

ZONE 1

A minimum 30-foot defensible space surrounding the house that should be well irrigated and fire resistant. Because fire travels quickly on a hill, the steeper the slope, the more open space you will need to protect your home. If you live on a hill, extend the zone on the downhill side.

- Clear away all combustible materials—including leaves or needles and other debris—from the roof, gutters, and decks (on top and below), and around the foundation.
- Remove vines from the exterior of the house. Move shrubs and other vegetation away from the sides of the house. Prune branches and shrubs within 15 feet of chimneys, stove pipes, or the structure. Avoid using bark and wood chip mulch next to any structure.
- Remove tree limbs within 15 feet of the ground. Create a 15-foot space between tree crowns.
- Replace highly flammable vegetation, such as pine, eucalyptus, juniper and fir trees with plants that do not burn as readily. Less flammable options include trees with low sap or resin content like many deciduous species, or those that have high moisture content, like succulents and some herbaceous species. For more information on “firewise” landscaping, go to www.firewise.org/wildfire-preparedness/firewise-landscaping-and-plant-lists.aspx.
- Replace or prune any plants that could help fire move from the ground into the treetops.
- Ask the power company to clear branches from or near power lines.
- Store outdoor furniture cushions, brooms, or other flammable items when not in use.

ZONE 2

From 30 to at least 100 feet around the house

- In this zone, reduce or replace as much of the most flammable vegetation as possible.
- Create “fuel breaks,” such as driveways, gravel walkways, and lawns.
- Prune tree limbs 6 to 10 feet from the ground.
- As in Zone 1, if you live on a hill, you may need to extend this zone further than 100 feet for additional safety.

ZONE 3

From 100 to 200 feet from the house

- Keep vegetation thinned to remove underbrush and keep tall trees from creating touching canopies.
- Stack firewood at least 100 feet away from the structure.