

WILDFIRE SAFETY TIPS FOR HOME AND YARD

Ember management is the most important goal because embers are the biggest cause of house fires during a wildfire event. You can reduce the risk of embers contacting structures on your property by establishing and maintaining **defensible space**.

Within 5 feet of your home:

- REMOVE flammable debris from spaces in and around the house.
 - Clear leaves and pine needles from roofs, gutters, window wells, etc .
 - Dry mulch can be highly flammable. Consider alternative materials such as stone within 5 feet of decks and foundation.
 - Keep trees and shrubs pruned of dead and damaged branches.
- SCREEN with 1/8 inch wire mesh
 - Areas below decks
 - Exterior attic and soffit vents
- INSPECT AND REPAIR building exterior
 - Shingles or roof tiles
 - Consider closing open eaves
 - Seal openings around your home wherever possible
- CHOOSE fire-resistant building materials
 - Asphalt shingles
 - Masonry

Within 30 feet of your home:

- CLEAR away all dry brush and dead vegetation
- STORE anything that can burn at least 30 ft from any structure
 - Wood piles
 - Construction materials
 - Vehicles and boats
 - Trash and recycling
- KEEP your lawn mowed and water it if it starts to brown.
 - This can help reduce fire spread and intensity.
 - Fire safety and water conservation are not mutually exclusive! Consider options for reducing irrigation and improving fire safety in your landscape design and maintenance plans.
 - Driveways, walkways, and patios made of stone or gravel can be low-maintenance and effective fuel breaks.
- PRUNE tree limbs so lowest branches are 6-10 feet above the ground
 - Low and overhanging branches can act as “ladders” spreading fire from the ground into tree canopies.
 - For smaller trees, avoid removing more than 1/3 of the tree’s branches.
- EVALUATE the trees surrounding your house

- Consider removing and replacing hazardous trees.
- Consult local conservation organizations and a qualified arborist for recommendations.
- PLANT trees cautiously, leaving at least 10' between building and mature canopy.

30-100 feet away from your home:

- REMOVE dry brush and small conifers growing between mature trees.
 - Dispose of brush at transfer station or burn it cautiously with a permit from the West Tisbury fire department.
- CLEAR vegetation around outbuildings.

PLAN for the worst:

- KNOW your escape route – two if possible.
- Make sure your Road Association assesses the road for risks
- Have a go back with essentials including N-95 masks

During a wildfire event:

- CLOSE all windows, doors, pet flaps, etc.
- GRAB your go-pack and LEAVE/

Helpful resources:

- MV Commission study on drought and wildfire hazards with recommendations for mitigation. <https://www.mvcommission.org/drought-and-wildfire>
- All Firewise USA resources
 - <https://nfpa.org/Public-Education/Fire-causes-and-risks/Wildfire/Firewise-USA>
 - <https://www.nfpa.org/-/media/Files/Firewise/Fact-sheets/FirewiseFactSheetsImmediateNoncombustibleZone.pdf>
- FEMA site US government: <https://www.ready.gov/wildfires>
- Local emergency management organizations
[please keep adding to this list!]