

When Developing or Maintaining a Landscape:

- ✓ Take out "ladder fuels" - vegetation serving as a link between grass and tree tops - that carry fire from vegetation to a structure or vice versa.
- ✓ Keep trees, shrubs pruned. Prune trees 6 to 12 feet from ground.
- ✓ Dispose of cuttings and debris properly.
- ✓ Clear dead wood and dense vegetation within 30 feet of your house; move firewood away from house or attachments.
- ✓ Use less-flammable plants: Azalea, Viburnum, Crepe Myrtle, Spirea, Hydrangea, Annual and Perennial Flowers, Ferns, Dogwood, Redbud, Red Maple and Oak.
- ✓ Mow, maintain and water your lawn regularly.

Firewise Construction

- ✓ Use construction materials that are fire-resistant or non-combustible whenever possible.
- ✓ Consider both size and materials for windows; smaller panes hold up better than larger ones. Double-pane glass and tempered glass are more effective than single-pane glass; plastic skylights can melt.
- ✓ Prevent sparks from entering your home through vents by covering exterior attic and crawl space vents with wire mesh no larger than 1/8 inch.

Structures such as decks, porches, fences and sheds attached to the house, should be considered part of the house. These structures can act as fuses or fuel bridges.

- ✓ If you wish to attach an all-wood fence to your home, use masonry or metal as a protective barrier between the fence and house.
- ✓ Use non-flammable metal when constructing a trellis and cover with high-moisture, fire-resistant vegetation.
- ✓ Prevent combustible materials and debris from accumulating beneath decks or elevated porches; screen underneath with wire mesh no larger than 1/8 inch.
- ✓ Keep your gutters, eaves and roof clear of leaves and other debris.

For additional information, visit
www.firewisevirginia.org

CONTACT INFORMATION

Abingdon Region Office:

Phone: (276) 676-5488 ; FAX: (276) 676-5581
Bland, Buchanan, Carroll, Dickenson, Grayson, Lee, Russell, Scott, Smyth, Tazewell, Washington, Wise and Wythe counties

Salem Region Office:

Phone: (540) 387-5461 ; FAX: (540) 387-5445
Alleghany, Bath, Bedford, Botetourt, Craig, Floyd, Franklin, Giles, Henry, Highland, Montgomery, Patrick, Pittsylvania, Pulaski, Roanoke and Rockbridge counties

Farmville Region Office:

Phone: (434) 392-4159 ; FAX: (434) 392-1550
Amelia, Appomattox, Buckingham, Campbell, Charlotte, Cumberland, Halifax, Lunenburg, Mecklenburg, Nottoway, Powhatan and Prince Edward counties

Charlottesville Region Office:

Phone: (434) 977-5193 ; FAX: (434) 296-3290
Albemarle, Amherst, Arlington, Augusta, Clarke, Culpeper, Fairfax, Fauquier, Fluvanna, Frederick, Goochland, Greene, Loudoun, Louisa, Madison, Nelson, Orange, Page, Prince William, Rappahannock, Rockingham, Shenandoah and Warren counties

Tappahannock Region Office:

Phone: (804) 443-2211 ; FAX: (804) 443-3164
Caroline, Charles City, Chesterfield, Essex, Gloucester, Hanover, Henrico, James City, King & Queen, King George, King William, Lancaster, Mathews, Middlesex, New Kent, Northumberland, Richmond, Spotsylvania, Stafford, Westmoreland and York counties

Waverly Region Office:

Phone: (804) 834-2300 ; FAX: (804) 834-3232
Accomack, Brunswick, Dinwiddie, Greensville, Isle of Wight, Northampton, Prince George, Southampton, Surry and Sussex counties, and cities of Chesapeake, Suffolk and Virginia Beach



This institution is an equal opportunity provider.



FIREWISE COMMUNITIES FOR VIRGINIA

*Reduce the Risk to
Your Home and Community!*



Virginia Department of Forestry
www.dof.virginia.gov

Protect Your Home and Community

From the beauty of the landscape to the privacy and quiet, you know the benefits of living in one of Virginia's forested areas are numerous and varied. Yet, with that high quality of life comes the risk of wildland fire.

Dry leaves, pine needles, dead tree limbs and flammable plants serve as the fuel for fires in communities such as yours. But there are several steps you can take to reduce the risk to you and your neighbors. By becoming "Firewise," you and your community will ensure that the quality of life you enjoy today will be there tomorrow.

Please take a few moments to read the material within this pamphlet, and share it with your neighbors. By following these guidelines, you will make your home and your neighbors' a Firewise community. Your local Virginia Department of Forestry staff is available to help you in this regard. Feel free to contact them for more information or assistance.

Firewise Landscaping

To create a landscape that will make your home less vulnerable to wildfire, the primary goal is fuel modification. Zone 1 is closest to your home, Zone 4 is the farthest away.

- Zone 1** This well-irrigated area of at least 30 feet on all sides, provides defensible space. Plants should be limited to carefully spaced fire-resistant tree and shrub species.
- Zone 2** Use Low-growing, fire-resistant plant materials. Irrigation system should extend into this zone.
- Zone 3** Place low-growing plants and well-spaced trees in this area; keep volume of vegetation (fuel) low.
- Zone 4** Thin selectively and remove highly flammable vegetation in this natural area.

**Firefighters Need Your Help.
Is Your Home Firewise?**

A Disaster Plan

The time to plan for any emergency is prior to the event. Take a few minutes to discuss with your family what actions you will take.

- ✓ Have tools available: shovel, rake, axe, handsaw or chainsaw, and water source.
- ✓ Post local emergency telephone numbers in a visible place.
- ✓ Leave before it's too late. Decide where you will go and how you will get there. Two escape routes out of your home and out of your neighborhood are preferable.
- ✓ Have a plan for your pets.
- ✓ Practice family fire drills.



When wildfire conditions exist, evacuations can occur without notice; be ready to take action.

Did You Know?

Defensible Space

Do you have at least 30 feet of space surrounding your home that is lean, clean and green?

The objective of defensible space is to reduce the wildfire threat to your home by changing the characteristics of the flammable vegetation.

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

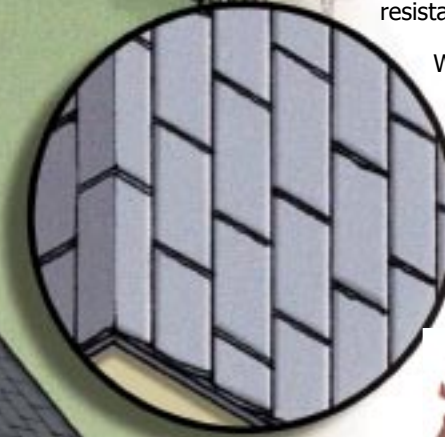
Clean – Remove all dead plant material from around your home; this includes leaves, dry vegetation and even stacked firewood. Plants, such as ornamental junipers, hollies, red cedar and young pine, that contain resins, oils and waxes burn readily – remove them.

Green – Plant fire-resistant vegetation that is healthy and green throughout the year.



Although mulch helps retain soil moisture, when dry, it can become flammable.

Did You Know?



Emergency Access

Identify your home and neighborhood with legible and clearly marked street names and numbers so response 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 vehicles.

Fire-Resistant Roof and Exterior Construction

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

Wall materials that resist heat and flames include brick, cement, plaster, stucco and concrete masonry. Tempered and double-pane glass windows can make a home more resistant to wildfire heat and flames. Although some vinyl will not burn, some vinyl soffits can melt, allowing embers into the attic space.



Simply making sure that your gutters, eaves and roof are clear of debris will reduce your fire threat.

Did You Know?

Fire-Resistant Attachments

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

For More Information

Virginia Department of Forestry
Firewise Program – www.firewisevirginia.org
Agency Web Site – www.dof.virginia.gov

National Firewise Organization
www.firewise.org

For additional information, visit
www.firewisevirginia.org

