

Reduce Your Wildfire Risk: Create Defensible Space



Know Your Zones



Reduce the chance of wind-blown embers igniting materials near your home, thereby exposing it to flames.



Choose noncombustible materials like rock or gravel mulches. Use brick or concrete walkways in this area.



Use noncombustible materials. If vegetation is used, select low growing plants such as irrigated flowers or lawn.



Do not store firewood, lumber or other combustibles under the entire footprint of any attached deck.



Create a landscape that will not readily allow fire to burn to the home.



Remove shrubs underneath trees, and thin trees to create a between-tree spacing of about 10 ft. Spacing should increase on slopes. Remove dead vegetation and branches overhanging your home. Keep plants healthy.



Move RVs/trailers into the 30 – 100 ft. zone. If unable to move, create defensible space around each. Create defensible space around each outbuilding.



Reduce the energy and speed of the wildfire.



Remove dead trees, shrubs and other dead material within plants.

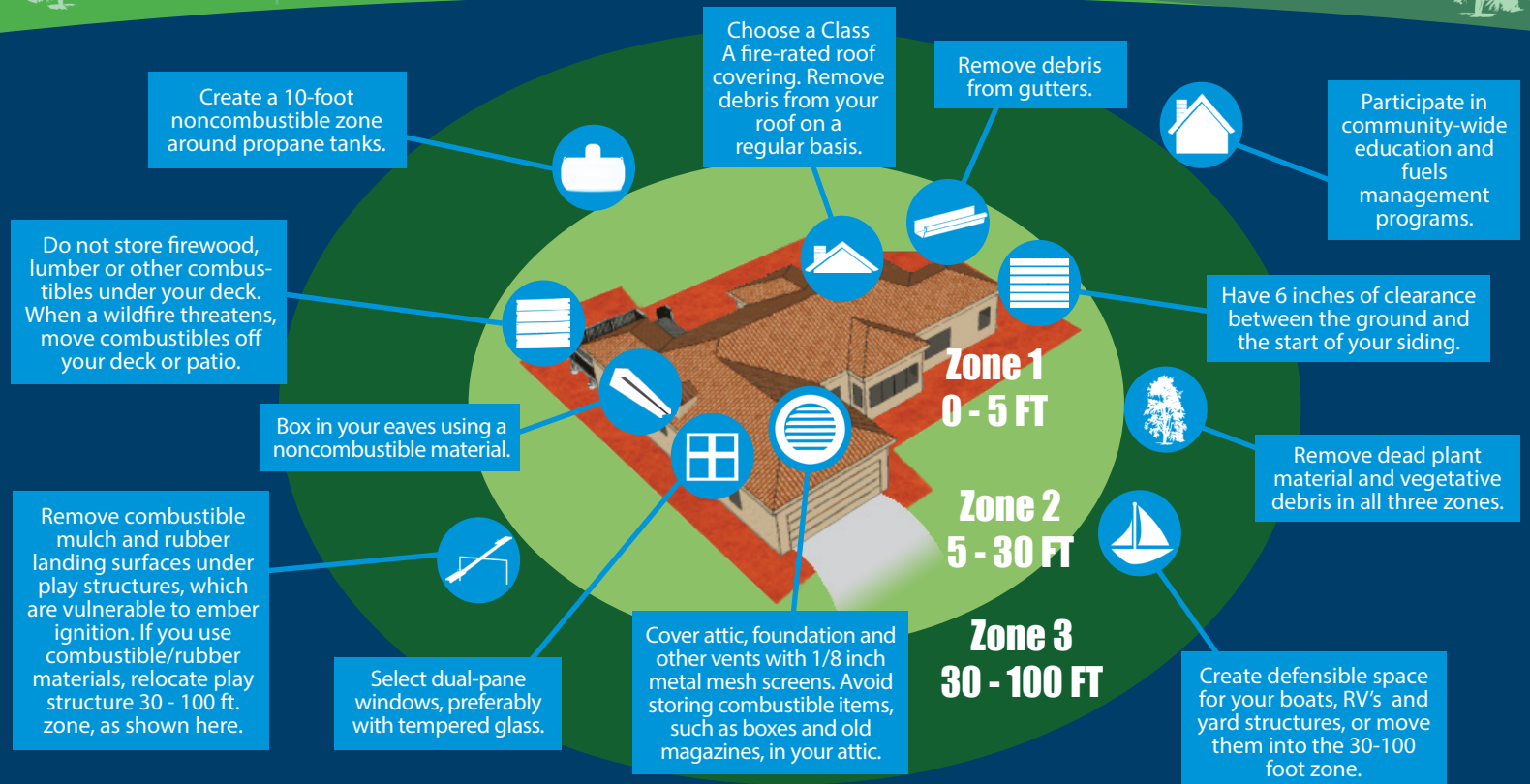


Thin and separate trees/shrubs. Trim trees and remove shrubs to eliminate ladder fuels under trees. Branch removal from the trunk should not exceed more than 1/3 of tree height.



Extend zone to 150 - 200 ft. if home is near or at the top of a steep slope.

Create an Ember-Resistant Home



SCRUTINIZE SIDING:

Walk around outside your home and look for places where the siding is close to the ground or touches it. Wind-blown embers can accumulate at the base of that wall and ignite it, even if you created a noncombustible zone around your house.



EXAMINE VENTS:

A house can have many vents, especially if there is an attic or crawl space, which can become entry points for burning embers. Dryer vents also are vulnerable. Make sure the mesh screen covering the vent is in good condition, is not rusted, and is 1/8 inch screening, not 1/4 inch screening.



CLOSE EAVES:

Some homes have open-eave construction where you can see exposed rafters. Vents located in the wood blocking between the rafters are vulnerable to ember entry. These areas can also trap heat from flames, leading to more rapid ignition of combustible wood and wood-based framing and sheathing. One way to enclose the underside of the roof overhang is to box in the eaves with a noncombustible or ignition resistant soffit material, such as fiber-cement products and exterior-rated, fire-retardant-treated plywood.



INSTALL A DRIP EDGE:

Do not use untreated wood shake or shingle roofing. Install a metal drip edge where the gutter is attached to the roof edge. In addition to protecting roof sheathing and fascia from water damage, a drip edge will protect these components from wind-blown embers and flames emanating from ignited debris in the gutter.



REPLACE SINGLE-PANE WINDOWS:

The glass is the most vulnerable component in a window. Use dual- or multi-pane windows with tempered glass, which is about four times more resistant to breaking when exposed to radiant heat. This helps prevent breakage, which would allow for the entry of wind-blown embers and flames. Consider replacing domed skylights, which are typically made from a plastic material, with flat, tempered glass skylights.



CHECK THE DECK:

A deck can easily fuel a fire, especially if combustible materials are stored underneath it, or if there's debris between the deck boards or at the intersection between the deck and the exterior wall. Combustible materials should not be stored under a deck. If dry, rotted wood is easy to ignite. Burning vegetation on a slope can result in flame lengths of more than 30 feet, so even an elevated deck can be vulnerable.

Additional wildfire resources are available at nationwide.com/wildfire-safety or disastersafety.org/wildfire

