

Create defensible space

Reduce organic fuel

Use noncombustible

1. Create defensible space

Defensible space is both horizontal and vertical (low lying brush to bushes to low lying tree canopies to large tree canopies). The key is to disrupt continuity in the vertical dimension. Your property should be divided into three zones around your building.

Zone 1: 0 to 5 feet from the exterior wall of your building

This zone is closest to your facility, so it requires the most careful selection and intensive management of plants and materials.

- Install hard surfaces in this zone, such as a concrete walkway, or use noncombustible mulch products, such as rock mulch.
- Regularly water lawns and plantings to prevent dry vegetation.
- Remove dead plant material from plants.
- Remove plants adjacent to combustible siding and foundation vents, as well as plants under or next to windows, under-eave vents or interior corners.

Zone 2: 5 to 30 feet from your building, or to the property line

Maintaining plants in this zone will help prevent fire from climbing (laddering) into the top portion of trees or shrubs and burning directly to your facility.

- Maintain trees and shrubs in well-spaced groupings.
- Remove dead plant material and lower tree branches.
- Maintain trees by keeping a minimum horizontal spacing of 10 feet between crowns, with the distance increasing with increasing slope.
- Prune limbs and branches to a height of up to 15 feet. For shorter trees, pruning should not exceed 1/3 of the tree height.

Zone 3: 30 to 100 feet from your building, or to the property line

Maintaining plants in this zone will help reduce the energy of wildfire, slowing its advance to your building. Tree and brush spacing should force any fire in the tops of the trees, brush, or shrubs to drop to the ground.

- Remove dead plant material and tree branches from vegetation on a regular maintenance schedule.
- Create islands or groupings of vegetation.
- Remove lower tree branches.
- Maintain trees with a minimum horizontal spacing of 10 feet between crown edges.

2. Reduce organic fuel