

Homeowners – Protect your Property from Wildfire

The Plumas County Fire Safe Council in cooperation with the US Forest Service, CDF, County Board of Supervisors and your local Volunteer Fire Department, urges all Plumas County residents to take the effort to make their homes more survivable and defensible from wildfires. As homes continue to be lost across the western US, again this year, residents are reminded that their efforts can make the difference. The potential for loss of property in Plumas County is increasing daily as we move further into fire season. As a minimum residents are reminded of California law that requires at least 30 feet of clearance around structure of flammable material. Often more clearance is necessary depending on fuel type, slope, and aspect.

Residents need to remember that it isn't always the fire directly adjacent to the structures that create the loss. It is often the ember blizzard with tens of thousands of sparks attacking a receptive fuelbed of needles or leaves against the wall, in the rain gutter, or under the deck that cause home to burn. These spot fires frequently occur up to ¼ mile in advance of fires with torching trees and brush. So not only should flammable vegetation up to at least 30 feet be removed, but any combustible materials, such as woodpiles, adjacent to structures should also be moved. Many homes that burn in a wildfire are lost from just a spark not the wall of flames.

In addition to clearing flammable vegetation, all pine needles should be removed from your roof. If your house has a shake roof, you should consider replacing it with composition shingles, steel or concrete. Shake roofs are the leading cause of home losses from wildfires. During the ember blizzard, burning material similar to thousands of matches are blown onto and under shingles. Once a shake roof catches fire it is almost impossible to extinguish and requires a large volume of water, which usually isn't available.

Residents can also prevent embers from blowing into their attics and under their house and decks if openings are screened. If the screen material can prevent a bee from entering, it will probably keep out firebrands or embers.

Often homes with shake roofs or lacking clearance are determined to be indefensible by fire fighters. They will move on to those structures where they have a high probability of success. If you expect the fire department to respond to protect your home during a wildfire you should give them a fighting chance and a safe environment in which to work. No ones life should be jeopardized for a structure.

For more information you can visit the Plumas County Fire Safe Council's web site at www.plumasfiresafe.org or call 283-0829 or (800) 973-3320. Citizens are invited to become members and attend the monthly County Fire Safe Council meetings, on the second Wednesday of each month at 9:00 am at the Quincy Fire Hall.

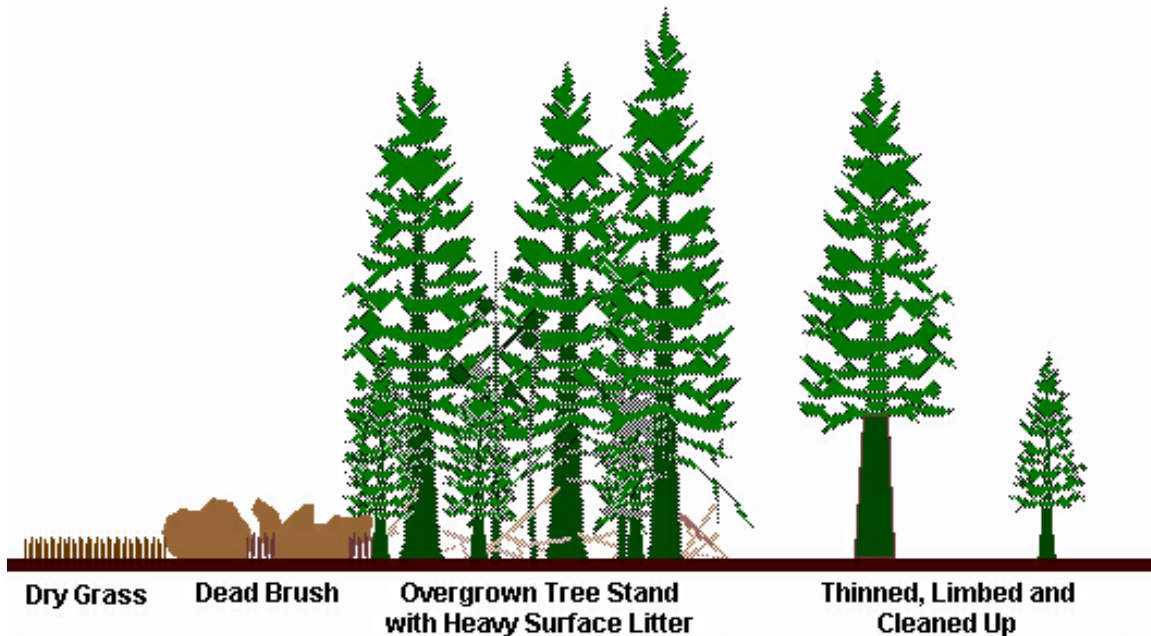


Your local Fire Safe Council says

“Give your firefighters a fighting chance ...”

By California state law, you must maintain at least 30 feet of defensible, cleaned-up space around all sides of all structures on your property.

While you're at it, make sure that the rest of your lot is also free of fire hazards.



Dry Grass

Dead Brush

Overgrown Tree Stand
with Heavy Surface Litter

Thinned, Limbed and
Cleaned Up

FIRE HAZARD !!

A small fire starting in the dry grass could easily move into brush, tree litter and tree crowns, becoming a major blaze.

MUCH BETTER !!

Fuels are removed and separated, preventing rapid fire growth.

On small trees, remove the lower 1/3 of limbs. Larger trees should be limbed to at least six feet (6') above the surface; eight to ten feet is even better.

All dead brush should be removed, and live brush should be separated so that there is no continuous fuel path between plants. Brush should also be separated from trees.

For more information, go to www.firewise.org