



# 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 within the zone of defensible space to protect a home in the wildland/urban interface include:

- Clean pine needles and leaves 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 into the adjacent treetops.
- On large or mature trees, prune tree limbs so the lowest branches are 6 to 10 feet from the ground.
- Remove large groupings of extremely flammable plants that are near the home (*see link at the end of this document for more information*).
- Thin pine trees so that the treetops are 10 to 15 feet apart. Keep broadleafed trees to provide shade and wildlife habitat.
- Replace flammable mulch like pine straw with shredded wood chips, chunky pine bark, lava rock or coarse gravel around shrubbery that is within 5 feet of the home.
- Re-locate firewood and propane gas tanks at least 50 feet away from the home.
- Keep 100 feet of hose readily available at a faucet away from the home.
- When possible, select less flammable plant species to plant within the zone of defensible space.

**Farther away from the home, landscaping can be less intensive. For wooded lots, emphasis should be on thinning the existing trees and ground vegetation:**

- Thin or prune flammable shrubs or trees, but keep some for wildlife food.
- Thin pine 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 Urban Forester (<http://www.state.sc.us/forest/scurban.htm>), 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.



## I. FLAMMABLE PLANT LIST for SC (native and ornamental)

**Note:** This list is NOT inclusive. Environmental conditions can affect performance. Well-watered plants on this list can perform better than the same plants under stress or drought conditions. Characteristics of poor performing plants are a low moisture content and high percentage of dead limbs or other vegetative debris.

### TREES

- American beech (winter months)
- Bald cypress
- Deodar cedar
- Eastern red cedar
- Eucalyptus
- Hollies
- Japanese cryptomeria
- Leyland cypress
- Loblolly bay
- Loquat
- Palmetto
- Pines

### SHRUBS

- Arborvitae
- Gallberry
- Hollies
- Junipers
- Oleander
- Podocarpus
- Saw Palmetto
- Wax Myrtle
- Yaupon

### GROUNDCOVERS, BEDDING PLANTS, AND VINES

- Pampas grass
- Pine straw

## II. PLANTS WITH SOME FIRE RESISTANCE (native and ornamental)

**Note:** This list is NOT inclusive. Any plant will burn given sufficient exposure to heat. Plants suffering from moisture stress will also be less resistant to fire than adequately watered plants. Succulent plants will resist fire better than non-succulent plants.

### TREES

- American Hophornbeam
- American Sycamore
- Ash
- Birch
- Blackgum
- Buckeye
- Cherry
- Chinese pistache
- Crab apple
- Crape Myrtle
- Dogwood
- Elm
- Ginkgo
- Hickory
- Japanese Zelkova
- Maple
- Oak
- Plum
- Redbud
- Sassafras

- Southern Magnolia
- Sweetbay Magnolia
- Sweetgum

- Tulip tree (Yellow Poplar)
- Willow
- Witch Hazel

### **SHRUBS**

- Azalea
- Barberry (Mahonia)
- Bottlebrush
- Boxwood
- Burning bush
- Butterfly bush
- Camellia
- Cleyera
- Crape myrtle
- Eleagnus
- Forsythia
- Gardenia
- Hydrangea
- Indian Hawthorne
- Ligustrum

- Liriope
- Loripetalum
- Mahonia
- Muhlenbergia
- Philodendron
- Photinia
- Pittosporum
- Privet
- Pyracantha, firethorn
- Rhododendron
- Rose
- Russian olive
- Spirea
- Viburnum
- Weigela

### **GROUNDCOVERS, BEDDING PLANTS, AND VINES**

- Blue-eyed grass
- Daylily
- Dusty miller, senecio
- Honeysuckle
- Iris
- Lantana
- Periwinkle

- St. Augustine grass
- Stonecrop
- Trumpet creeper
- Yarrow
- Yellow Jessamine
- Yellow-eyed grass