

# Wildfire Safe

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## Introduction

This tutorial provides actionable steps to create defensible spaces around your property to mitigate wildfire risks, as discussed by Fire Chief Todd Hesse in his seminar. Understanding and implementing these strategies is essential for enhancing your home's safety during wildfire season.

## Step 1: Create a Defensible Space

Defensible space is the area around your home that is maintained to reduce fire risk.

Follow these guidelines to establish a defensible space:

- **Zone 1 (0-5 feet from your home):**
  - Use non-combustible materials for landscaping, like gravel or concrete.
  - Keep vegetation minimal and well-watered.
  - Remove any flammable materials, such as wood piles or propane tanks.
- **Zone 2 (5-30 feet from your home):**
  - Trim trees and shrubs to create space between plants.
  - Maintain a minimum of 10 feet of clearance between tree canopies.
  - Remove dead leaves and debris regularly.
- **Zone 3 (30-100 feet from your home):**
  - Thin out trees to create a more open area.
  - Space trees at least 10-12 feet apart.
  - Keep shrubs trimmed and away from tree bases.

## Step 2: Maintain Your Landscape

Regular maintenance is crucial for keeping your defensible space effective. Implement these practices:

- **Regularly clear debris:**
  - Remove fallen branches and leaves from gutters, roofs, and driveways.
- **Water plants:**
  - Ensure that the vegetation in your defensible space is healthy and well-watered to reduce flammability.
- **Prune trees and shrubs:**
  - Regularly trim branches to prevent fires from spreading to your home.

## Step 3: Utilize Fire-Resistant Materials

When building or renovating, consider using fire-resistant materials to withstand heat and flames:

- **Roofing:**

- Choose Class A fire-rated roofing materials like metal, tile, or asphalt shingles.
- **Siding:**
  - Use fire-resistant materials such as stucco, brick, or fiber-cement siding.
- **Decking:**
  - Opt for composite materials or treated woods that resist fire.

#### **Step 4: Plan for Emergency Access**

Ensure that emergency responders can easily access your property:

- **Create clear pathways:**
  - Maintain driveways free of obstructions and provide enough space for fire trucks.
- **Mark addresses clearly:**
  - Use reflective numbers that are easy to see from the road to help emergency services locate your home quickly.

#### **Conclusion**

Establishing defensible spaces and maintaining your landscape is crucial for wildfire preparedness. By following these steps, you can significantly reduce your home's vulnerability to wildfires. Regular maintenance and the use of fire-resistant materials further enhance safety. Consider conducting a property assessment with local fire services to identify additional risks and recommendations tailored to your area. Stay informed and proactive to protect your home and community from wildfire threats.