

Create a defensible space and defensible home



Novato

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PLEASE KEEP FOR YOUR REFERENCE

Defensible space

Homeowners are required to create and maintain defensible space—a buffer to slow or halt the spread of wildfires and improve safety for firefighters working to protect structures.

ZONE 0 THERE SHOULD BE “ZERO” COMBUSTIBLES IN “ZONE ZERO”

- **Only use** inorganic, non-combustible mulches such as stone or gravel.
- **Remove** or relocate all combustible materials including firewood, garbage and recycling containers, lumber, and trash.
- **Choose** metal outdoor furniture instead of wood or wicker.
- **Replace** jute or natural fiber doormats with heavy rubber or metal grates.
- **No vegetation** is recommended in Zone 0.
- **Remove** tree limbs that extend into this zone.
- **Clean** fallen leaves and needles regularly, focusing on the roof, gutters, decks, & the base of walls.
- **Don't** store combustibles on or under decks. Keep decks clean at all times.
- **Install** hardscaping and paths of stone, gravel, or concrete around the perimeter of structures.

ZONE 1 5–30 FEET FROM BUILDINGS, DECKS, AND OTHER STRUCTURES

- **Remove** all dead grasses, weeds, plants, & foliage.
- **Remove** all fallen leaves, needles, twigs, bark, cones, and small branches.
- **Use** compost or heavy bark mulch in this zone to maintain soil moisture and control erosion.
- **Choose** only fire resistant plants, and keep them healthy and well irrigated.
- **Remove** fire-prone plants.
- **Provide** spacing between shrubs, at least 2 times the height of the mature plant. Add space on slopes.
- **Trim** trees & remove limbs 6' to 10' from the ground.
- **Remove** branches that overhang your roof or within 10' of chimneys.
- **Move** firewood & lumber out of Zone 1, or cover in a fire resistant enclosure.
- **Remove** combustibles around and under decks and awnings.
- **Clear** vegetation around fences, sheds, outdoor furniture, play structures.
- **Maintain** regularly, focusing on the areas closest to the structure.
- Outbuildings and LPG storage tanks should have at least 10' of clearance.

ZONE 2 30–100 FEET FROM BUILDINGS, DECKS, AND OTHER STRUCTURES

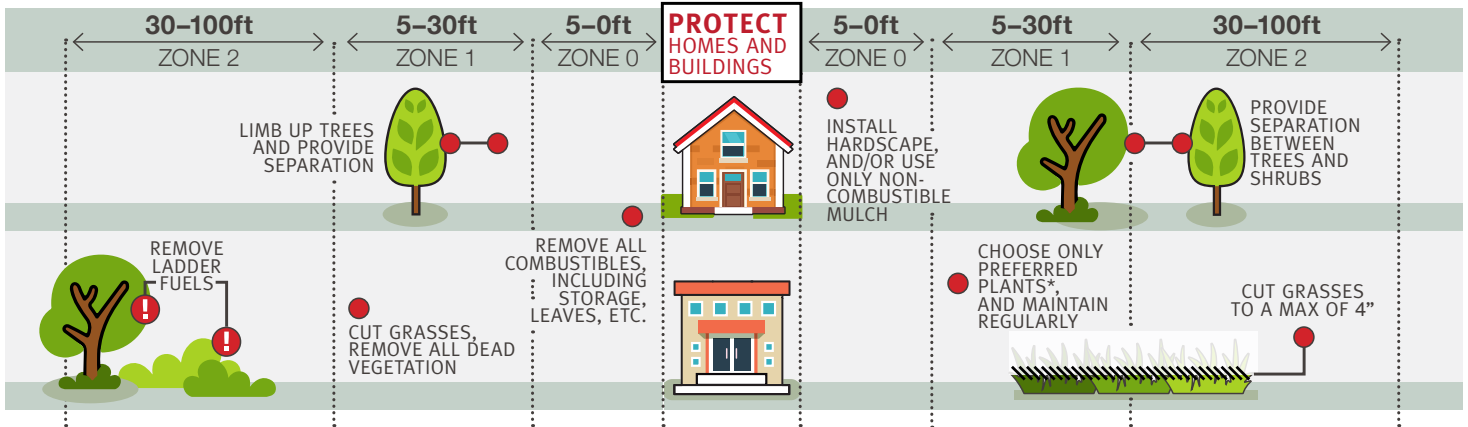
- **Cut** annual grasses and weeds to a maximum height of 4".
- **Provide** horizontal spacing between shrubs & trees.
- **Create** vertical spacing between grass, shrubs and lower tree limbs.
- **Allow** no more than 3" of loose surface litter (consisting of fallen leaves, needles, twigs, cones, and small branches) if needed to protect from erosion.
- **Remove** all piles of dead vegetation.

ACCESS ZONE PROPERTY OWNERS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR VEGETATION ADJACENT TO ROADS AND DRIVEWAYS.

- **Clear** vegetation 14' overhead and 10' from sides of roads and driveways in the same manner as Defensible Space Zone 1.
- **Maintain** 12' of unobstructed pavement for passage of vehicles.
- **Choose** only fire resistant plants and ensure that they do not extend into the roadway.
- **Address** numbers must be clearly visible from the road. Use 4" reflective or lighted numbers on a contrasting background.
- **Create** vertical spacing between shrubs and lower tree limbs.

Defensible home

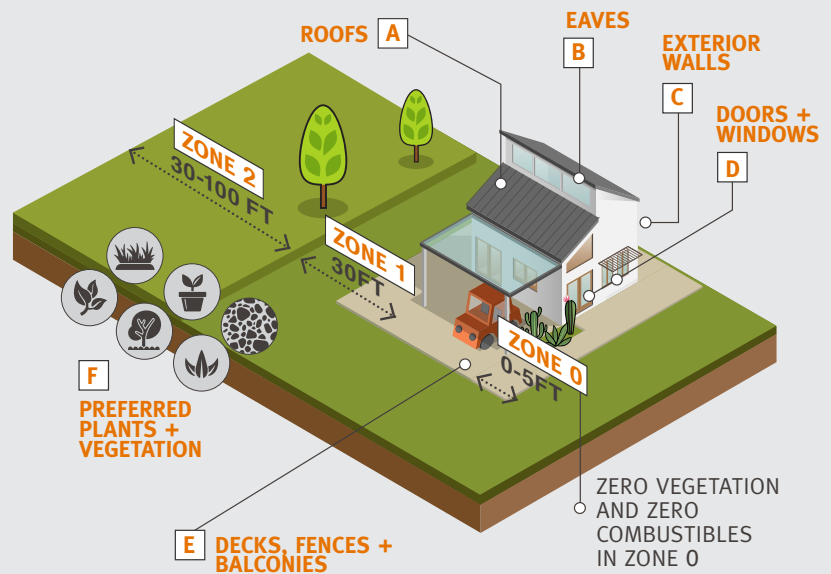
LEARN MORE AT WWW.FIRESAFEMARIN.ORG/DEFENSIBLE-SPACE



HARDEN YOUR HOME TO PROTECT AGAINST EMBERS.

LEARN MORE AT WWW.FIRESAFEMARIN.ORG/HOME-HARDENING

- A** **Roofs** must be “Class A,” with ignition resistant materials such as composition, metal or tile.
- B** **Eaves** can be protected by enclosing them with stucco or cement siding to prevent ignition. **Vent openings** should be covered with 1/8” metal mesh to stop ember intrusion. Do not use fiberglass or plastic mesh because they can melt and burn.
- C** **Exterior walls** can be covered with non-combustible siding or stucco, with no gaps, cracks, or openings for embers to get in.
- D** **Weatherstripping** around windows and doors can stop embers from entering the home. Choose double pane, tempered glass windows to protect from breakage if exposed to heat.
- E** **Balconies, decks, and fences** attached to the building can be built with ignition resistant or non-combustible materials.



F Preferred plants and vegetation

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SHRUBS

Avoid:

Juniper, Sage, Bamboo, Calif. Buckwheat,

Suggested:

Amur Maple, Camelia, Cherry Laurel, Creeping, Mahonia, English Laurel, Lantana, Buckthorn,

Quail Bush, Acacia, Toyon, Lemonade Berry.

Hollyleaf Cherry, Karo, Pacific Wax Myrtle, Privet, Rhododendrons and Azaleas, Yucca.



TREES

Avoid:

Eucalyptus, Palm, most Conifers (Pines, Italian Cypress, Juniper, Firs, Cedars), Acacias.

Suggested:

Oaks, Maples, Sycamores, Western Redbud, Holly Leaf Cherry.



GROUNDCOVER

Avoid:

Iceplant, Hot N Tot Fig, Periwinkle, Algerian Ivy.

Suggested:

Carpet Bugle, Beach Aster, Strawberry, Giant Turf Lily, Alpine Cinquefoil, Creeping Thyme, Perennial Verbena.



GRASSES

Avoid:

Deer Grass, Fountain Grass, Pampas Grass, Bamboo, Brazilian Pepper, Giant Reed.

Suggested:

Wild Rye, Foothill Needlegrass, Purple Needlegrass, Melic Grass.



SUCCULENTS

Suggested:

Prickly Pear Cactus, Cholla, Chaparral Yucca, Dudleya, Agave.



PERENNIALS

Avoid using:

Artichoke Thistle, Russian Thistle, Castor Bean, Mustard.

Suggested:

Most others...



FIRE-RESISTANT MULCHES

Suggested:

Crushed Rock, Pea Gravel, Beaded Glass, Decomposed Granite or other Non-Combustible Material

* CONSULT WITH THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT PRIOR TO CHANGING YOUR HOME OR LANDSCAPE AS IT MIGHT REQUIRE A PERMIT OR DESIGN REVIEW

