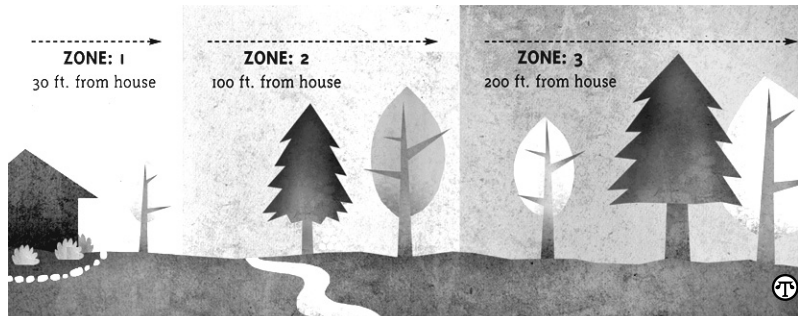


HOME SAFETY

Keeping Landscapes Lean, Green, Clean—And Firewise



Careful landscaping can help your home survive a wildfire.

(NAPS)—A well-maintained landscape can not only enhance the beauty and value of any property—it can also serve as a fuel break. Under the right conditions, a “Firewise” home can even survive a wildfire.

The goal is to keep your landscaping lean, clean and green. If water is scarce, contact a landscape specialist to discuss plants that require less irrigation and are native to your area.

The following steps can help your home survive a wildfire:

ZONE 1: 30 feet adjacent to the home beyond attachments such as wooden decks and fences. Keep this area well irrigated and free from dry vegetation and debris. Plants should be carefully spaced, low growing and free of resins, oils, and waxes that burn easily.

- Mow the lawn regularly. Prune all trees so the lowest limbs are six to 10 feet from the ground. Remove dried leaves, pine needles and other dead vegetation.

- Allow 30 feet between tops of trees to reduce the risk of crown fire.

- Within five feet of the home, use nonflammable landscaping materials, such as rock, pavers, annuals, and high-moisture-content perennials.

- If you live in a moderate- to high-hazard area, consider fire-

resistant patio furniture, swing sets, and accessories.

- Keep firewood stacks and propane tanks at least 30 feet from the home.

- Water plants and trees regularly to ensure they are healthy. Mulch should also be watered.

ZONE 2: 30 to 100 feet from the home. In moderate- and high-hazard areas, plants should be low growing, well irrigated and less flammable.

- Leave 30 feet between clusters of two to three trees, or 20 feet between individual trees. Prune trees so branches and leaves are at least six to 10 feet above the ground.

- Give yourself added protection with “fuel breaks,” such as driveways, gravel walkways, and lawns.

ZONE 3: 100 to 200 feet from the home. Keep this area thinned out. Remove heavy accumulation of woody debris. Reduce the density of tall trees so high-intensity crown fire is less likely to reach your home.

Contact your state forestry office or landscape specialist for more information about Firewise landscaping, and to determine your area’s wildfire hazard level. To find your state forestry office, visit www.stateforesters.org. For more tips, visit www.firewise.org.