



50 things you can do to help protect your home from wildfire

No Cost, Just A Little Time

- 🔥 Perform a *FIREWISE* assessment of your home.
- 🔥 Move your firewood pile out of your home's defensible space.
- 🔥 Clean your roof and gutters of leaves and pine needles (best done in November).
- 🔥 Clear the view of your house number so it can be easily seen from the street.
- 🔥 Remove conifer shrubs from your home's defensible space, especially if your home is in a high-risk area.
- 🔥 Put a hose (at least 100' long) on a rack and attach it to an outside faucet.
- 🔥 Trim all tree branches if they overhang your house.
- 🔥 Trim all tree branches from within 20' of all chimneys.
- 🔥 Remove trees along the driveway to make it at least 12' wide.
- 🔥 Prune branches overhanging the driveway to have a minimum 14' overhead clearance.
- 🔥 Maintain a green lawn for 30' around your home.
- 🔥 If new homes are still being built in your area, talk to the developer and local zoning officials about building standards.
- 🔥 Develop and discuss an escape plan for your family and pets. Have a practice drill.
- 🔥 Get involved with your community's disaster mitigation plans.
- 🔥 Check your fire extinguishers. Are they still charged? Are they easy to get to in an emergency? Does everyone in the family know where they are and how to use them?
- 🔥 Clear deadwood and dense flammable vegetation from your home's defensible space.
- 🔥 Review your homeowner's insurance policy for adequate coverage. Consult your insurance agent about costs of rebuilding and repairs in your area.
- 🔥 Talk to your children about not starting fires or playing with matches.
- 🔥 If you have a burn barrel that you use for burning trash, *STOP!* Burning trash is illegal in West Virginia.
- 🔥 Compost leaves in the fall, don't burn them.
- 🔥 If you burn your brush piles or garden debris, follow state burning regulations and local ordinances – use common sense when burning – don't burn on a windy day.
- 🔥 Always have a shovel on hand and hook up the garden hose *BEFORE* you start the fire.
- 🔥 Never burn if the smoke and flames are blowing towards your home (or your neighbor's home).

Minimal Cost Actions (\$10 – \$25 and a little time)

- 🔥 Install highly visible house numbers (at least 4" tall) on your home.
- 🔥 Install big, highly visible house numbers (at least 4" tall) at the entrance of the driveway onto the street. Use non-flammable materials and posts.
- 🔥 Install metal screens on all attic, foundation, and other openings on your home to prevent accumulation of leaves and needles.
- 🔥 Hold a neighborhood meeting to talk about fire safety. Invite your local fire chief. Have coffee and donuts for neighbors.
- 🔥 Install a fire extinguisher in the kitchen *AND* the garage.
- 🔥 Install a metal shield between your home and an attached wood fence or deck.

- 🔥 Replace conifer and evergreen shrubs with low-flammable plants in your home's defensible space.
- 🔥 Prune and thin conifer trees that are located within 30' to 100' of your home.
- 🔥 Purchase and use a NOAA weather alert radio. Many types of emergencies are announced through this service.
- 🔥 Install a spark arrestor or heavy wire screen with openings less than 1/2" on wood burning fireplaces and chimneys.

Moderate Cost Actions (\$50 - \$250 and a little more work)

- 🔥 Build a gravel turnaround area near your house big enough to allow a fire truck to turn around.
- 🔥 Join your neighbors in creating an additional access road into your neighborhood. Share the costs.
- 🔥 Modify driveway gates to accommodate fire trucks. They should be at least 10' wide and set back at least 30' from the road. If locked, use a key box approved by your local fire department or use a chain loop with a lock that can be cut in an emergency.
- 🔥 Replace vinyl gutters and downspouts with non-flammable, metal gutters and downspouts that incorporate easily cleaned or non-clogging features.
- 🔥 Treat flammable materials like wood roofs, decks and siding with fire retardant chemicals.
- 🔥 Enclose decks to prevent accumulation of leaves, needles, and debris. Include a metal screen with a 1/4" or less mesh opening to prevent sparks from getting under the deck.

High Cost Actions (more than \$500)

- 🔥 Replace your roof with fire-resistant materials such as Class A shingles, metal or tile.
- 🔥 Install a roof irrigation system to protect your home's roof.
- 🔥 Install an independent water supply for a sprinkler system with a non-electric (e.g. propane) powered pump capable of running unattended for 24 hours.
- 🔥 Replace wood or vinyl siding with non-flammable material.
- 🔥 Replace single-pane glass windows and plastic skylights with tempered, double-pane glass.
- 🔥 Box in roof eaves, fascias, and soffits with aluminum or steel materials with metal screens to prevent entry of sparks.
- 🔥 Have electric service lines to your house placed underground.
- 🔥 Relocate propane tanks inside the defensible space but at least 10' from the house.
- 🔥 Have non-flammable ground cover such as gravel under and around propane tanks for 10'.
- 🔥 Improve driveway culverts and bridges to accommodate the weight of a fire truck.
- 🔥 Improve your driveway by straightening sharp curves and filling in sharp dips that would hinder a fire truck.

(Modified from original list compiled by Minnesota DNR Firewise Program)

Please visit these websites for more information on Firewise and how to make your home or community safer from wildfire:

