

My Personal

# Wildland Fire ACTION GUIDE



Ready



Set



SET, GO!

Go!



# Ready begins with property owners taking action.

Defensible space around property created with different types of rock mulch.



Defensible space works with well-maintained, fire-resistant vegetation.

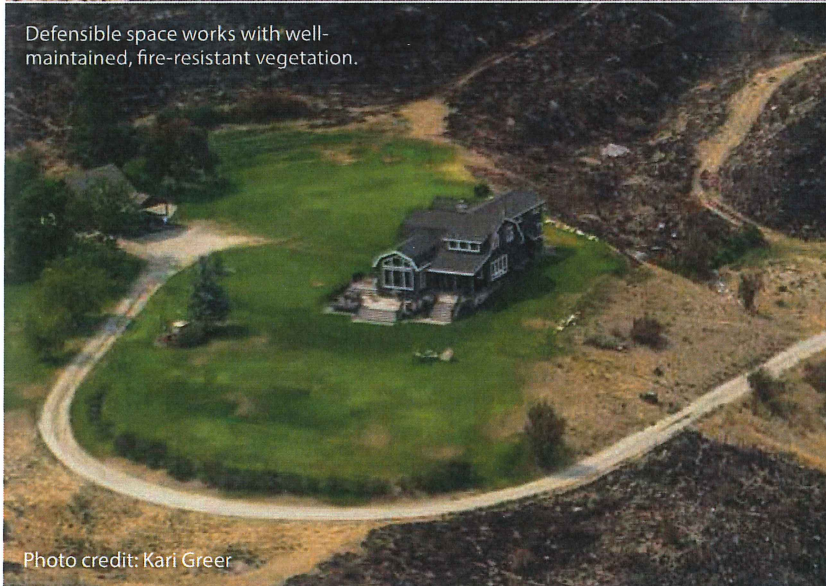


Photo credit: Kari Greer

Red Flag Warning



## Defensible Space and Fire-Resistant Landscaping Can Protect Your Home

If you live next to a dense vegetation area, the WUI, you should provide defensible space to better protect your home. This will create a safer area for firefighters to operate if they have the capacity to defend your home. Creating a buffer zone by removing weeds, dried grass, brush, and other vegetation helps keep the fire away from your home and reduces the risk of ignition from flying embers.

### Consider This

Unmanaged and overgrown vegetation between and around homes increases the risk of wildland fire spreading throughout the community and endangering lives and property. Pre-fire planning through mitigation and vegetation management allows firefighters the ability to fight wildland fires more safely. The work you complete today may save your home and protect a firefighter tomorrow.

### Ember Zone

An ember is a small, glowing fragment from a wildland fire that is carried by the wind. Embers are light enough to travel long distances and are the primary reason homes ignite, often at significant distances from the actual flame front of a wildland fire. Embers travel inside your home through vents, windows, and other openings.

### Homes on the Wildland Boundary are at Risk

If your home is within one mile of a natural area, it may be considered part of an ember zone. Keep in mind, embers can destroy homes or neighborhoods far from the actual front of the fire. Use the information in this Guide to help you prepare your property.

### Red Flag Warning

A Red Flag Warning is issued by the National Weather Service when low humidity, warm temperatures, dry fuels, and strong winds could combine to produce extreme fire behavior. Fires occurring during a Red Flag day can be very dangerous and spread rapidly. You should always follow the instructions provided by your local emergency response organizations and be prepared to take immediate action.

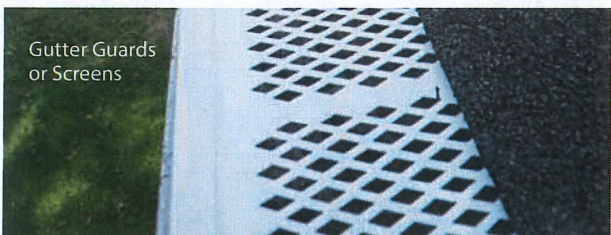
# Ready Make Your Home Fire Resistant - Harden Your Home

Construction materials and the quality of the defensible space surrounding the structure are what increases the chance of survival in a wildland fire. Embers from a wildland fire will find the weak spot in your home's fire protection scheme and can easily lodge in small, overlooked, or seemingly inconsequential areas. Look at where snow drifts form on your roof and deck and around your home - these are the areas where embers will collect. Below are some home hardening measures you can take to safeguard your home.



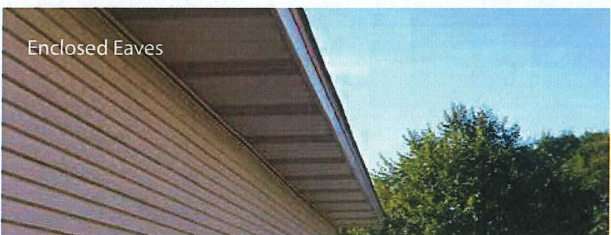
## Balconies and Decks

Construct your balconies or decks with **noncombustible materials**, and do not store combustible items underneath them. If there is a fire threat, bring any **furniture** into your home. Embers can collect in or on combustible surfaces, or beneath decks and balconies, igniting the material and giving a path for the fire to enter your home. **Remove pine needles, leaves, grass, or any other flammable materials** from underneath your deck.



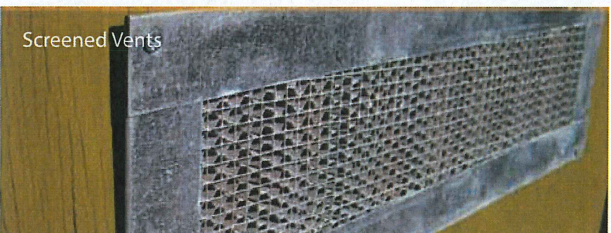
## Roofs

Roofs are vulnerable to embers that become lodged and can start a fire, especially anywhere on the roof with litter buildup. **Roof valleys**, open ends of **barrel tiles**, and **rain gutters** are all points of entry. Block off all open spaces, and regularly inspect these areas. Remove any combustible material.



## Eaves

Embers can gather under open eaves and ignite combustible material. Enclose your eaves with **noncombustible or ignition-resistant materials** to prevent ember intrusion, and regularly clear away debris that collects here.



## Vents

Embers can enter the attic or other concealed spaces and ignite combustible materials through open and unscreened vents. Vents in eaves, gables and cornices are particularly vulnerable if not properly screened with wire mesh. Use **corrosion resistant metal mesh** to screen all vents, and check them regularly to remove any debris that collects in front of the screen.



## Walls and Fencing

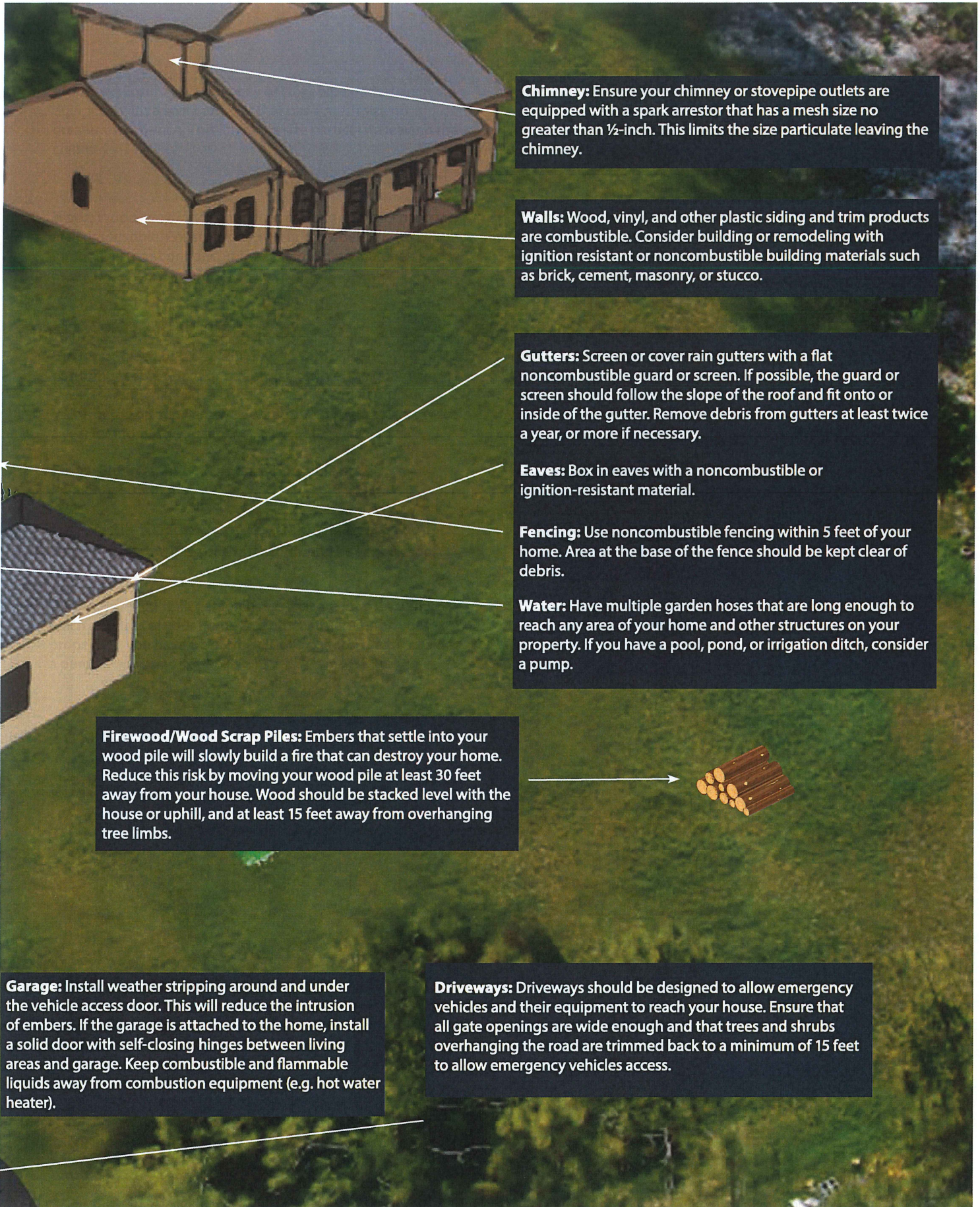
Combustible siding or fencing provides surfaces and crevices for embers to nestle and ignite. Ensure wooden fences do not connect directly to the house. Create a **break in the fence** by using a gate or noncombustible substitute to connect to the house. Build or remodel with **noncombustible or ignition-resistant materials** wherever possible, regularly clear away debris from any crevices, and perform annual upkeep.



## Windows and Doors

Embers can enter gaps in doors, including garage doors. Install **weather proofing** around your garage door; and if your garage is attached to your home, make sure the interior door is solid and on **self-closing hinges**.

Plants or combustible storage near windows can be ignited from embers and generate heat that can break windows and/or melt combustible frames. Wherever possible, use **dual-paned windows with tempered glass**, as they are less likely to shatter from radiant heat.



**Chimney:** Ensure your chimney or stovepipe outlets are equipped with a spark arrestor that has a mesh size no greater than ½-inch. This limits the size particulate leaving the chimney.

**Walls:** Wood, vinyl, and other plastic siding and trim products are combustible. Consider building or remodeling with ignition resistant or noncombustible building materials such as brick, cement, masonry, or stucco.

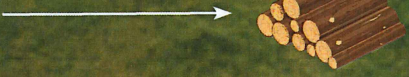
**Gutters:** Screen or cover rain gutters with a flat noncombustible guard or screen. If possible, the guard or screen should follow the slope of the roof and fit onto or inside of the gutter. Remove debris from gutters at least twice a year, or more if necessary.

**Eaves:** Box in eaves with a noncombustible or ignition-resistant material.

**Fencing:** Use noncombustible fencing within 5 feet of your home. Area at the base of the fence should be kept clear of debris.

**Water:** Have multiple garden hoses that are long enough to reach any area of your home and other structures on your property. If you have a pool, pond, or irrigation ditch, consider a pump.

**Firewood/Wood Scrap Piles:** Embers that settle into your wood pile will slowly build a fire that can destroy your home. Reduce this risk by moving your wood pile at least 30 feet away from your house. Wood should be stacked level with the house or uphill, and at least 15 feet away from overhanging tree limbs.



**Garage:** Install weather stripping around and under the vehicle access door. This will reduce the intrusion of embers. If the garage is attached to the home, install a solid door with self-closing hinges between living areas and garage. Keep combustible and flammable liquids away from combustion equipment (e.g. hot water heater).

**Driveways:** Driveways should be designed to allow emergency vehicles and their equipment to reach your house. Ensure that all gate openings are wide enough and that trees and shrubs overhanging the road are trimmed back to a minimum of 15 feet to allow emergency vehicles access.

## Set Prepare and Be Aware

- Monitor fire weather conditions and fire status. Check your local fire department or emergency management websites and social media accounts for wildland fire information. Stay tuned to your TV or local radio stations for updates, including Red Flag Warnings in your area.
- Alert household and neighbors.
- Dress in appropriate clothing (i.e., clothing made from natural fibers, such as cotton, and work boots). Have goggles and a dry bandana or particle mask handy.
- Ensure your Go Kit includes all necessary items, such as a battery powered radio, spare batteries, emergency contact numbers, and drinking water.
- Remain close to your house, drink plenty of water, and ensure your household members and pets are accounted for and ready to leave.

### INSIDE CHECKLIST, IF TIME ALLOWS

- Close all windows and doors.
- Remove all shades and curtains from windows and ensure all blinds remain open, unless you have metal blinds. Close all metal blinds.
- Move furniture to the center of the room, away from windows and doors.
- Turn off pilot lights and air conditioning units.
- Leave your lights on so firefighters can see your house in smoky conditions

### OUTSIDE CHECKLIST, IF TIME ALLOWS

- Make sure combustible items are a safe distance away from the exterior of the house (e.g., patio furniture, children's toys, door mats, etc.) If you have time, place these items inside your garage or home where they will not become a hazard.

- Turn off propane tanks and other gas at the meter.
- Don't leave sprinklers on or water running. They can affect critical water pressure.
- Leave exterior lights on.
- Back your car into the driveway to facilitate a quick departure. Shut doors and roll up windows.
- Have a ladder ready to use to cover attic vents. Use pre-cut plywood or commercial seals. Use the same for ground vents. Do so in a safe manner, and only if time permits.
- Patrol your property and extinguish small fires, if you can do so safely, until you leave.

### IF YOU ARE TRAPPED: SURVIVAL TIPS

- If you have become trapped and cannot evacuate, call 9-1-1 immediately.
- Stay in your home, sheltering away from walls, until the fire passes or emergency personnel tell you differently. Follow their instructions and commands.
- Look for spot fires and extinguish if found inside house.
- Wear long sleeves, long pants, and a bandana made of natural fibers, such as cotton.
- Stay hydrated.
- Ensure you can exit the home if it catches fire. Remember, if it's hot inside the house, it is four to five times hotter outside. Be prepared.
- Fill sinks and tubs for an emergency water supply.
- Place wet towels under doors to keep smoke and embers out.
- After the fire has passed, check your roof and extinguish any fires, sparks, or embers if you are able to safely do so. Check the attic as well.

# My Personal Wildland Fire ACTION PLAN

Write up your Wildland Fire Action Plan and post it in a location where every member of your household can see it. Rehearse it with your household.

During high-fire-danger days in your area, monitor your local media for information and be ready to implement your plan. Hot, dry, and windy conditions create the perfect environment for a wildland fire.

## IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS

Out-of-Area Contact \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Work \_\_\_\_\_

School \_\_\_\_\_

Other \_\_\_\_\_

## EVACUATION ROUTES

1 \_\_\_\_\_

2 \_\_\_\_\_

3 \_\_\_\_\_

## WHERE TO GO

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## LOCATION OF GO KIT(S)

\_\_\_\_\_

## NOTES

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Contact your local fire department for more tips on preparing before a wildland fire.

