

Home

D O N ' T L E T Y O U R H O M E B E C O M E F U E L F O R A W I L D F I R E

Few of nature's furies can match the sudden destructive power of a wildfire.

Fortunately, you *can* make your home and landscape less vulnerable to fire by **creating a fire-buffer zone**. Your goals are to minimize fuel sources (that could turn a windblown spark into an inferno) and to give open access to firefighters.

Follow these tips, courtesy of PEMCO and the Department of Natural Resources:

- Use trees and shrubbery sparingly near your home. Opt instead for a large, well-watered, closely cropped lawn.
- When using mulch, favor non-flammable choices like pumice or crushed gravel. Dry beauty bark *burns*.
- In forested areas, remove trees within 50 feet of the home or other structures. Remove limbs within 15 feet of the ground on all other trees.
- In non-forested areas, if your landscape includes trees, remove all limbs within 15 feet of the ground.
- Trim any branches that hang over your roof. Branches should never be closer than 15 feet from your chimney – and all chimneys should have a spark screen.
- Clear away moss and needles from your roof and gutters.
- Remove foliage, fallen branches and twigs, and dry undergrowth that could lead encroaching flames to your home. Be especially vigilant on slopes (fires tend to burn uphill) and the side of your home exposed to prevailing winds.
- Create natural firebreaks in your landscape with elements like well-irrigated perennial beds, concrete or gravel walkways, and ponds.
- Stack firewood *at least* 30 feet away and uphill from your home and other structures.
- Connect a garden hose that's long enough to reach any area of the home and other structures.
- Clear a 10-foot area around propane tanks and the barbecue. Soak used, burning briquettes in a metal bucket.
- Tidy up storage areas that seem to accumulate combustibles. Pay particular attention to areas under decks and eaves.

(continued)



- Stock handy household items that can serve as fire tools: a shovel, rake, axe, handsaw or chainsaw, and bucket.

You'll also want to **make your home firefighter-friendly**.

- Make sure your address is visible from the street, both day and night.
- Widen your driveway to at least 12 feet to accommodate a fire truck. Again, ensure there are no overhanging branches within 15 feet of the ground.
- Know the laws about burn bans and outdoor burning permits. If in doubt, call your local fire department or the Department of Natural Resources at 1-800-323-BURN.

