

Berkeley homeowner's insurance Zoom webinar video is now available online

Berkeleyside

Homeowners around the city, as with much of the state, have been getting non-renewal notices from their insurers, leaving them with few options and rising costs.

Original story, May 23: Councilmember Susan Wengraf, who represents the northeastern corner of Berkeley, has organized a Zoom seminar on insurance issues at 7 p.m. May 23.

The panel is scheduled to include Julia Svetlana, deputy commissioner at the California Department of Insurance; Amy Bach, executive director of United Policyholders, a nonprofit that helps people find insurance if they lose it; Karl D. Susman, an insurance broker and radio personality; Carmen Balber, executive director at Consumer Watchdog; and Colin Arnold, Berkeley Fire Department's Wildland Urban Interface Division chief.

Some Berkeleyans, like many Californians, have been receiving notices of non-renewal from their insurance carriers.

"In the past several months, I have received hundreds of emails and phone calls from anxious residents who have received notices from their insurers that their homeowner's policy will not be renewed," Wengraf wrote in an announcement.

"As climate change hammers the state with wildfires, storms, and other extreme weather events, several insurance companies in California have paused or restricted new business. The latest example was State Farm's recent announcement that it would stop renewing 72,000 homeowners' and other policies," Wengraf wrote.

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Anyone who wants to view the seminar must register at this link.

Residents can learn more about Berkeley's unique wildfire risks and BFD's defensible space inspections on the agency's website.

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