

How to Prepare Your Home for Wildfire

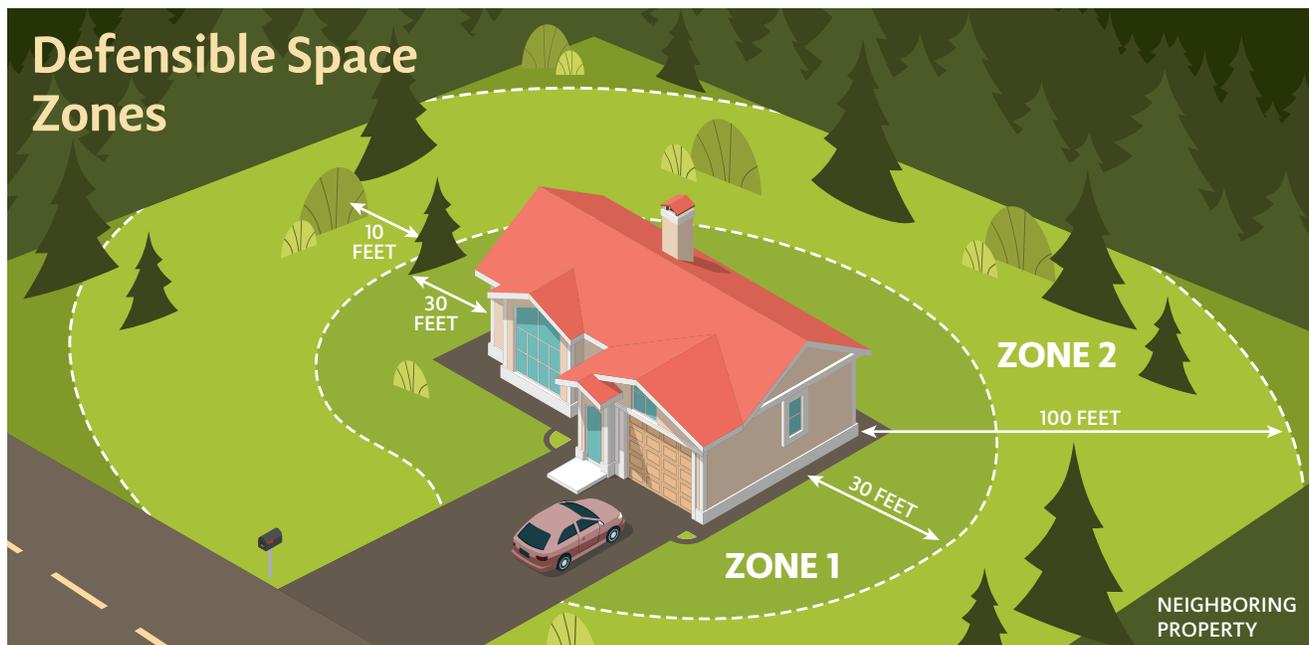
Those who live and work in communities on the edge of forests, often called the “wildland urban interface,” need to protect their homes from the threat of wildfire. Being ready for wildfire starts with **maintaining an adequate defensible space** and by **hardening your home** by using fire resistant building and landscaping materials. Fire professionals repeatedly state that the area within 100 feet of your home has the biggest influence on its chance of surviving a wildfire.

Defensible Space

Defensible space is the buffer you create by removing dead plants, grass, and weeds from around your home. This buffer is needed to slow or stop the spread of wildfire and it helps protect your home from catching fire—either from direct flame contact or radiant heat. For more information check out: <https://www.readyforwildfire.org/prepare-for-wildfire/>.

6 No Cost Ways to Create Defensible Space:

- 1 Regularly clean your roof, gutters, decks, and the base of walls to avoid accumulation of leaves, needles and other flammable materials.
- 2 Ensure all combustible materials are removed from underneath, on top of, or within five feet of a deck.
- 3 Remove vegetation or other combustible materials that are within five feet of windows and glass doors.
- 4 Replace wood mulch products within five feet of all structures with noncombustible products such as dirt, stone, or gravel.
- 5 Maintain Zone 1 by removing all dead or dying grass, plants, shrubs, trees, branches, leaves, weeds, and pine needles within 30 feet of all structures.
- 6 Maintain Zone 2 by mowing grass to 4 inches and by removing low branches from trees and shrubs within 100 feet of all structures.



Home Hardening

Hardening your home means using construction materials that can help your home withstand flying embers, which can result in your house catching fire. Embers will seek out any opening or weak spot in your home's construction to get inside. Taking the necessary measures to harden your home can help increase its chance of survival when wildfire strikes.

10 Low Cost Ways to Harden Your Home:

- 1 When it is time to replace your roof, replace it with fire-resistant composition, metal, or tile materials.
- 2 Block spaces between your roof covering and sheathing using an eave closure.
- 3 Install non-combustible metal gutter covers to prevent the accumulation of leaves and debris in the gutter.
- 4 Cover your chimney, stove pipe, and all vent openings with a noncombustible corrosion-resistant metal mesh screen, a spark arrestor, with 3/8-inch to 1/2-inch openings.
- 5 Have multiple garden hoses that are long enough to reach all areas of your home and other structures on your property. If you have a pool or well, consider getting a pump.
- 6 Caulk and plug gaps greater than 1/16-inch around exposed rafters and blocking to prevent ember intrusion.
- 7 Inspect siding for dry rot, gaps, cracks, and warping. Caulk or plug gaps greater than 1/16-inch in siding and replace any damaged boards, including those with dry rot.
- 8 Install weather stripping to gaps greater than 1/16-inch in garage doors to prevent ember intrusion.
- 9 When replacing windows use multi-paned windows with at least one pane of tempered glass.
- 10 When it's time to replace your siding or deck, use non combustible, ignition-resistant materials or consider switching to a stone or concrete patio.

