

# Create a defensible space and defensible home



## Novato

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PLEASE KEEP FOR YOUR REFERENCE

## Defensible space

Homeowners are required to create and maintain defensible space—a buffer to slow or halt the spread of wildfires and improve safety for firefighters working to protect structures.

### ZONE 0 THERE SHOULD BE “ZERO” COMBUSTIBLES IN “ZONE ZERO”

- **Only use** inorganic, non-combustible mulches such as stone or gravel.
- **Remove** or relocate all combustible materials including firewood, garbage and recycling containers, lumber, and trash.
- **Choose** metal outdoor furniture instead of wood or wicker.
- **Replace** jute or natural fiber doormats with heavy rubber or metal grates.
- **No vegetation** is recommended in Zone 0.
- **Remove** tree limbs that extend into this zone.
- **Clean** fallen leaves and needles regularly, focusing on the roof, gutters, decks, & the base of walls.
- **Don't** store combustibles on or under decks. Keep decks clean at all times.
- **Install** hardscaping and paths of stone, gravel, or concrete around the perimeter of structures.

### ZONE 1 5–30 FEET FROM BUILDINGS, DECKS, AND OTHER STRUCTURES

- **Remove** all dead grasses, weeds, plants, & foliage.
- **Remove** all fallen leaves, needles, twigs, bark, cones, and small branches.
- **Use** compost or heavy bark mulch in this zone to maintain soil moisture and control erosion.
- **Choose** only fire resistant plants, and keep them healthy and well irrigated.
- **Remove** fire-prone plants.
- **Provide** spacing between shrubs, at least 2 times the height of the mature plant. Add space on slopes.
- **Trim** trees & remove limbs 6' to 10' from the ground.
- **Remove** branches that overhang your roof or within 10' of chimneys.
- **Move** firewood & lumber out of Zone 1, or cover in a fire resistant enclosure.
- **Remove** combustibles around and under decks and awnings.
- **Clear** vegetation around fences, sheds, outdoor furniture, play structures.
- **Maintain** regularly, focusing on the areas closest to the structure.
- Outbuildings and LPG storage tanks should have at least 10' of clearance.

### ZONE 2 30–100 FEET FROM BUILDINGS, DECKS, AND OTHER STRUCTURES

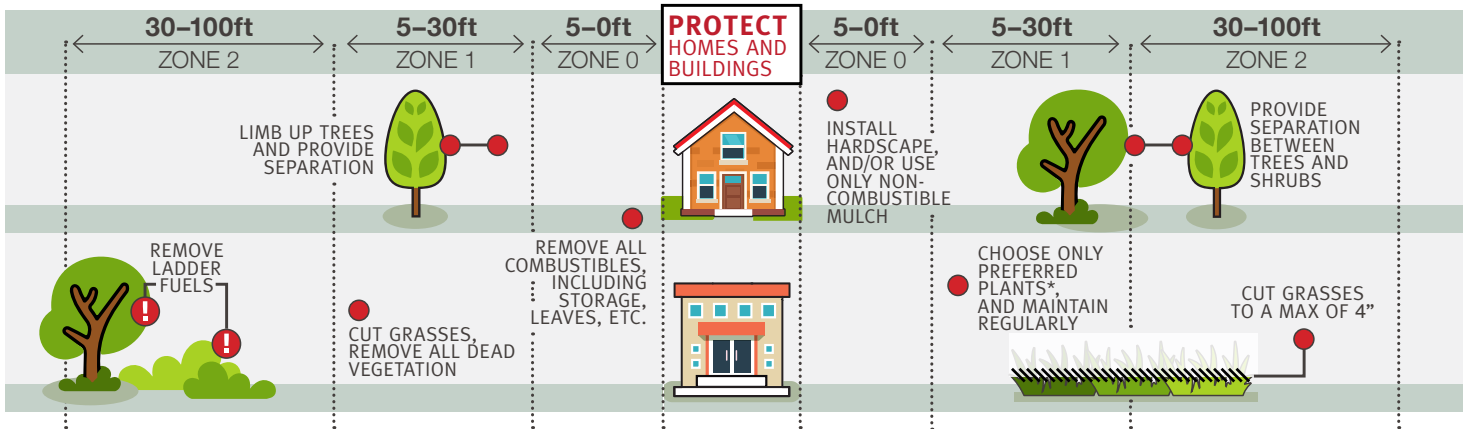
- **Cut** annual grasses and weeds to a maximum height of 4".
- **Provide** horizontal spacing between shrubs & trees.
- **Create** vertical spacing between grass, shrubs and lower tree limbs.
- **Allow** no more than 3" of loose surface litter (consisting of fallen leaves, needles, twigs, cones, and small branches) if needed to protect from erosion.
- **Remove** all piles of dead vegetation.

### ACCESS ZONE PROPERTY OWNERS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR VEGETATION ADJACENT TO ROADS AND DRIVEWAYS.

- **Clear** vegetation 14' overhead and 10' from sides of roads and driveways in the same manner as Defensible Space Zone 1.
- **Maintain** 12' of unobstructed pavement for passage of vehicles.
- **Choose** only fire resistant plants and ensure that they do not extend into the roadway.
- **Address** numbers must be clearly visible from the road. Use 4" reflective or lighted numbers on a contrasting background.
- **Create** vertical spacing between shrubs and lower tree limbs.

# Defensible home

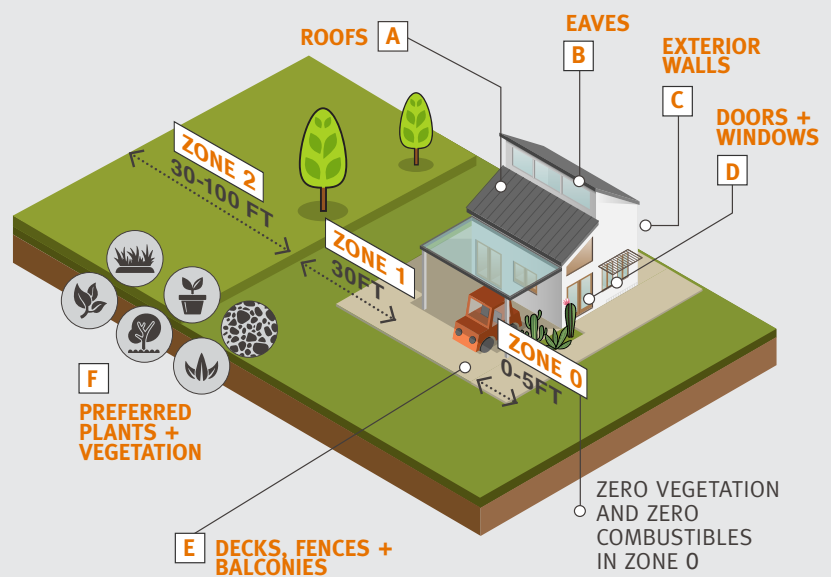
LEARN MORE AT [WWW.FIRESAFEMARIN.ORG/DEFENSIBLE-SPACE](http://WWW.FIRESAFEMARIN.ORG/DEFENSIBLE-SPACE)



## HARDEN YOUR HOME TO PROTECT AGAINST EMBERS.

LEARN MORE AT [WWW.FIRESAFEMARIN.ORG/HOME-HARDENING](http://WWW.FIRESAFEMARIN.ORG/HOME-HARDENING)

- A Roofs** must be "Class A," with ignition resistant materials such as composition, metal or tile.
- B Eaves** can be protected by enclosing them with stucco or cement siding to prevent ignition. **Vent openings** should be covered with 1/8" metal mesh to stop ember intrusion. Do not use fiberglass or plastic mesh because they can melt and burn.
- C Exterior walls** can be covered with non-combustible siding or stucco, with no gaps, cracks, or openings for embers to get in.
- D Weatherstripping** around windows and doors can stop embers from entering the home. Choose double pane, tempered glass windows to protect from breakage if exposed to heat.
- E Balconies, decks, and fences** attached to the building can be built with ignition resistant or non-combustible materials.



## F Preferred plants and vegetation

LEARN MORE AT [WWW.FIRESAFEMARIN.ORG/PLANTS](http://WWW.FIRESAFEMARIN.ORG/PLANTS)



### SHRUBS

#### **Avoid:**

Juniper, Sage, Bamboo, Calif. Buckwheat,

#### **Suggested:**

Amur Maple, Camelia, Cherry Laurel, Creeping, Mahonia, English Laurel, Lantana, Buckthorn,

Quail Bush, Acacia, Toyon, Lemonade Berry.

Hollyleaf Cherry, Karo, Pacific Wax Myrtle, Privet, Rhododendrons and Azaleas, Yucca.



### TREES

#### **Avoid:**

Eucalyptus, Palm, most Conifers (Pines, Italian Cypress, Juniper, Firs, Cedars), Acacias.

#### **Suggested:**

Oaks, Maples, Sycamores, Western Redbud, Holly Leaf Cherry.



### GROUNDCOVER

#### **Avoid:**

Iceplant, Hot N Tot Fig, Periwinkle, Algerian Ivy.

#### **Suggested:**

Carpet Bugle, Beach Aster, Strawberry, Giant Turf Lily, Alpine Cinquefoil, Creeping Thyme, Perennial Verbena.



### GRASSES

#### **Avoid:**

Deer Grass, Fountain Grass, Pampas Grass, Bamboo, Brazilian Pepper, Giant Reed.

#### **Suggested:**

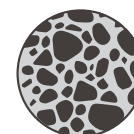
Wild Rye, Foothill Needlegrass, Purple Needlegrass, Melic Grass.



### SUCCULENTS

#### **Suggested:**

Prickly Pear Cactus, Cholla, Chaparral Yucca, Dudleya, Agave.



### FIRE-RESISTANT MULCHES

#### **Suggested:**

Crushed Rock, Pea Gravel, Beaded Glass, Decomposed Granite or other Non-Combustible Material

#### **Avoid using:**

Artichoke Thistle, Russian Thistle, Castor Bean, Mustard.

#### **Suggested:**

Most others...

\* CONSULT WITH THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT PRIOR TO CHANGING YOUR HOME OR LANDSCAPE AS IT MIGHT REQUIRE A PERMIT OR DESIGN REVIEW

