

TENNESSEE FIREWISE COMMUNITIES

Although mulch helps retain soil moisture, when it is dry it will become flammable. Consider using alternative ground covers, such as rock or pea gravel. Mulch as well as all landscaping materials should be kept well-watered to prevent them from becoming fire fuel.

- **Emergency Access**

Identify your home and neighborhood with legible and clearly marked street names and numbers so emergency vehicles can rapidly find the location of the emergency. Include a driveway that is at least 12 feet wide with a vertical clearance of 15 feet – to provide access to emergency apparatus.

- **A Disaster Plan**

The time to plan for a fire emergency is now. Take a few minutes to discuss with your family what actions you will need to take.

Post your local firefighting agency telephone number in a visible place. Decide where you will go and how you will get there. Unlike evacuating for a hurricane, with fire you may not have a moment's notice. Two escape routes out of your home and out of your neighborhood are preferable.

- **Have Tools Available.**

Keep a shovel, rake, axe, handsaw and a 2-gallon bucket within easy reach.

- **Have a Plan for Your Pets.**

- **Practice Family Fire Drills.**

Evacuations for a wildfire can occur without notice. When wildfire conditions exist, **BE ALERT!**



For more information about the Tennessee Firewise Communities Program, contact:

*Tennessee Department of Agriculture
Division of Forestry
P.O. Box 40627
Nashville, TN 37204
615-837-5091 • Fax: 615-837-5129*

or visit our website at:

<http://www.state.tn.us/agriculture/forestry>



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Is Your Home
FIRE
wise?



Tennessee Department of Agriculture
Division of Forestry



Areas where homes meet the wildlands are called the wildland/urban interface. A home in a woodland setting is surrounded by flammable forest fuels. You can help minimize a fire threat to your home and family by following a few safety tips.

A Firewise home has:

• Defensible Space

Do you have at least 30 feet of space surrounding your home that is **Lean**, **Green** and **Clean**?

The objective of Defensible Space is to reduce the wildfire threat to your home by changing the characteristics of the surrounding vegetation.

Lean – Prune shrubs and cut back tree branches, especially within 15 feet of your chimney.

Clean – Remove all dead plant material from around your home; this includes dead leaves, dry grass and even stacked firewood.

Green – Plant fire-resistant vegetation that is healthy and green for most of the year.

Defensible space allows firefighters room to put out fires.

• Fire-Resistant Exterior Construction

Wall materials that can resist heat and flames include cement, plaster, stucco and concrete masonry. Double pane glass windows can make a home more resistant to wildfire heat and flames.

Although some vinyl will not burn, some vinyl soffits will melt, allowing embers into the attic space.

• Fire-Resistant Roof Construction

Firewise construction includes Class-A asphalt shingles, metal, cement and concrete products. Additionally, the inclusion of a fire-resistant sub-roof adds protection.

• Fire-Resistant Attachments

Attachments include any structure connected to your home, such as decks, porches or fences. If an attachment to a home is not fire-resistant, then the home as a whole is *not* Firewise.

• Firewise Landscaping

With Firewise landscaping, you can create defensible space around your home that reduces your wildfire threat. Large, leafy hardwood trees should be pruned so that the lowest branches are at least 6 to 10 ft high to prevent a fire on the ground from spreading up to the tree tops. Within the defensible space, remove flammable plants that contain resins, oils and waxes that burn readily such as eastern red cedar and pine.

Something as simple as making sure that your gutters, eaves and roof are clear of debris can reduce your fire threat!

- Fire resistance exterior construction
- Fire resistant roof
- Fire resistant attachments
- 30 feet (minimum) of space surrounding your home
- Firewise landscaping (Remove dead limbs, leaves and other litter; thinning trees and brush cover)
- Stack firewood away from home
- Double pane glass windows
- Prune branches to 10 feet above the ground

