

# PROTECTING YOUR HOME



Clear trees and shrubs from this area, or replace with succulents. Garden in islands.



Clearly numbering your house is very important.



**Gutters:**  
Metal roof gutters do not ignite, only the leaf material that accumulates in them. This is why keeping them clean is so important. Vinyl roof gutters can melt when the debris is ignited and flaming gutters can fall from the roof edge and land next to the house, or transfer flames to the roof structure.

**Roof Maintenance:**  
Keep roofs clean from leaf litter. Remove all tree limbs within 3m of the chimney, or that overhang the roof.

**Fireplace Chimneys:**  
Remove debris that may accumulate at roof-to-wall joints. Embers from a fireplace can exit the chimney and smoulder in debris. To prevent this, install a spark arrestor on the chimney.



**Windows:**  
Multi-paned tempered glass can help reduce the risk of fracture or collapsing in a wildfire.

**Eaves:**  
Boxed eaves reduce the entry of embers.

**Air Vents:**  
All air vents should have a fine corrosion-resistant metal screening.



Trim lower tree limbs to reduce ladder fuels.

**Carpports**  
Remove flammable items that are stored under carports.

**Garages**  
Be sure the door is tight fitting, so embers cannot slide under the door or in from the sides. If possible, choose a metal door.

**Crawl Spaces**  
Remove combustible materials from open spaces and under decks. Install fine metal screening on vents.

**Fencing**  
Use non-flammable fencing material (metal or masonry). Preferably wooden fences attached to the home can carry flames directly to the house.

**Skylights**  
Remove debris next to and on skylights. Glass is a better option than plastic or fiberglass.

**Sliding Glass Doors**  
Choose double-pane tempered glass. Consider fireproof shutters to protect large windows and glass doors from radiant heat.



When making an open fire, keep water handy and ensure that the fire is extinguished. If the weather is hot and windy, avoid making any open fire.

Firewood and flammable materials should not be stored next to the house.



**Decks and Verandas:**  
Never store flammable materials underneath elevated decks or verandas. Remove dead vegetation and debris from under decks and verandas, and between deck board joints.

# DEFENSIBLE SPACE AROUND YOUR HOME

Decades of research have shown that both the house and the landscape adjacent to it play a critical role in the structure surviving a wildfire. A wildfire can transfer from ignited vegetations or an ignited home(s) through:

## FIRESCAPING YOUR GARDEN

- Create fuel breaks with driveways, walkways/paths, patios and decks.
- Keep lawns and native grasses mowed and keep well-watered and green.
- Remove ladder fuels (vegetation under trees) so a surface fire cannot reach the crowns.
- Space trees to have a minimum of 6m between crowns, with more distance if the property is sloped.
- Tree placement should be planned to ensure the mature canopy is no closer than 3m to the edge of the structure.
- Trees and shrubs should be limited to small clusters of a few each, to break up the continuity of the vegetation across the landscape.
- Make sure that plants are healthy. If water is in short supply, garden with succulents.

## IMPORTANT POINTS TO REMEMBER

- Move vehicles into a non-combustible area (gravel or concrete) and roll up all windows.
- When wildfire threat is high and warnings are received, move patio/deck furniture, cushions, doormats and potted plants indoors, or as far away from the home, shed and carport as possible.
- Place wooden swings and playsets as far as possible from the home.
- Use rubber doormats instead of those manufactured with natural fiber materials.
- Select fire resistant options for patio furniture.
- Close and protect home openings, including attic and basement doors and vents, windows, garage and pet doors, to prevent embers from gaining access to the home.
- Connect garden hoses, fill pools, hot tubs, garbage cans or other large containers with water and place ladders outdoors. Firefighters may need to use hoses, ladders and water sources to extinguish spot fires.
- Addresses should be visible from the road.
- Non-flammable materials should be cleared around the perimeter of the home and kept free of ground litter or debris. Concrete, stone or gravel walkways are great additions to the Immediate Zone.
- Wood mulch products should be replaced with non-combustible mulch products such as crushed stone/gravel options.

## MAINTAINING YOUR FIREWISE GARDEN

### SHRUBS - Minimum horizontal clearance

From the edge of one shrub to the edge of the next

#### Flat to mild slope (0% to 20% slope)

Two times (2x) the height of the shrub (two shrubs 0,5m high should be spaced 1m apart)  
(pic)

#### Mild to moderate slope (20% to 40% slope)

Four times (4x) the height of the shrub (two shrubs 0,5m high should be spaced 2m apart)  
(pic)

#### Moderate to steep slope (greater than 40% slope)

Six times (6x) the height of the shrub (two shrubs 0,5m high should be spaced 3m apart)  
(pic)

#### TREES

From the edge of one tree canopy to the edge of the next

#### Flat to mild slope (0% to 20% slope)

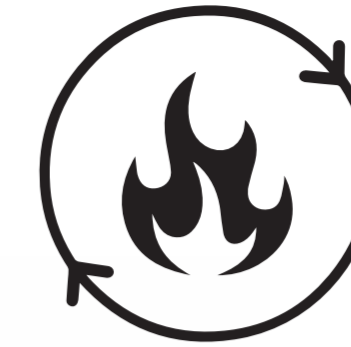
3 metres  
(pic)

#### Mild to moderate slope (20% to 40% slope)

6 metres  
(pic)



RADIATION



CONVECTION



EMBERS / FIREBRANDS

A home's building materials, design and landscape have a significant role in the level of exposure that can be endured before ignition occurs from any of these sources.

## WHY YOUR HOME IGNITES

### EMBER ATTACKS AND FIREBRANDS:

Burning pieces of airborne wood and vegetation that can be carried more than a kilometre through the wind and can cause spot fires and ignite homes, gardens and other flammable objects. They can also penetrate and smoulder in woodpiles, patio/deck items, vents and openings, roofs and debris filled gutters. Most home losses in a wildfire are from embers, not by direct contact with flames.

### SURFACE FIRES:

Typically small flames burning through grass and ground litter. They can reach houses, pergolas and decks if there is no interruption in the types of fuel sources. Flames touching a house, fence or deck can cause them to ignite.

### CROWN FIRE:

Large flames burning in the tops or canopies of trees. These large flames radiate heat that can ignite wood walls from up to 30m away. Other types of large flames can come from detached buildings, burning wood piles and ignited vehicles.

### CONTACT DETAILS

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