

Tour Wildfire-Ready Homes

Address:

Make sure your address is clearly visible from the street.

Home Site and Yard:

Ensure you have at least a 100-foot radius of defensible space (cleared vegetation) around your home. Note that even more clearance may be needed for homes in severe hazard areas. This means looking past what you own to determine the impact a common slope or neighbor's yard will have on your property during a wildfire.

Cut dry weeds and grass before noon when temperatures are cooler to reduce the chance of sparking a fire.

Landscape with fire-resistant plants that have a high moisture content and are low-growing.

Keep woodpiles, propane tanks and combustible materials away from your home and other structures such as garages and sheds.

Ensure that trees are far away from power lines.

Inside:

Keep working fire extinguishers on hand.

Install smoke alarms on each level of your home and within bedrooms. Test them monthly and change the batteries twice a year.

Roof:

Your roof is the most vulnerable part of your home because it can easily catch fire from windblown embers. Homes with wood-shake or shingle roofs are at a higher risk of being destroyed during a wildfire than homes with fire-resistant roofs.

Build your roof or re-roof with fire-resistant materials that include composition, metal or tile. Block any spaces between roof decking and covering to prevent ember intrusion.

Cut any tree branches within ten feet of your roof.

Vents:

Vents on homes are particularly vulnerable to flying embers. All vent openings should be covered with 1/8-inch metal mesh. Do not use fiberglass or plastic mesh because they can melt and burn.

Attic vents in eaves or cornices should be baffled or otherwise protected to prevent ember intrusion (mesh is not enough).

Windows:

Heat from a wildland fire can cause windows to break even before the home ignites. This allows burning embers to enter and start internal fires. Single-paned and large windows are particularly vulnerable.

Install dual-paned windows, with the exterior pane of tempered glass, to reduce the chance of breakage in a fire.

Limit the size and number of windows in your home that face large areas of vegetation.





Garage:

Have a fire extinguisher and tools such as a shovel, rake, bucket and hoe available for fire emergencies.

Install a solid door with self-closing hinges between living areas and the garage. Install weather stripping around and under doors to prevent ember intrusion.

Store all combustibles and flammable liquids away from ignition sources.

Driveways and Access Roads:

Driveways should be designed to allow fire and emergency vehicles and equipment to reach your house.

Access roads should have a minimum 10-foot clearance on either side of the traveled section of the roadway and should allow for two-way traffic.

Ensure that all gates open inward and are wide enough to accommodate emergency equipment.

Trim trees and shrubs overhanging the road to a minimum of 13 1/2 feet to allow emergency vehicles to pass.

Non-Combustible Fencing:

Make sure to use non-combustible fencing to protect your home during a wildland fire.

Chimney:

Cover your chimney outlet with a non-flammable screen of 1/4-inch wire mesh or smaller to prevent embers from escaping and igniting a fire.

Make sure that your chimney is at least 10 feet away from any tree branches.

Non-Combustible Boxed In Eaves:

Box in eaves with non-combustible materials to prevent accumulation of embers.

Rain Gutters:

Screen or enclose rain gutters to prevent accumulation of plant debris. If not screened, keep gutters clear of debris.

Water Supply:

Have multiple garden hoses that are long enough to reach any area of your home and other structures on your property.

Deck/Patio Cover:

Use heavy timber or non-flammable construction material for decks and patio covers.

Enclose the underside of balconies and decks with fire-resistant materials to prevent embers from blowing underneath, lodging and starting a fire.

Keep your deck clear of combustible items, such as baskets, dried flower arrangements and other debris.

The decking surface must be ignition resistant if it's within 10 feet of the home.

Walls:

Wood products, such as boards, panels or shingles, are common siding materials. However, they are combustible and not safe choices for fire-prone areas.

Build or remodel with fire-resistant building materials, such as brick, cement, masonry or stucco.

Be sure to extend materials from foundation to roof.