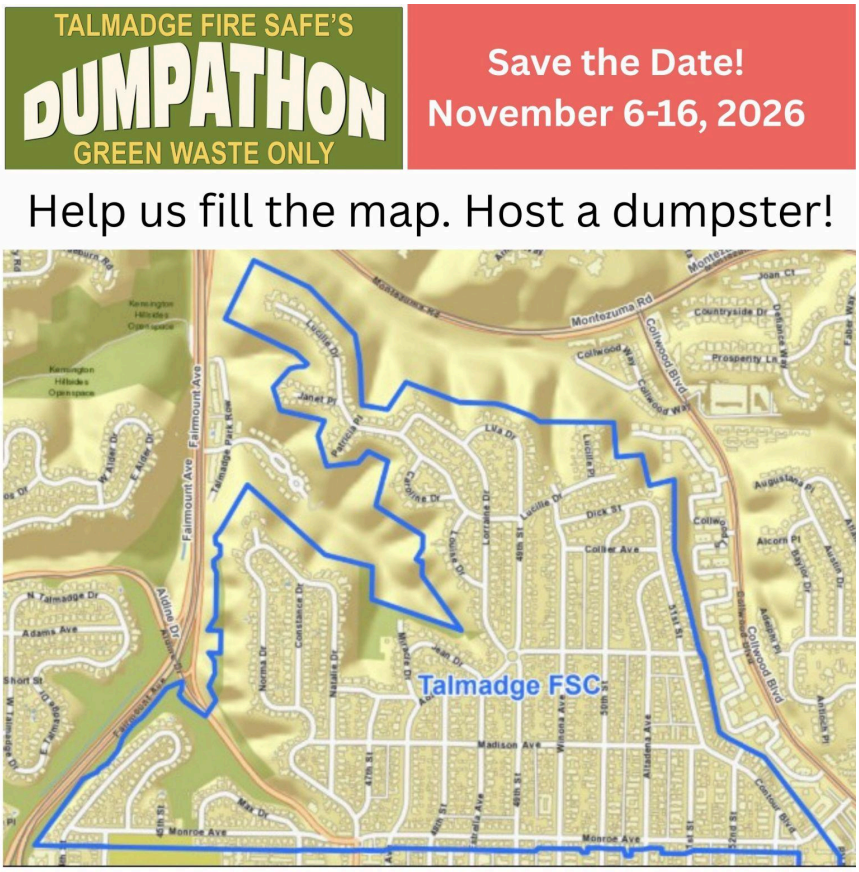
FAQs for Dumpster Hosts and Neighbors

2026



Create Defensible Space * Reduce Canyon Fuel * Clear Zone Zero

Email us to Volunteer or learn more!
TalmadgeFireSafe@gmail.com
TalmadgeFireSafe.org

TALMADGE FIRE SAFE COUNCIL

Contact for Questions & Issues

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1) If I volunteer, what can I expect?

By mid September (~1 ½ month before)
Identify locations throughout the neighborhood
Project Lead confirms that dumpsters are compatible with curb space, hydrants, etc.
Hosts communicate with neighbors so there are no misunderstandings or surprises.

2026 - Locations will be vetted and permitted by the Community Risk Reduction Division of San Diego Fire Rescue Department (SDFRD). A site visit will be conducted by CRRD personnel to approve all proposed sites.

Before Block Party (10/10/26 ~ 3 weeks before)
Signage and maps to promote the event are available
“Dumpster coming here” yard signs distributed to Hosts

Dumpathon! Nov 7-17, 2025
Hosts clear curb space with cones 1-2 days prior
Banners and signs attached to dumpsters. Place cones at the outer corners.
Hosts monitor dumpster for inappropriate material and contact Lead
Hosts notify Lead if the dumpster fills early.
Hosts promote usage and encourage neighbors!

Thank you for being a Dumpathon Host!

2) How big are the dumpsters?

We will try to place the largest dumpster our volunteer spaces can accommodate. **In 2026 dumpsters will be provided by the City of San Diego. These will be 40 cu yd.** If some spaces are approved but require a smaller dumpster, FSC will attempt to contract with a local hauler.

15 cu yard - 16’ long x 7’ 6” wide x 4’ 6” tall
25 cu yard - 22’ long x 8’ 3” wide x 4’ 4” tall
30 cu yard - 22’ long x 8’ 3” wide, with taller sides
40 cu yard - 22’ long x 8’ 3” wide, 8’ high sides

3) Please talk to your neighbors ahead of time.

It’s important to find out if neighbors are planning any maintenance that might conflict with the dumpster space needs.

Some neighbors will want to schedule yard work to take advantage of the dumpster (and lower their cost). Consider collaborating to get a group price for this work.

Only clear your own property. Do not clear other private property or city property without obtaining the correct permissions.

4) What do I need to do before the dumpster is delivered?

About 3 weeks before the event, you will receive a yard sign to promote the event. You will also receive about 30 flyers to share with neighbors.

The day before the delivery, reserve the parking spaces needed for the dumpster with the traffic cones provided. Extra space is needed at each end on the day of delivery and pickup. Provide an extra 15-22' feet of space on that day. You may need to ask neighbors to move their cars.

5) When is delivery? Do I need to be home?

We will aim for delivery the evening before the event or the morning of the first day. However, it may be necessary to stagger delivery. We will keep you informed. You do not need to be home at delivery time because the cones will be marking the location. If you are concerned about exactly where it goes, be home if you can. After delivery, place the traffic cones at the outer corners.

In 2026, SDFRD personnel may be present at delivery.

6) How do I attach the banners to the dumpster?

We will provide painters tape to attach the banners to all sides of the dumpster. Duct tape damages the banners and makes it difficult to use them again, so please don't use this. All of our materials are intended to be used over again to keep costs manageable!

7) What can go in a "Greens Waste Only" dumpster?

All plant waste, branches, leaves, clippings, including agave and palm waste is green waste. **No wood, dirt, concrete, rocks, construction waste, or dog poop!** Use your own green can for food waste, not the dumpster. The City of San Diego Environmental Services will be delivering and picking up the dumpsters and utilizing city green waste facilities.

What happens if someone "dumps" inappropriate waste into the dumpster?

The dumpsters are not locked. We are depending on our signage and watchful neighbors to keep out inappropriate users. It is not possible to “lock” the dumpsters. If you have a security camera, that can also help us keep a lookout.

If other items end up in the dumpster, you can remove them yourself or call us. Because City Environmental Services is our partner, we can obtain assistance with large scale dumping issues, if any.

What do we do when the dumpster is full?

Call us! If it's full, we will notify the city to have the dumpster picked up early. We will also post a sign directing neighbors to a different location. In some cases a new, empty dumpster will be brought back, depending on each situation.

8) Should I tamp down the greens in the dumpster?

True, tamping down the greens can make more space, but it can be dangerous. We DO NOT ask dumpster hosts to do this. If you choose to do so, it is at your own risk.

9) How is the Dumpathon funded?

The Talmadge Fire Safe Council (Tal-FSC) formed in early 2025 and received early support from the Talmadge Community Association (TMAD-TCA) and the Talmadge Community Party. In April 2025 Tal-FSC received a grant from the San Diego Regional Fire Foundation and the San Diego River Conservancy to fund the 2025 Dumpathon and further establish the FSC. This financial support was continued with a grant in 2026.

In 2026 the San Diego Fire Rescue Department will support brush clearance events held by established Fire Safe Councils.

Fire Safe Councils are volunteer led organizations that mobilize residents to protect their homes, neighborhoods, and environments from wildfire. They know the unique challenges their community faces and implement such projects as hazardous fuel reduction programs, local wildfire protection planning, and homeowner education for home hardening and wildfire readiness. The Fire Safe Council of San Diego County is the sponsor of more than 50 FSCs in our region.

10) Where can I learn more about how to manage brush in the canyon and protect my home by removing fuel in the first five feet?

The best way to get started is to use the City of San Diego SDFRD information.

- Refer neighbors to the City of San Diego Wildfire Preparedness webpage https://www.sandiego.gov/fire/community-risk-reduction/wildfire-preparedness.
- Download the Ready Set Go! planning booklet to learn more about the importance of reducing fuel in zones 0, 1, and 2.
- Read the city's brush management bulletin.