

FIREWISE LANDSCAPING SUGGESTIONS

Homeowner action **BEFORE** a wildfire occurs can make the difference between a protected home and a home lost to a wildland fire. Relatively simple things that a homeowner can do to protect a home in the wildland/urban interface include:

- Clean pine needles off the roof and out of the gutters on a regular basis.
- Pick up dead needles and branches in the yard, particularly needles that hang in shrubbery near the house.
- Remove any vines and shrubs that can carry a ground fire up into the treetops.
- Prune tree limbs so the lowest branches are 6 to 10 feet from the ground.
- Remove large groupings of extremely flammable plants (*see link at the end of this document for more information*).
- Thin pine and fir trees so that the treetops are 10 to 15 feet apart. Keep broadleafed trees to provide shade and wildlife habitat.
- Instead of a flammable mulch like pine straw or shredded wood chips, use chunky bark, lava stone or coarse gravel around any shrubbery that is within 5 feet of the structure.
- Locate firewood and propane gas tanks at least 50 feet from the structure.
- Keep 100 feet of hose readily available at a faucet away from the structure.
- Select less flammable plant species to plant within the zone of defensible space.

Farther away from the structure, landscaping can be less intensive. Emphasis should be on thinning the existing trees and ground vegetation:

- Thin or trim flammable shrubs or trees, but keep some for wildlife food.
- Thin pine and fir trees so that the treetops are 10 to 15 feet apart.
- Remove any vines and shrubs that can act as “ladder fuels” and carry a ground fire up into the treetops.

Ask your local nurseryman or landscape professional about less flammable landscape plants for your area.

Visit <http://www.firewise.org/usa/> for a state-by-state list of Firewise plants.