

"Honey, your car is on fire!"

March 30, 2010

Alabama Forestry Commission
513 Madison Avenue
Montgomery, Alabama 36130

To whom it may concern:

Sometimes in our busy lives we neglect to take time and say "thank you" to those who give us help and assistance. I would like to say a heartfelt "thank you" to Chris White [AFC Forest Ranger in Lauderdale County] and the Alabama Forestry Commission.

You see, Mr. White and the Forestry Commission helped save our home and possibly our neighbor's home also. Some time ago, Mr. White called me and explained Alabama's program for preventing fires in a rural wooded community. He came out to our home and explained specific procedures we could undertake to protect our home in case of a fire. And the best part was they would pay me to accomplish it! I had to brag on Alabama to my brother-in-law in rural Virginia.

We spent several days cutting brush and small trees, raking leaves and hauling it all away. To be honest, I really got started just so I wouldn't disappoint Chris White who spent so much time and effort showing us what to do.

Part 2 of the story started last Friday evening at 11:30 when my wife gently woke me saying: "Honey your car is on fire!" I ran outside in my night shirt and bare feet and my car was totally ablaze. While my wife was calling 911, I started hosing down the car and the side of the house with the garden hose. Pieces of flaming black plastic and rubber shot into the air and into the woods - right where I had cleaned up. The fire department arrived about a half an hour later and extinguished the car.

No fires started in the woods because all of the brush and trash had been cleaned up - there was nothing to burn! My car was burned to the ground, but no one was burned and our house is fine. It could have been much worse.

Thank you for showing me how to protect our home and giving us the means to do so. THANK YOU.

Sincerely,
Barry Rupp
980 Paradise Drive
Waterloo, Alabama 35677



As these photos demonstrate, the fire was extremely close to the Rupp family's home. Thanks to previous clearing of vegetation, the house was saved. According to AFC Forest Ranger Chris White, you could not walk around the garage prior to this vegetation removal because it was so thick with privet, briars, dead trees, etc.