

Attachment B

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County of Monterey
RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AGENCY



Basic Defensible Space & Vegetation Management Guidelines For Property Owners

Scope: These guidelines provide property owners with information regarding basic vegetation management practices to create defensible space around structures in all unincorporated areas of Monterey County. Use of these practices will help property owners bring the property into a **basic** level of compliance with:

- LE-100 Defensible Space Inspection Program
- California Public Resources Code Section 4291
- Local fire dept. wildland fire safety requirements
- Planning Services Dept. zoning, easement & environmental requirements

Within 30 feet immediately surrounding the building (or to property line, which ever is closer):

- ❖ Cut flammable vegetation around buildings a minimum 30 feet or to the property line, whichever is closer, except for landscaping, as follows:
 - Cut dry and dead grass to a maximum height of 4 inches.
 - Maintain the roof and gutters of the structure free of leaves, needles or other dead vegetative growth.
 - Maintain any tree adjacent to or overhanging a building free of dead wood.
 - Trim tree limbs that extend within 10 feet of the outlet of a chimney or stove pipe.
 - Trim dead portions of tree limbs within 10 feet from the ground.
 - Remove all limbs within 6 feet of the ground.
 - Remove all dead fallen material unless it is embedded in the soil.
 - Remove all cut material from the area.
- ❖ Remove all cut material from the area or chip and spread on site.
- ❖ Provide and maintain at all times a screen over the outlet of every chimney or stovepipe that is attached to a fireplace, stove or other device that burns any solid or liquid fuel. The screen shall be constructed of nonflammable material and openings of not more than one-half inch in size.
- ❖ Post house numbers per Fire Department requirements.

Between 30 and 100 feet around the building (or to the property line, whichever is closer)

- The fuel reduction zone in the remaining 70 feet (or to the property line) will depend on the steepness of your property and the type of vegetation. For additional information, refer to the Cal Fire brochure [“Why 100 Feet? Protect Your Home...and Property”](#)
- Cut plants and grass beneath tree canopies to prevent fire from spreading to the trees. These plants should be “topped off” leaving the root structure intact to minimize erosion.
- Do not use herbicide or other chemical methods to remove vegetation.

Note: Any further vegetation management activities, including those required by insurance companies, may require prior approval from the Planning Services Department when activities involve the following:

- Exposing soil to erosion
- Impact sensitive habitat
- Accelerating sediment runoff into water courses
- Tree removal

Permit requirements for these additional vegetation management activities are available at the Monterey County Planning Department office located at 1441 Schilling Place, 2nd Floor - South, Salinas, CA 93901. If you wish to speak to a Planner regarding these permit requirements, you may call (831) 755-5025.



**WILDFIRE IS COMING...
ARE YOU READY?**

HOME **PREPARE FOR WILDFIRE** ▾ PREVENT WILDFIRE ▾ POST WILDFIRE ▾
FOREST HEALTH ▾ PERMITS ▾ SPANISH MORE ▾ CONTACT US



MAINTAIN DEFENSIBLE SPACE

Keep your property lean and green to help protect your family and home.

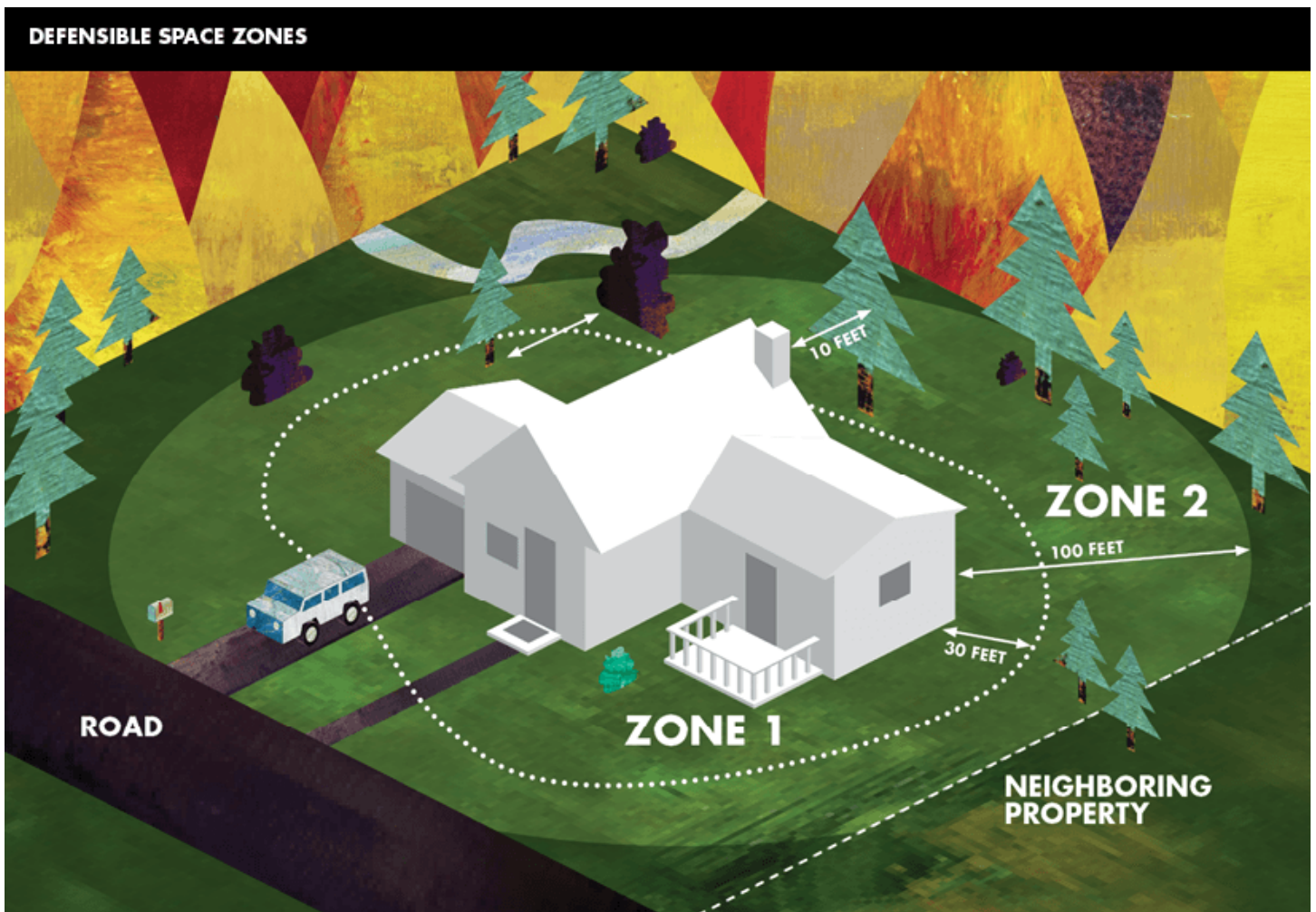
Creating defensible space is essential to improve your home's chance of surviving a wildfire. It's the buffer you create between a building on your property and the grass, trees, shrubs, or any wildland area that surround it. This space is needed to slow or stop the spread of wildfire and it protects your home from catching fire—either from direct flame contact or radiant heat. Defensible space is also important for the protection of the firefighters defending your home.

Defensible Space Zones

Two zones make up the required 100 feet of defensible space.

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Zone 1

Zone 1 extends 30 feet* out from buildings, structures, decks, etc.

- Remove all dead plants, grass and weeds (vegetation).
- Remove dead or dry leaves and pine needles from your yard, roof and rain gutters.
- Trim trees regularly to keep branches a minimum of 10 feet from other trees.
- Remove branches that hang over your roof and keep dead branches 10 feet away from your chimney.
- Relocate wood piles into Zone 2.
- Remove or prune flammable plants and shrubs near windows.
- Remove vegetation and items that could catch fire from around and under decks.
- Create a separation between trees, shrubs and items that could catch fire, such as patio furniture, wood piles, swing sets, etc.

Zone 2

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- Cut or mow annual grass down to a maximum height of 4 inches.
- Create horizontal spacing between shrubs and trees. (See diagram)
- Create vertical spacing between grass, shrubs and trees. (See diagram)
- Remove fallen leaves, needles, twigs, bark, cones, and small branches. However, they may be permitted to a depth of 3 inches.

* San Diego County requires 50 feet of clearance in Zone 1. Check with your local fire department for any additional defensible space or weed abatement ordinances.

Plant and Tree Spacing

The spacing between grass, shrubs, and trees is crucial to reduce the spread of wildfires. The spacing needed is determined by the type and size of brush and trees, as well as the slope of the land. For example, a property on a steep slope with larger vegetation requires greater spacing between trees and shrubs than a level property that has small, sparse vegetation.

Vertical Spacing

Remove all tree branches at least 6 feet from the ground.

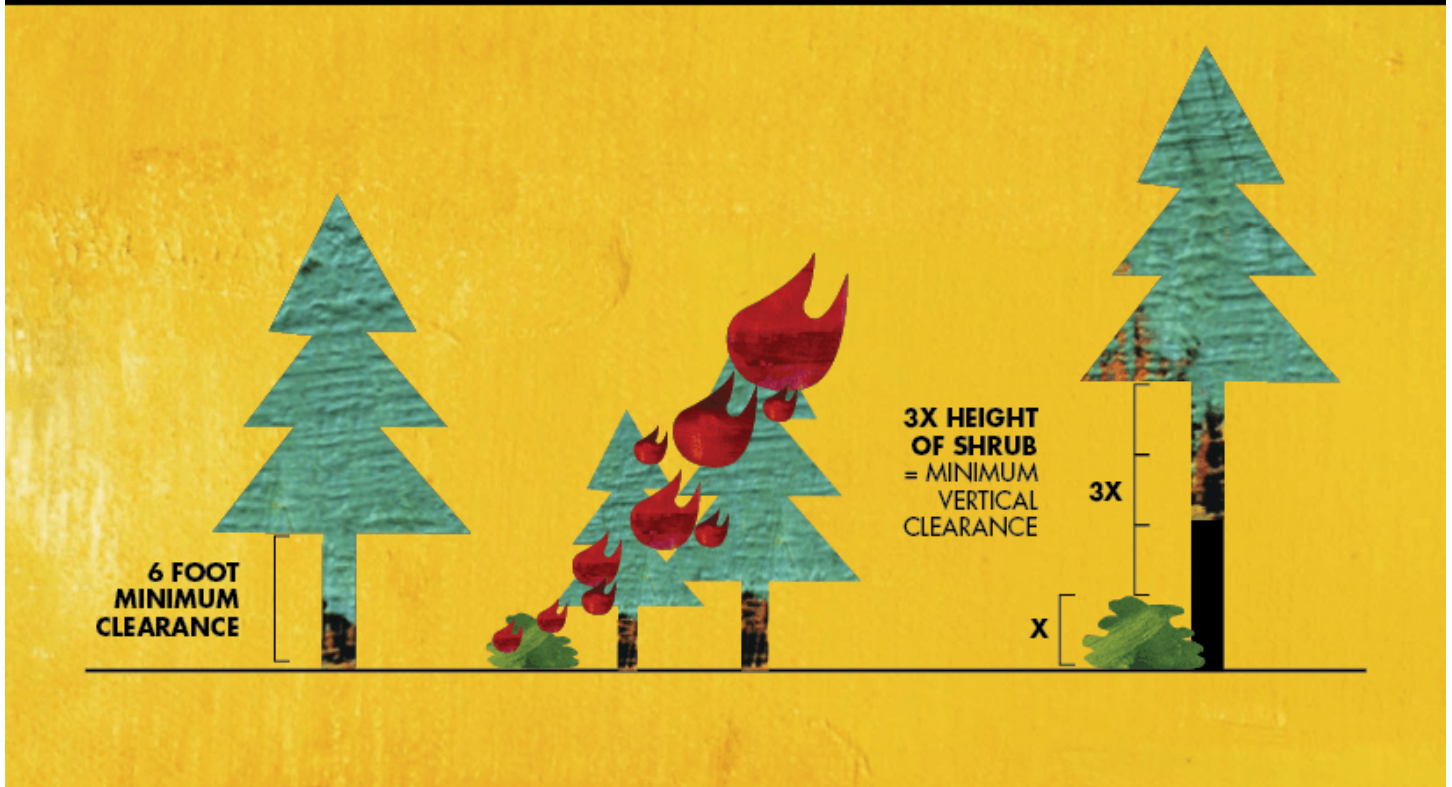
Allow extra vertical space between shrubs and trees. Lack of vertical space can allow a fire to move from the ground to the brush to the tree tops like a ladder.

To determine the proper vertical spacing between shrubs and the lowest branches of trees, use the formula below.

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MINIMUM VERTICAL CLEARANCE



Example: A five foot shrub is growing near a tree. $3 \times 5 = 15$ feet of clearance needed between the top of the shrub and the lowest tree branch.

Horizontal Spacing

Horizontal spacing depends on the slope of the land and the height of the shrubs or trees. Check the chart below to determine spacing distance.

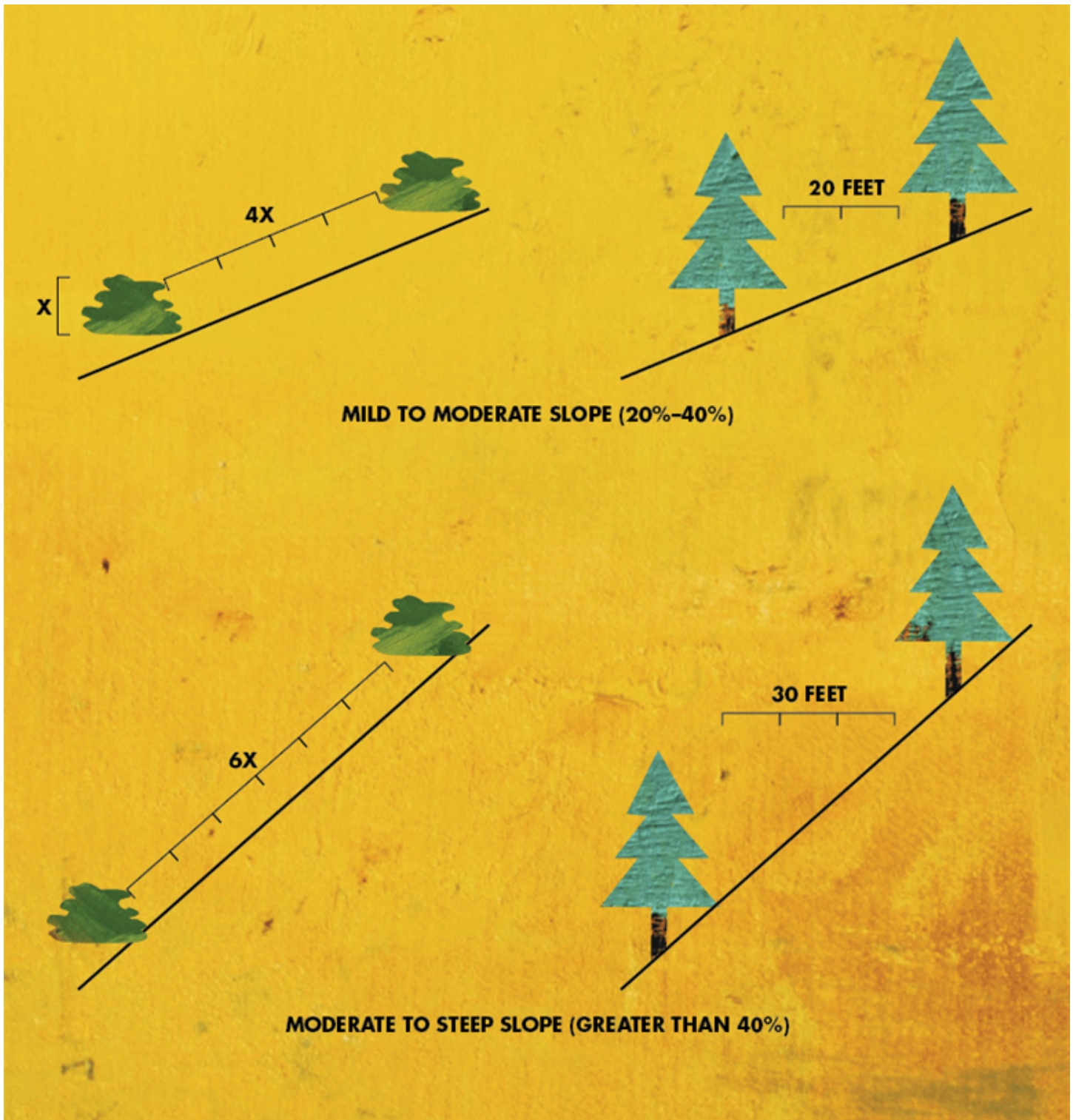
MINIMUM HORIZONTAL CLEARANCE



FLAT TO MID SLOPE (LESS THAN 20%)

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Fire-Resistant Landscaping

Fire-resistant landscaping isn't necessarily the same thing as a well-maintained yard. This type of landscaping uses **fire-resistant plants** that are strategically planted to resist the spread of fire to your home.

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your home.



DEFENSIBLE SPACE VIDEO

One Ember Can Bring It H...



READY FOR WILDFIRE APP



Use our new web-based app


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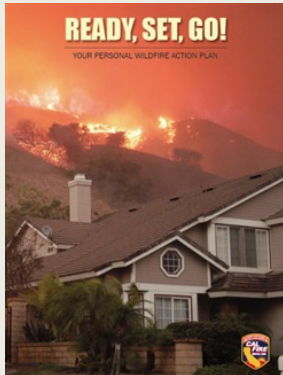
find information on wildfire incidents near you! Go to the [Ready for Wildfire App](#)


IS YOUR HOME READY? BROCHURE



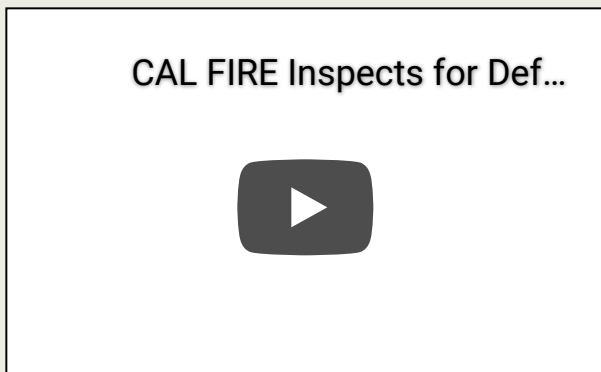
Download the [Wildfire is Coming, Are You Ready? brochure](#)  to get your home ready for wildfire.

READY, SET, GO! BROCHURE



Download the [Ready, Set, Go! brochure](#)  to learn more about preparing your home and your family for Wildfire.

VIDEOS AND OTHER HELPFUL LINKS



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Check out [CALFIRETV](#) for more videos.

[Ready, Set, Go! Video](#)

[California Living Fire Resistant Video](#)

[Defensible Space Photo Album](#)

DEFENSIBLE SPACE FLYER



Download the [Defensible Space flyer](#) for a action checklist.

HOMEOWNER'S CHECKLIST



Download [Homeowner's Checklist](#) to make your home fire-resistant inside and out.

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Wildfire Preparation

Fire is an inevitable part of living in California, but there are key ways to prepare. Building resistance in the surrounding landscape, the WUI area, and in your structures are necessary to improve your chances of withstanding wildland fire.

Use the following resources to understand your risks, identify resources, and know your limitations when implementing preventative treatments.

Identify Your Local Fire Hazard Ranking

Click on the map to find your local county.

DRAFT FIRE HAZARD SEVERITY ZONES IN LOCAL RESPONSIBILITY AREA



Government Code 91175.89 directed the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) to map areas of very high fire hazard within Local Responsibility Areas (LRAs). Portions of the areas, related to weather, were initially developed in the mid 1990s but are now being updated based on improved science, mapping techniques, and data.

The California Building Commission adopted the Wildland-Urban Interface codes in late 2005 to be effective in 2007. These codes establish minimum standards for the greater resistance of buildings required from firebrands. The updated fire hazard severity zones will be used by building officials to determine appropriate construction requirements for new buildings in the Wildland-Urban Interface. The updated zones will also be used by property owners to comply with natural resource disclosure requirements at time of property sale and 300-foot setback requirements. It is noted that the fire hazard severity zones will be used for updates to the safety element of general plans.

This map has been created by CAL FIRE's Fire and Resource Assessment Program (FRAP) using data and models describing development patterns, potential fuels over a 30-year time horizon, estimated fire behavior, and expected fire propagation to quantify the hazard and tabulate of vegetation fire exposure (including firebrands) to new construction. Details on the project and specific modeling methodology can be found at <http://www.fire.ca.gov/arcgis/rest/services/arcgis/rest/info>.

The version dated September 17, 2007 of the map shown here represents draft VHFHSZs within LRA, for review and comment by local government.

An interactive system for viewing map data is hosted by the UC Center for Fire at <http://www.fire.ucdavis.edu/arcgis/>.

Questions can be directed to:

Kathleen Schulz (Northern Region) (916) 472-3121 kathleen.schulz@fire.ca.gov
 Gene Barton (Southern Region) (916) 243-4130 gene.barton@fire.ca.gov

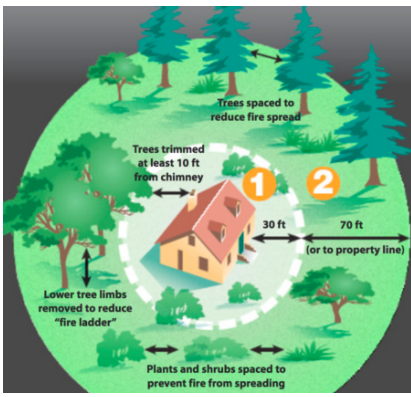


The State of California and the Department of Forestry and Fire Protection make no representations or warranties regarding the accuracy of data or maps. Neither the State nor the Department shall be liable under any circumstances for any direct, special, incidental, or consequential damages with respect to any claim by any user or third party on account of, or arising from, the use of data or maps.

Obtain FRAP maps, data, metadata and publications on the Internet at <http://frap.cdf.ca.gov>
 For more information, contact CDF-FRAP, P.O. Box 944249, Sacramento, CA 94244-2459, (916) 327-3939.

Arnold Schwarzenegger, Governor,
 State of California
 Mark Chelmer, Secretary for Resources,
 The Resources Agency
 Ruben Galvao, Director,
 Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

MAPID: FHSZL06_1_MAP
 DATA SOURCES
 USGS 1:100,000 DLGs
 CAL FIRE State Responsibility Areas (SRAS-4)
 CAL FIRE Hazard Severity Zones (FHSZL06_1)

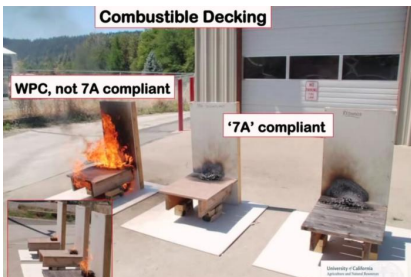


Create Defensible Space

Defensible space does more than just preventing fire from reaching your home. Defensible space gives fire fighters a safe area from which they can defend your property.

Reduce Landscape Fuels

In addition to the area directly around the home, consider your proximity to hazardous fuels. Fire can build energy as it moves through a natural area, making it an unstoppable force by the time it reaches you. Prevent this with strategic landscape treatments before you are placed at risk.



Use Fire-Resistant Building Materials

Embers are the primary cause of home ignition during fire. Choosing the right building materials and design features to reduce the influence of embers on your home can drastically improve your home's chances of survival.

Use Fire-Adapted Landscaping

Home landscaping in California must consider threat from fire. The best plants are low lying species with strong root systems that can easily respond to fire.



References

1. Texas, (2014) Environmental Best Management Practices for Wildfire Risk Reduction and Recovery, *Wildfire Ready Austin*
2. DeGomez, Jones, (2013) Fire Safety for Wildland Homes, *University of Arizona Cooperative Extension*
3. Quarles, S.L. et al. (2010) Home Survival in Wildfire-Prone Areas: Building Materials and Design Considerations, *UC Agricultural and Natural Resources*
4. Alexander, M.E. (2006) You are about to be entrapped or burned over by a wildfire: what are your survival options?, *Forest Ecology and Management*

Webmaster Email: rpsatomi@ucanr.edu

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