

Home Ignition Zone

By properly preparing the space around your home you can reduce the possibility of it catching fire. When preparing your house for wildfire, the area directly around the house is the most important. Many people call this area the Home Ignition Zone. By properly selecting, planting and maintaining vegetation in this area, you can increase the probability of your house surviving a wildfire. Make sure to consider detached garages, barns, or other structures as they can be strong fire ignition sources.

As you consider the vegetation around your home, you will need to use different landscaping depending on how far the vegetation is from your house. The space around your house can be divided into three areas, Near Area, Mid Area and Far Area. The Near and Mid Areas make up the Home Ignition Zone. Larger properties will have a Far Area. Smaller properties may need to be treated totally within the Home Ignition Zone.

Near Area - Keep plantings within 3 to 5 feet of the structure to a minimum, especially if walls are flammable. Don't plant under windows, vents, decks or next to propane tanks. Decorative gravel, concrete, stone or other non-combustibles are best close to the house.

Near Area Vegetation

- Choose low growing, fire-resistant plants close to the house.
- Keep grasses watered and/or cut low.
- Trees in this area are considered part of the structure- the fewer the better.
- Choose deciduous trees over coniferous or fire-prone trees.
- Remove tree branches that overhang or touch the roof.
- Keep trees at least 10 feet between crowns. Crown separation is measured from the furthest branch of one tree to the nearest branch of the next tree.

NEAR AREA

Mid Area – this area is further away from your home, the continuity and arrangement of vegetation is modified to slow down and reduce the intensity of a wildfire.

MID AREA

Mid Area Vegetation

You can use other firewise plants further away from the structure. Emphasize low growing plants, up to 18". Plant firewise shrubs in small, irregular clusters or islands that are separated by at least 2 times their mature height. Although more trees are okay in this area, thinning and clumping is recommended. Choose deciduous trees over coniferous or fire-prone trees.

Far Area

Many large properties may extend beyond the need for highly managed vegetation treatments. The area furthest from your house, or the Far Area, typically does not need the same level of care as the Near and Mid Areas. Transition to wildland by pruning and thinning trees and brush. Break up any "fire ladders." Prevent build up of dry brush.

FAR AREA



Fire Safety Tips

- Crush cigarette butts out
- Don't use fireworks in wildland urban interface areas
- Store hazard materials in a cool, dry place
- Obey fire restrictions regarding camp fires, outdoor cooking, target shooting and fireworks. Restrictions change seasonally; check with local fire department before any activity
- When using equipment that may produce sparks, work before 10:00 AM and avoid windy conditions
- Be sure spark arresters are installed and working properly on all portable equipment including mowers, chainsaws, weed-eaters, tractors, and harvesters
- Don't drive vehicles -including dirt bikes- on dry grass or brush. Remember that hot exhaust pipes and mufflers can ignite dry vegetation
- Check with local fire department and obtain permits before burning debris or fields
- Douse BBQ charcoal with water before disposing

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PREPARE THE ACCESS TO YOUR HOUSE:

Help emergency responders locate and access your home.

- Provide a reflective, noncombustible address sign with 4 inch high numbers that are visible and can be seen from the street.
- Remove flammable vegetation from sides (12') and above (13.5') your driveway for wildfire response equipment.
- If your driveway is more than 150' long, turnarounds or turnouts for emergency equipment may be needed.
- If you have a gate, provide a key box for emergency responders.
- Check bridges and culverts to see if fire-fighting equipment can reach your home.

DEVELOP OR MODIFY THE CONSTRUCTION OF YOUR HOUSE:

Limit ways fire can enter your house.

- Clean rain gutters and roof of leaves, needles and debris before fire season.
- Store firewood and other combustibles at least 30' from your home. Flammable outdoor furniture and cushions, dried flowers, and baskets can ignite structures so it is best to remove when wildfire threatens.
- Make sure chimney is screened with ½" or smaller wire mesh.
- Avoid wood roofs, use metal, tile or asphalt.

WHAT ELSE CAN YOU DO TO ASSURE YOUR PROPERTY IS AS PREPARED AS IT CAN BE?

- If the home has combustible siding, consider stucco, brick, cement board, or stone.
- If necessary, consider covering underside of eaves with a soffit or "box in" eaves.
- Evaluate and modify windows if less than double pane or tempered glass. All vent openings need to be covered with 1/4 inch or smaller wire mesh.
- If you have a limited water supply you may need to add a cistern, pond or pool.
- Decks, balcony, outside stairs should be constructed of noncombustible material. Underside of decks should be enclosed or covered with ¼ inch wire mesh and kept free of combustible materials.
- Use fire resistant material to attach fences to house.

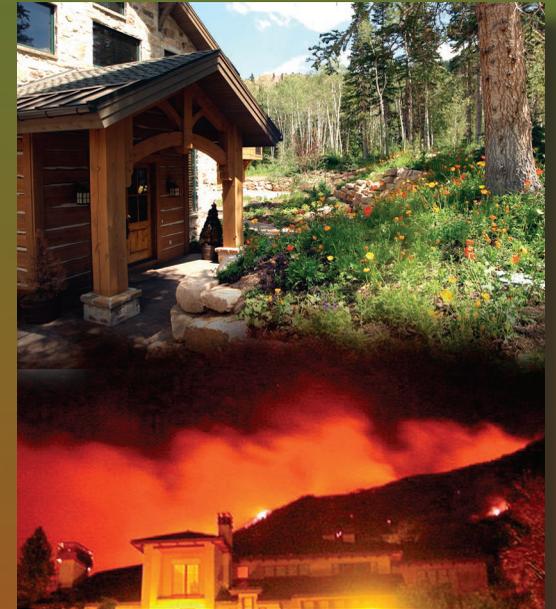
MAINTAIN ACCESS, DEFENSIBLE/ SURVIVABLE SPACE, AND CONSTRUCTION

Annual preparation is the only way to reduce wildfire threat.

Reevaluate and make sure that all Access, Defensible/Survivable Space and Construction activities are addressed before fire season.

HELP INFORM YOUR NEIGHBORS ABOUT WILDFIRE PREPARATION.

Prepare for Wildfire



What can you do?

Attend to:

Access

Construction

Defensible/Survivable Space

Maintenance

