

## Fire Wise Safety

- Know debris burning laws. Contact your local Division of Forestry or fire department for information.
- Keep handy household items that can be used as fire tools: a rake, axe, handsaw or chainsaw, bucket and shovel.
- Have a garden hose and sprinkler ready to be placed on your roof.
- Keep a ladder that will reach the roof.
- Make sure that fire vehicles can get to your home. Clearly mark all driveway entrances and display your name and address.
- Plan several escape routes away from your home, by car and by foot.
- Teach each family member how to use the fire extinguisher (ABC type) and show them where it's kept.
- Store gasoline, oily rags and other flammable materials in approved safety can. Place cans in a safe location away from the base of buildings.
- Consider how you could help neighbors with special needs such as children, elderly, or disabled persons.
- Make a list of your neighbors' skills such as medical or technical.

## When Wildfire Threatens

- If you are warned that a wildfire is threatening your area, listen to your radio for reports and evacuation information.
- Prepare for arriving firefighters. Place ladders against the front of the house. Connect garden hoses with shutoff nozzles and turn on water. Leave nozzles closed.
- Park cars headed out.
- If advised to evacuate, do so immediately.
- Wear protective clothing, sturdy shoes, cotton or woolen clothing, long pants, a long sleeve shirt, gloves and a handkerchief to protect your face.
- Take your disaster Supplies Kit and family first aid kit, with prescription medication. Store these supplies in sturdy, easy-to-carry containers such as backpacks, duffelbags or trash containers.
- Keep important family documents in a waterproof container. Assemble a smaller version of your kit to keep in the trunk of your car.
- Choose a route away from fire hazards. Watch for changes in the speed and direction of fire and smoke.

## Wildfire in the Urban Interface ... Protect Your Dream

# Wildfire in the Interface...

## Where the Trees Meet the Eaves

Today, most people's dream home is a place tucked in among the trees with a view of a lake or stream. A place where they can get away from it all, a place that is secure, serene and most of all quiet.



Brian Myrick/Daytona Beach News-Journal

Unfortunately, these places, often referred to as the "*Wildland Urban Interface*," come at a cost, the very real danger of wildfire.



## Before Wildfire Threatens

Wildfire often begins with little or no warning, spreading quickly, igniting trees, brush and your home. Reduce your risk *before* wildfire strikes. Follow the steps listed in this brochure to protect your family, home and property.

### Fire Wise Landscaping

Create a safety zone around your home where you can take steps to reduce potential exposure to flames and radiant heat. To create a *fire wise* landscape, remember that the primary goal is fuel (vegetation) reduction.

- Have a well-irrigated area (sprinklers) that encircles your home for at least 30 feet on all sides. This provides space for emergency fire fighting equipment.
- Plant fire-resistant shrubs and trees. For example, hardwood trees are less flammable than pines.
- Carefully space the trees you plant. Take out the "ladder fuels" - vegetation that serves as a link between grass and tree tops. It can carry fire to your home.
- Give yourself added protection with "fuel breaks" like driveways, gravel walkways, and lawn.
- Natural areas should be thinned selectively to remove highly flammable vegetation.
- Encourage local officials and your neighbors to be **proactive** in supporting fuel reduction treatments such as prescribed burning to lessen the threat of wildfire to your home.

## Fire Wise Design

When building or renovating your home, keep wildfire safety in mind.

Use fire resistant or non-combustible materials on the roof and exterior structure of the dwelling. Treat wood or combustible material used in siding, decking or trim with UL-approved fire-retardant chemicals.



This home received only minor damage to the soffits due to defensible space.

Soffits damaged by wildfire in Palm Coast, Florida  
Photo by Prescribed Fire Training Center

Any structures attached to the house, such as decks, porches, fences, and outbuildings can act as fuses or fuel bridges, particularly if constructed from flammable materials.

If you wish to attach an all-wood fence to your home, use masonry or metal as a protective barrier between the fence and house.

## Fire Wise Precautionary Measures

- Rake leaves, dead limbs and twigs. Clear all flammable vegetation away from your home.
- Remove leaves and rubbish from under structures.
- Thin tree crowns so that there is a 15-foot space between each crown, and remove limbs within 15 feet of the ground around your home.
- Move vegetation at least 30 feet from the eaves of your home if the soffits on your home are vinyl or plastic. These soffits can melt allowing sparks from nearby vegetation to fly up under the eaves starting fires in the attic.
- Remove dead branches that extend over the roof. Remove vines from home walls.
- Prune tree branches and shrubs within 15 feet of a chimney outlet.
- Regularly clean roof and gutters.
- Clear a 10-foot area around propane tanks and barbecues.
- Remove combustible materials and debris from beneath patio decks or elevated porches.
- Stack firewood at least 10 feet away from any structure.
- Contact your local Division of Forestry for a review of your home for wildfire danger potential.

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[www.prescribed-fire.org](http://www.prescribed-fire.org)

