

## For Immediate Release

**Contact:**

Seth Schalet  
Santa Clara County FireSafe Council  
[sschalet@sccfiresafe.org](mailto:sschalet@sccfiresafe.org)  
(408) 975-9591

Luisa Rapport  
Director, Emergency Communications and Media Relations (PIO)  
University Communications  
Stanford University  
[lrappor@stanford.edu](mailto:lrappor@stanford.edu)



### **Local agencies bring AI based wildfire smoke detection technology to local wildland urban interface areas.**

***Collaborative creates the largest AI based wildfire sensor technology installation in the Bay Area.***

**Bay Area, California, 9/3/24** - Santa Clara County FireSafe Council, Palo Alto Fire Department and Office of Emergency Services, and Woodside Fire Protection District, have collaborated with Stanford University, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Science and Technology Directorate, and N5 Sensors to bring the latest in artificial intelligence (AI) based wildfire smoke sensing technology to wildland urban interface (WUI) areas in Palo Alto, Stanford and Woodside Fire District (the sensors will be installed in the Town of Woodside, Town of Portola Valley and the unincorporated regions of San Mateo County).

Through the collaboration, 50 [N5 Sensors](#) have been installed at strategic locations throughout the monitoring area. They are intended to detect the earliest stages of a wildland fire and provide real-time alerts to responders. The sensors can also track movements of fires and smoke and can monitor hazardous air quality events.

**Dr. Lori Moore-Merrell, U.S. Fire Administrator**, “The U.S. Fire Administration is working with DHS Science and Technology to ensure innovative technology is leveraged to sense wildfire ignitions quickly, reducing the time to notification and enabling firefighters to respond to the fire before it spreads out of control. I encourage everyone to find out whether they live in fire prone areas and work to reduce combustible fuels around their residences like cutting trees and bushes close to their home, use rocks instead of mulch in landscaping, and clear dry leaves and downed branches. We need people to help make themselves savable should wildfire spread to their community.”

“We are fighting fire with technology” **Dr. Dimitri Kusnezov, Undersecretary of DHS Science & Technology Directorate** commented about his office’s development of new wildfire sensor technology. “These sensors look for wildfire ignition gases and particulates they emit and work 24/7 giving first responders another tool to help their community resilience.”

**Cody Hill, Stanford University**, "The deployment of these wildfire detection sensors is yet another testament to how Stanford's Wildfire Resilience program leverages our lands as a living lab and continues collaborations with our neighbors to enhance regional wildfire resilience. We are deeply grateful for the collective efforts that made this wildfire detection network a reality."

**Geo Blackshire, Fire Chief, Palo Alto Fire Department**, “Wildfire knows no boundaries. Our community risk reduction efforts are more effective when we collaborate with neighboring jurisdictions to ensure safe communities. The partnership with the Palo Alto Fire Department, Stanford, and Woodside Fire Protection District to invest in the N5 sensors is a reflection of our commitment to proactively address the threats of wildfires in California using innovation and technology to give our residents early notification to evacuate a hazardous area and save their loved ones and any other belongings they hold dearly. Early detection is essential for saving lives, property, and protecting the environment from the perils of wildfire.”

**Seth Schalet, CEO of Santa Clara County FireSafe Council**, “This is the culmination of a multi-month process to avail of a unique program from the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Science and Technology Directorate, and N5 Sensors. When we approached the collaborators, they were excited to join the program and engaged us to design an installation that best protects WUI areas around Palo Alto, Stanford, and Woodside Fire Protection District. We look forward to working with them over the next several years to support keeping Santa Clara and San Mateo County residents safe from wildfire.”

**Debra Deininger, CRO of N5 Sensors**, “We appreciate the leadership shown by the teams at Santa Clara FireSafe Council, Palo Alto, Woodside and Stanford in partnership with USFA and DHS S&T to deploy N5SHIELD® for early wildfire detections. We are honored to have the chance to help protect these communities.

**Woodside Fire Protection District's Fire Marshal, Kim Giuliacci**, "Woodside Fire Protection District has a new eye in the sky...the N5". Well, it's more of a nose than an eye. New advanced state of the art technology detects wildfires using multiple sensors. As a fire district, our foremost commitment is to the safety and well-being of our community. The release of the N5 sensors marks a significant step forward in early warning detection, allowing us to respond sooner. Thirteen of these devices are mounted throughout our Fire District and can determine the difference between cigarette smoke, cooking smoke or wildfire smoke. The N5 early detection system uses a sense of smell, not sight, like most camera systems installed today. By embracing advanced technology, we are not only enhancing our early response capabilities, but also protecting our community from the threat of wildfires. This new N5 system reinforces Woodside Fire Protection District's dedication to preventing tragedies before they occur."

##

**About Santa Clara County FireSafe Council:**

As a 501(c)3 nonprofit with a 20-year history, Santa Clara County FireSafe Council's core mission is to mobilize the people of Santa Clara County to protect their homes, communities, and environment from wildfires. As a trusted partner across the government, fire service, corporate and WUI residential communities, SCCFSC has led some of the most complex hazardous fuel reduction projects in the region. With a board and advisory council that has a deep expertise across the wildfire ecosystem including wildfire and environmental research, academia, emergency management, regional planning, technology products and wildland firefighting leadership, Santa Clara County FireSafe Council is uniquely positioned to lead cross-sector collaborations, government-private partnerships in Silicon Valley, Santa Clara County and beyond. For more information, visit [www.sccfiresafe.org](http://www.sccfiresafe.org)

**About N5 Sensors, Inc.:**

N5 believes that in a world with rapidly changing environmental threats, everyone has access to the right information at the right time to stay safe. N5 has been providing innovative and reliable environmental sensing systems for over 12 years to customers in diverse markets including Defense, Homeland Security and commercial systems. The N5SHIELD® was designed to meet the needs of industry, communities and firefighters to help protect against devastating impacts of wildfires in the Wildland Urban interface and has been deployed throughout the US and Canada. For more information, please visit <http://www.n5sensors.com>



# Working together to protect our community from wildfires!

**This station monitors weather conditions,  
air quality, and detects carbon from  
wildfires to provide early detection.**

No video or audio recording present.