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Day 1: Clean Your Roof and Rain Gutters!

A SIMPLE, 7 DAY GUIDE TO IMPROVING YOUR HOME AND FAMILY'S WILDFIRE PREPAREDNESS WITH EASY, INEXPENSIVE TIPS.

Day 1: Clean Your Roof and Rain Gutters!

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Day 2: Cut Your Grass!

A SIMPLE, 7 DAY GUIDE TO IMPROVING YOUR HOME AND FAMILY'S WILDFIRE PREPAREDNESS WITH EASY, INEXPENSIVE TIPS.

Day 2: Cut Your Grass!



Marin's grasslands provide the fuel for our most frequent and fast moving wildfires. Dry grass is particularly susceptible to ignition - carelessly dropped cigarettes, illegal fireworks, mower blades, and hot car mufflers

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Day 3: Expand Your Defensible Space

A SIMPLE, 7 DAY GUIDE TO IMPROVING YOUR HOME AND FAMILY'S WILDFIRE PREPAREDNESS WITH EASY, INEXPENSIVE TIPS.

Day 3: Expand Your Defensible Space

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

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Day 4: Choose the Right Plants

A SIMPLE, 7-DAY GUIDE TO IMPROVING YOUR HOME AND FAMILY'S WILDFIRE PREPAREDNESS WITH EASY, INEXPENSIVE TIPS.

Day 4: Choose the Right Plants

Plant selection in your garden and the space surrounding your home can play an important role in protecting your property, and your neighborhood, during a wildfire. FIRESafe MARIN pioneered the concept of a "fire safe" plant list in the early

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7 DAY GUIDE TO IMPROVING YOUR HOME AND FAMILY'S WILDFIRE PREPAREDNESS WITH EASY, INEXPENSIVE TIPS.

Day 5: Now that You're Ready, Get Set!

Ready, Set, Go. If you've followed days 1-4 of our Wildfire Preparedness Week step-by-step planning guide, you've now taken steps to "Ready" your home for wildfire. By creating Defensible Space, and taking steps to harden your home and

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Day 6: Go! Create an Evacuation Plan

A SIMPLE, 7 DAY GUIDE TO IMPROVING YOUR HOME AND FAMILY'S WILDFIRE PREPAREDNESS WITH EASY, INEXPENSIVE TIPS.

Day 6: Go! Create an Evacuation Plan

Ready, Set, Go. If you've followed days 1-5 of our Wildfire Preparedness Week step-by-step planning guide, you've now taken steps to "Ready" your home for wildfire, and are "set" to evacuate when the time is right. Today we'll look at the last step in a process that we hope you'll never face - **evacuate**.

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Day 7: Help a Neighbor, Organize a Neighborhood

FOLLOW FIRESAFE MARIN'S SIMPLE, 7 DAY GUIDE TO IMPROVING YOUR HOME AND FAMILY'S WILDFIRE PREPAREDNESS WITH SIMPLE, EASY, INEXPENSIVE TIPS.

Day 7: Help a Neighbor, Organize a Neighborhood

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Now that you've followed our step-by-step guide to preparing your home and family for wildfire, why not organize your entire



neighborhood? In order to be truly "fire safe," every home in your community needs to play its part in preparing, by creating defensible space and using fire-safe building materials and practices.

1. Helping an elderly or disabled neighbor create defensible space is a great way to build community, and every resident of your neighborhood will benefit, since wildfire, by definition, knows no boundaries.
2. Organize a community chipper day to dispose of cut vegetation. FIRESafe MARIN manages a grant program to help neighborhoods cover the expense of holding a chipper day. We sponsor chipper days and green waste disposal days every spring and summer.
3. Participate in the "Ready Marin" program to learn more about disaster preparedness in general, and to learn about community resources like C.E.R.T. that can help when any disaster strikes, including wildfire.
4. Consider organizing your neighborhood to achieve "FIREWISE Community" status. This program can save every resident of an accredited neighborhood up to 20% on homeowner's insurance and is a great step towards protecting Marin from wildfire. As of 2016, 7 neighborhoods in Marin have achieved FIREWISE recognition. Contact FIRESafe MARIN for more information.

**FIRESAFE MARIN CAN HELP YOUR
NEIGHBORHOOD ACHIEVE FIREWISE
COMMUNITY RECOGNITION!**



NFPA's Firewise Communities Program encourages local solutions for safety by involving homeowners in taking individual responsibility for preparing their homes from the risk of wildfire. Firewise is a key component of Fire Adapted Communities – a collaborative approach that connects all those who play a role in wildfire education, planning and action with comprehensive resources to help reduce risk.

The program is co-sponsored by the USDA Forest Service, the US Department of the Interior, and the National Association of State Foresters.

To save lives and property from wildfire, NFPA's Firewise Communities program teaches people how to adapt to living with wildfire and encourages neighbors to work together and take action now to prevent losses. We all have a role to play in protecting ourselves and each other from the risk of wildfire.



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Evacuations save lives and allow responding personnel to focus on the emergency at hand. Evacuate immediately when requested! Evacuate early if you are unsure, feel unsafe, or lose communications. Your life is at stake!

By leaving early, you give your family the best chance of surviving a wildfire. You also help firefighters by keeping roads clear of congestion, enabling them to move more freely and do their job.

EVACUATE EARLY AND SAFELY. FOLLOW YOUR PERSONAL WILDLAND FIRE ACTION PLAN. DOING SO WILL NOT ONLY SUPPORT YOUR SAFETY BUT WILL ALLOW FIREFIGHTERS TO BEST MANEUVER RESOURCES TO COMBAT THE FIRE.



READY

SET

GO

Family flees Valley Fire



Give your household the best chance of surviving a wildfire by being ready to go and evacuating early. This includes going through the [Evacuation Checklist](#), as well as creating a [Wildfire Action Plan](#) before a fire strikes for your family. Being ready to go also means knowing when to evacuate and what to do if you become trapped.

TAKE ACTION IMMEDIATELY WHEN WILDFIRE STRIKES

Please read our Evacuation Preparedness materials and familiarize yourself with evacuation procedures TODAY. Your life may depend on it TONIGHT.

1. [Register for Alert Marin](#)
2. [Wildfire Evacuation Guide](#)
3. [Evacuation Checklist](#)
4. [Evacuating Pets](#)
5. [Evacuating Large Animals](#)

LEARN MORE ABOUT WILDFIRE EVACUATION IN MARIN.

Remember: When immediate evacuation is necessary, follow these steps as soon as possible to get ready to GO!

1. Review your Evacuation Plan Checklist.
2. Ensure your Emergency Supply Kit is in your vehicle.
3. Cover-up to protect against heat and flying embers. Wear long pants, long sleeve shirt, heavy shoes/boots, cap, dry bandanna for face cover, goggles or glasses. 100% cotton is preferable.
4. Locate your pets, place them in crates, gather pet food and supplies, and prepare to take them with you.
5. Review the IBHS Last Minute Evacuation Checklist if you have time (before evacuation is ordered or advised).

WHEN TO EVACUATE

Leave as soon immediately if you receive a notification or alert to avoid being caught in fire, smoke or road congestion. Don't wait to be ordered by authorities to leave if you are unsure, feel threatened, or lose communications. Law enforcement will direct the evacuation, and they will keep intersections open and moving, but resources may be limited. Evacuating early helps keep roads clear of congestion, and lets fire apparatus move more freely to do their job. If you are advised to leave, don't hesitate!

- The fire Incident Commander will determine the areas to be evacuated and escape routes to use depending upon the fire's location, behavior, winds, terrain, etc.
- Law enforcement agencies are responsible for enforcing an evacuation order. Follow their directions promptly.
- You will be advised of potential evacuations as early as possible by Alert Marin. YOU MUST REGISTER TO RECEIVE ALERTS.

- You must take the initiative to stay informed and aware. Listen to your radio (AM1610, AM840, and others) and TV for announcements from law enforcement and emergency personnel.
- You may be directed to temporary assembly areas to await transfer to a safe location.

All evacuation instructions provided by officials should be followed immediately for your safety.

WHAT IF MY ROAD IS BLOCKED?

Law enforcement can move a large number of vehicles through intersections.

- Drive calmly and safely.
- Turn your lights on.
- If an alternate route is available, take it.
- If the road is blocked, try to clear the obstruction.
- Do not leave your vehicle if fire is burning on the roadsides unless there is no other option or your car is on fire. Leaving your car is a last resort and may prove deadly. You are almost always safer in your car or a building.
- Do not abandon your car in the roadway, park it off the road if there is no other option.
- Take shelter in a building if no quick escape route is available. Close doors and windows, stay low (lay on the floor, crawl to move if there is smoke or heat in the building, and stay near a door. Stay inside until the fire passes or conditions become untenable.

MY NEIGHBORHOOD IS ONE WAY IN, ONE WAY OUT!

If you live in a "one way in, one way out" neighborhood, as is common in Marin, then your escape route is predetermined.

- Use the one-way-out direction and leave! Drive towards your neighborhoods exit, and to the nearest town away from the fire.
- Follow instructions in the alert messages if they provide evacuation shelter or escape route information.
- Do not flee to fire roads or vegetated open spaces - it's more dangerous than being in your car on the pavement.
- But fire engines will block my escape!
 - WRONG! During an evacuation, the fire's Incident Commander will instruct fire engines not to enter areas where evacuation is occurring and two-way passage is not possible. Evacuation is the number one priority for firefighters.

FIRE ROADS

FIRE ROADS are NOT safe or viable evacuation routes during wildfires! Stay on pavement, in your car if possible, and evacuate downhill towards major roads and town unless instructed otherwise by emergency personnel.

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maintain fire resistant landscaping, firefighters have a fighting-chance to save your home when wildfire strikes. Today we'll look at the first stage of preparation to evacuate.

Remember: The 2017 North Bay firestorm was the most destructive wildfire in US history less than 20 miles from Marin. 43 people perished in the fires, most of whom were residents attempting, too late, to evacuate. In 1991, the second most destructive wildfire in US history killed 25 people in the Oakland/Berkeley Hills less than 10 miles from Marin!

SET: PREPARE TO EVACUATE

PLAN ESCAPE ROUTES IN ADVANCE AND MAKE SURE YOUR FAMILY KNOWS THE PLAN OF ACTION. ASSEMBLE EMERGENCY SUPPLIES AND BELONGINGS IN A SAFE PLACE. MONITOR NEWS AND INFO ON LOCAL FIRES FROM MEDIA AND PUBLIC SAFETY AGENCIES.



Before wildfire strikes, it is important that you get "Set." Getting set requires preparation *before* a wildfire strikes, readying yourself and your home for the possibility of having to evacuate ("Go").

Three main preparation actions should be completed when getting "Set." Be sure you and all members of your household are familiar with these items and procedures long before a fire starts.

STEPS TO GETTING SET:

1. Register for Alert Marin at www.alertmarin.org to ensure you receive evacuation notifications. Help your elderly neighbors register.
2. Create a [Wildfire Action Plan](#) that includes evacuation planning for your home, family, and pets.
3. Assemble an [Emergency Supply Kit](#) for each person in your household.
4. Fill out a [Family Communication Plan](#) that includes important evacuation and contact information.
5. Check your [Fire Insurance](#), and make sure your policy is up to date.
6. When wildfire strikes or [weather conditions are extreme](#), use our [Evacuation Checklist](#) to prepare for evacuation before it's too late.

When a fire is burning nearby, review these checklists:

OUTSIDE CHECKLIST

These steps should be taken well in advance of the fire when possible:

- Gather up flammable items from the exterior of the house and bring them inside (e.g., patio furniture, children's toys, door mats, etc.) or place them in your pool.
- Turn off propane tanks.
- Don't leave sprinklers on or water running - they can waste critical water pressure best reserved for firefighters.
- Leave exterior lights on.
- Back your car into the driveway. Shut doors and roll up windows.
- Have a ladder available. Leave it where firefighters can find it easily.
- Patrol your property and extinguish all small fires until you leave.

- Seal attic and ground vents with pre-cut plywood or commercial seals if time permits.
- Place pets in carriers.

INSIDE CHECKLIST

- Shut all windows and doors, leaving them unlocked.
- Remove flammable window shades and curtains and close metal shutters.
- Remove lightweight curtains, close blinds and shutters.
- Move flammable furniture to the center of the room, away from windows and doors.
- Shut off gas at the meter if you have time. Turn off pilot lights.
- Leave your lights on so firefighters can see your house under smoky conditions.
- Shut off the air conditioning.

Learn more at www.firesafemarin.org/preparedness, and watch your email tomorrow for Day 6 of our Wildfire Preparedness Week series.

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1990s, partnering with the University of California to develop a list of fire-resistant landscaping plants specific to Marin county, and northern California's mediterranean climate.

MARIN'S FIRE SAFE PLANT LIST UPDATED FOR 2017!

FIRESafe MARIN's "[Fire Safe Plant List](#)" was updated for 2017!

We've consolidated the list, and made it searchable online.

Some plants once recommended as "fire-safe" were removed as invasive, and a few new species have been added to help beautify AND protect your home. We've launched our new website and plant list, and continue to improve and add to the list of recommended plants. Check back regularly at www.firesafemarin.org/plants!

WHAT ARE FIRE RESISTANT PLANTS?

Fire-resistant plants are those that do not readily ignite from a flame or other ignition sources. These plants can be damaged or even killed by fire, however, their foliage and stems do not significantly contribute to the fuel and, therefore, the fire's intensity. There are several other significant factors that influence the fire characteristics of plants, including plant moisture content, age, total volume, dead material, and chemical content.

Plants that are fire-resistant have the following characteristics:

- Leaves are moist and supple.
- Plants have little dead wood and tend not to accumulate dry, dead material within the plant.
- Sap is water-like and does not have a strong odor.
- Sap or resin materials are low. Most deciduous trees and

shrubs are fire-resistant.

In contrast, plants that are highly flammable generally have several of these characteristics:

- Contain fine, dry, or dead material within the plant, such as twigs, needles, and leaves.
- Leaves, twigs, and stems contain volatile waxes, terpenes, or oils.
- Leaves are aromatic (strong odor when crushed).
- Sap is gummy, resinous, and has a strong odor.
- May have loose or papery bark.

Both native and ornamental plants can be highly flammable.


An example of a highly flammable shrub often planted in Marin home landscaping is juniper. Avoid landscaping with highly flammable plants directly around your home. Many Marin communities have "banned" certain fire prone species like juniper and pampas grass.

FIRE-RESISTANT DOES NOT MEAN FIREPROOF!

Even fire-resistant plants will burn if not well maintained. Be sure to keep all of your landscape plants healthy with appropriate watering, proper pruning, etc. [Check our list of "fire-prone" plants to learn which plants should NEVER be planted near your home.](#)

NATIVE PLANT CONSIDERATIONS

Remember that all of California's native plants are adapted to fire - some are resistant to fire, others make fires burn faster and hotter. Unfortunately, many California natives are among the most flammable plants on earth. Don't assume that because it's a "native" it will help protect your home from fire!

Download this  [California Native Plant Society booklet](#) for a detailed look at California native plants and fire - and be sure to check that the plant you select for your garden are allowed in your town.

[VIEW MARIN'S FIRE SAFE PLANT LIST](#)

[VIEW A LIST OF "FIRE PRONE PLANTS THAT YOU SHOULD AVOID IN MARIN."](#)

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catching fire – either from direct flame contact or radiant heat.

Defensible space is also important for the protection of the firefighters defending your home, and it's required by law!

Creating an area of defensible space does not mean you need a ring of bare dirt around your home. It does not mean you need to remove all of the trees on your property. It does, however require some planning and upkeep. With proper planning, you can have both a beautiful drought resistant, low water landscape and a fire safe home.

The defensible space concept is simple: that trees should be limbed up, spaced out, and kept further from your house; shrubs can be closer, but should be kept low and spaced; bedding plants and lawns may be nearest the house. The use of "hardscaping" like retaining walls, pathways, and clean space near the home will beautify your property and add the finishing touch on a well planned defensible space.

PLANTS AND DEFENSIBLE SPACE

Our goal is to help homeowners protect their homes in an hour or less each day. One simple way to achieve this, is to add spacing to your landscaping plants by *removing* a few plants. Look for hazardous "pyrophytic" (fire loving) plants on our list, and start by removing these. Removing half of the plants from an overgrown garden, and covering the space with fire resistant mulch (compost or 1/2" or larger bark works well) can cut your irrigation water use in half, improve the health of remaining plants, and dramatically slow the spread of fire.

Ensure that remaining plants are on our Marin county specific "fire safe" plants list.

A simple drip irrigation system can be added to save even more water, and improve the health of remaining plants.

Careful, water-wise irrigation and mulch will improve water retention in the plants, which makes your remaining landscape even more resistant to fire.

Defensible Space Zones: 0'-100'

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

The two zones are: the home defense zone; and the reduced fuel zone (see "Defensible Space Zones, below). The home defense zone is within 30 feet of the house. The reduced fuel zone lies beyond the home defense zone and extends out at least 100 feet from the house or to your property line. Greater defense zone widths are necessary when your home is on a steep slope or in a windswept exposure. Specific recommendations for each zone are described below and pertain to all Marin jurisdictions in the Wildland Urban Interface. Some cities and fire departments may have slightly more stringent requirements.



ZONE 1: HOME DEFENSE ZONE

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

- Keep this space clean at all times during fire season!
- 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: REDUCED FUEL ZONE

- 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 if erosion control is an issue.

* Check with your local fire department for any additional defensible space or weed abatement ordinances.

Fire Safe Landscaping

Defensible Space requires the installation and maintenance of Fire Safe Landscaping. It is important to remember that a fire safe landscape isn't necessarily the same thing as a well-maintained yard. A fire safe landscape uses fire resistant plants that are strategically planted to resist the spread of fire to your home.

The good news is, you don't need a lot of money to make your landscape fire safe. And you will find that a fire safe landscape can increase your property value and conserve water while beautifying your home.

[Learn more about Fire Safe Landscaping practices and materials here...](#)

Hardening Structures Against Wildfire

During a wildfire, tiny burning embers can fly far ahead of the fire, sometimes igniting homes a mile or more away from the fire itself. A wildfire-safe home must be resistant to ignition from these flying embers, so that even if the flames do not reach your home, it will be able to withstand exposure to embers that may have been blown a mile or more in front of a wildfire. To provide maximum wildfire protection for your

home, a combination of near-home vegetation management, appropriate building materials, and related design features must be used.

[Learn more about fire resistant construction practices and materials here...](#)

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frequently ignite grass fires. These fast-moving fires damage and destroy homes every year in California and Marin, often in the first few minutes of a wildfire before firefighters arrive.

Marin's wet winter is helping grow a record crop of grass. The grass around your home may be green today, but will dry quickly in the spring sun and winds. Now is the time to cut, and be prepared to cut again in mid-late June.

Every homeowner is responsible for maintaining vegetation on their property, and cutting dry grass, like cleaning your roof and gutters, is one of the fastest and most effective ways to protect your home and family.

TAKE AN HOUR TODAY TO CUT THE GRASS ON YOUR PROPERTY. THIS EASY AND INEXPENSIVE STEP MAY SAVE YOUR HOME!

1. Start closest to your home, and work outward.
2. Cut grass to 3" or less, 30'-100' from all structures, decks, and outbuildings.
3. Add additional defensible space on the downhill side if you live on a slope. Even a slight slope will greatly increase the heat and speed of a wildfire.
4. Rake up trimmings and dispose of them in your green waste can.
5. Cut dry grass in the morning when it's cool and moist.
6. Do not cut grass or operate outdoor power tools on hot,



dry, or "red flag" days.

7. Sparks from some power tools can cause fires. String trimmers are safer than mowers, and newer battery powered models are effective, quiet, lightweight, quiet, and will not cause sparks that start fires.
8. Be prepared to cut again within a few weeks if regrowth occurs.

Grass fires are deceptively dangerous, with flames that can explode from inches to tens of feet from a brief gust of wind, these fast moving fires kill more firefighters each year than any other type of fire.

If you see a grass fire:

- Call 911 and report the fire's location.
- Never approach a fire to observe or photograph.
- Stay on pavement and away from unburned grass or vegetation.
- Quickly move downhill, away from the fire.
- Watch out for firefighters, fire engines, and fire equipment.
- Keep your camera drone grounded. Even a single hobby drone in the air will ground all firefighting aircraft, placing lives and property at risk and possibly making you liable for injuries and damage.

Did you complete Day 1: Clean Your Roof and Gutters?

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The single most effective step you can take to protect your home TODAY is to clean all leaves, needles, and



debris from your roof and rain gutters! The most vulnerable part of your home is typically the roof. Although Class "A" roof construction, required in most Marin jurisdictions for nearly 20 years, is more resistant to fire, even a small handful of leaves or needles can ignite your "fire resistant" roofing. Fire inspectors find that most homeowners do not properly maintain their roofs, leaving Marin's neighborhoods vulnerable to wildfires.

Firefighters know that embers are the most important cause of home ignition. Research shows that two out of three homes destroyed during wildfires are ignited by wind-blown embers, and not from the actual flames of the fire. These embers can ignite and burn your home in several ways, and **can travel as far as a mile** from the main fire. **By taking one hour today to clean your roof and gutters, you'll have taken the first, and possibly the most significant step, towards protecting your home.**

ROOF AND GUTTER CLEANING TIPS

1. Be safe!
 1. Hire a professional if you are unsure or lack the proper tools. Some roofing materials can be damaged if you walk on them, and *every* roof poses a fall hazard.
 2. Always use a sturdy, well-footed ladder to reach your roof and gutters.

3. Don't clean your roof alone. Be sure there is someone with you, on the ground, to help when needed.
2. Check your roof. Is it well maintained? Is the roofing made from a fire resistant (Class "A") material like tile, composite shingles, or tar and gravel? It can be difficult to tell whether you have a Class "A" fire-rated roof, unless it's made of an obviously noncombustible material, such as tile. If you are not sure about your roof, schedule a professional roof inspection to find out.
3. Always keep your roof clean of debris. Clean it as often as necessary during fire season. Remember: even a tiny handful of leaves is enough to burn your home!
4. Check your gutters. Metal gutters are safest, and all gutters must be maintained completely free of leaves, needles, and vegetation during fire season (and the rainy season too, of course). Like the rest of your roof, you may need to clean them more often during the summer if you live in an area where leaves are likely to fall onto your roof.

FIRE RESISTANT ROOFING

Regardless of the specific Class "A" roofing material that you choose, inspect it regularly, maintain it when necessary, and replace it when needed.

Here are some things to keep in mind when choosing a Class "A" roof covering:

- Many roof coverings have a Class "A" rating based only on the top/external part of the roof that you can see. Some common examples include asphalt composition fiberglass shingles, steel, and clay or concrete tiles. Asphalt composition shingles also can use organic fibers instead of fiberglass, which would result in a Class "C" fire rating.
- Other roof coverings obtain their Class "A" rating because

additional materials are used in the roof assembly to enhance fire resistance. The assembly is the underneath part of the roof that you can see. These coverings are considered “Class ‘A’ by assembly.” Examples include aluminum, and some newer composite roofs made from recycled plastic and rubber materials, which require other layers of noncombustible materials to achieve a Class “A” rating. Wood shakes also are now available with pressure-impregnated, exterior-rated, fire-retardant chemicals that provide a Class “B” fire rating, and a “Class ‘A’ by assembly.”

- It is important to note that most roofing products and assemblies are tested with new materials when they receive their rating. One exception is wood shakes, which are subjected to a natural weathering protocol prior to roof fire testing. One important thing to note is that over time as the products weather, both wood shake and shingle roofs may become more vulnerable to fire.

FIRESafe MARIN has extensive resources online to [help you choose and maintain a fire resistant roof](#). Learn more!

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