

Defensible Space

Presented by **CAL FIRE** NEU



Stagecoach Fire July 2017

Auburn, CA



Public Resources Code 4290

The regulations shall include all of the following:

- (1) Road standards for fire equipment access.
- (2) Standards for signs identifying streets, roads, and buildings.
- (3) Minimum private water supply reserves for emergency fire use.
- (4) Fuel breaks and greenbelts.
 - (b) These regulations do not supersede local regulations which equal or exceed minimum regulations adopted by the state.

Public Resources Code 4291

- (a) A person who owns, leases, controls, operates, or maintains a building or structure in, upon, or adjoining a mountainous area, forest-covered lands, brush-covered lands, grass-covered lands, or land that is covered with flammable material, shall at all times do all of the following:
 - (1) Maintain defensible space of 100 feet from each side and from the front and rear of the structure, but not beyond the property line except as provided in paragraph (2). The amount of fuel modification necessary shall take into account the flammability of the structure as affected by building material, building standards, location, and type of vegetation.

HOW DO I CLEAR LEGALLY?

- Combustible vegetation can be removed by mowing, cutting and grazing as long as the root structure is left intact. Any trees you remove shall have the stumps cut no higher than 8 inches above the ground. The only exception would be an orchard. Orchard trees may have their stumps completely removed.

WHAT ELSE SHOULD I DO TO PROTECT MY PROPERTY AGAINST FIRE?

- Vary the height of plants and adequately space them. Taller plants need to be spaced wider apart.
- Existing trees and large shrubs should be pruned by cutting off any branches up to 6 feet above the ground to prevent ground fires from spreading upwards into trees.
- Remove any tree limbs within 10 feet of your chimney.
- Work with your neighbors to clear common areas between houses, and prune areas of heavy vegetation that are a fire threat to both properties.
- Avoid planting trees under or near electrical lines. They may grow into or make contact with overhead lines. Under windy conditions these instances may cause a fire.

DEFENSIBLE SPACE ZONES

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Zone 1

Zone 1 extends 30 feet out from buildings, structures, decks, etc. Remove all dead plants, grass and weeds (vegetation).

- Remove dead or dry leaves and pine needles from your yard, roof and rain gutters.
- Trim trees regularly to keep branches a minimum of 10 feet from other trees.
- Remove branches that hang over your roof and keep dead branches 10 feet away from your chimney.
- Relocate wood piles into Zone 2.
- Remove or prune flammable plants and shrubs near windows.
- Remove vegetation and items that could catch fire from around and under decks.
- Create a separation between trees, shrubs and items that could catch fire, such as patio furniture, wood piles, swing sets, etc.

- Stack firewood and scrap wood piles at least 30 feet from any structure and clear away any combustible vegetation within 10 feet of the piles. Many homes have "survived" as a fire moved past it, only to burn later from a wood pile that caught fire after the firefighters had moved on to protect other homes.
- Check and clean your roofs and gutters on all structures several times during the spring, summer and fall to remove debris that can easily ignite from a spark.

Zone 2

- Cut or mow annual grass down to a maximum height of 4 inches.
- Create horizontal spacing between shrubs and trees. (See diagram)
- Create vertical spacing between grass, shrubs and trees. (See diagram)
- Remove fallen leaves, needles, twigs, bark, cones, and small branches. However, they may be permitted to a depth of 3 inches if erosion control is an issue.

Plant and Tree Spacing

The spacing between grass, shrubs, and trees is crucial to reduce the spread of wildfires. The spacing needed is determined by the type and size of brush and trees, as well as the slope of the land. For example, a property on a steep slope with larger vegetation requires greater spacing between trees and shrubs than a level property that has small, sparse vegetation.

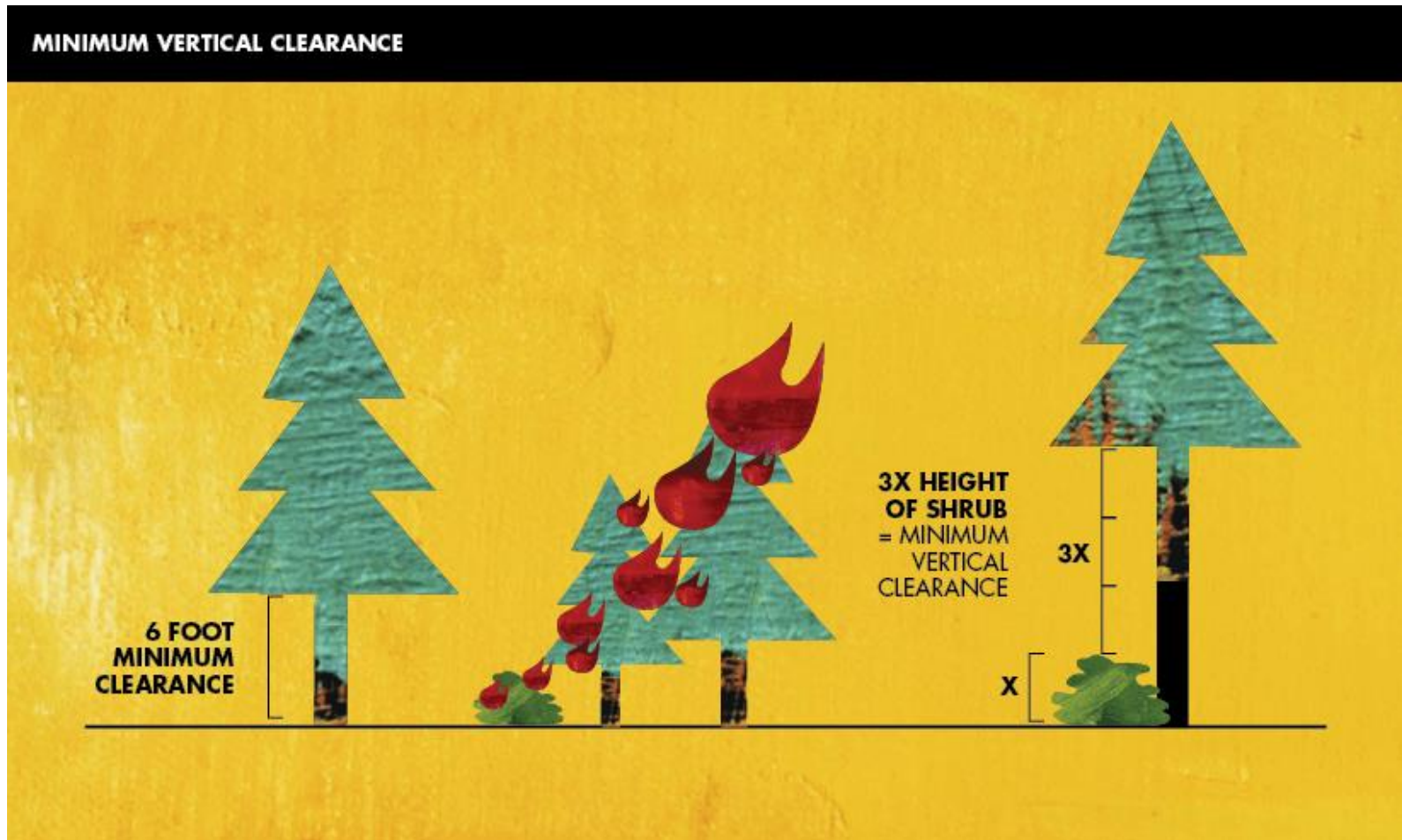
Vertical Spacing

Remove all tree branches at least 6 feet from the ground.

Allow extra vertical space between shrubs and trees. Lack of vertical space can allow a fire to move from the ground to the brush to the tree tops like a ladder.

To determine the proper vertical spacing between shrubs and the lowest branches of trees, use the formula below.

Vertical Spacing



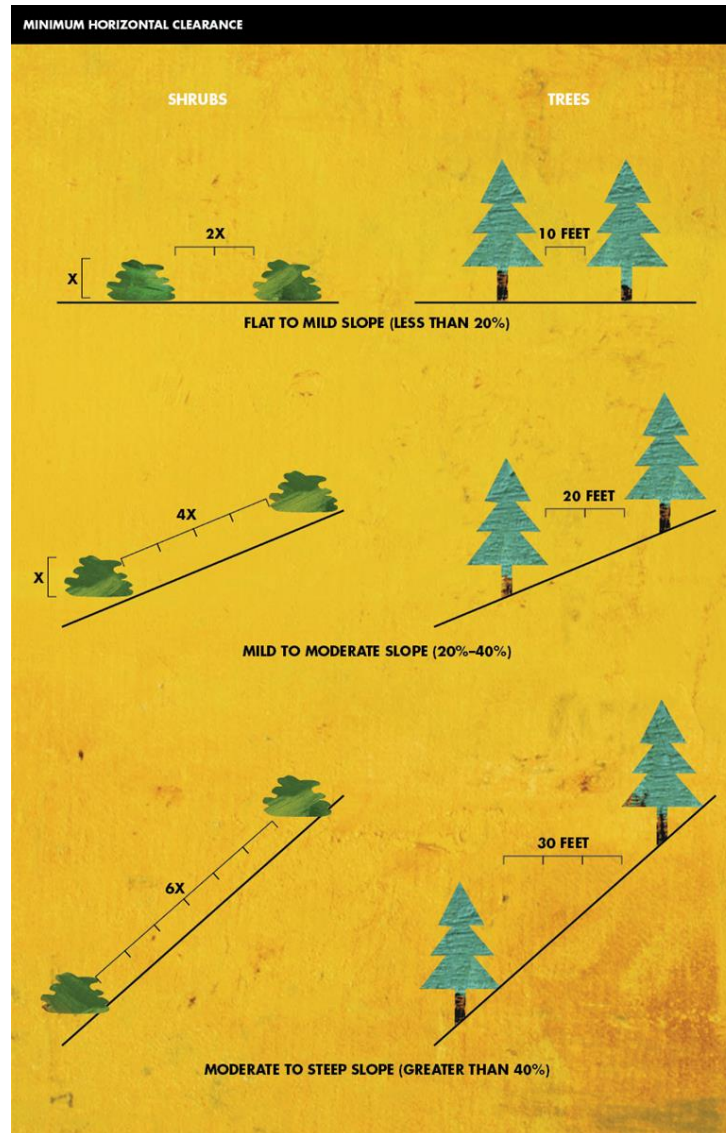
Minimum Horizontal Clearance



FRENCH LAVENDER IS A FIRE RESISTANT PLANT THAT THRIVES IN DRY GROWING CONDITIONS. THIS LOW-KEY PLANT WILL ADD BEAUTY TO YOUR DEFENSIBLE SPACE LANDSCAPE.



THE FIRE RESISTANT RED MONKEY FLOWER YIELDS BEAUTIFUL BRIGHT RED BLOSSOMS. THIS EVERGREEN SHRUB IS ALSO DROUGHT TOLERANT AND A CALIFORNIA NATIVE SPECIES.



SAGE IS A LOW MAINTENANCE PLANT THAT PROVIDES FIRE RESISTANCE WHILE BEING DROUGHT TOLERANT.



THE CALIFORNIA LILAC IS THE NAME OF THIS COLORFUL SHRUB. THIS FIRE RESISTANT PLANT IS DROUGHT TOLERANT AND IS COVERED WITH SMALL PINK & PURPLE FLOWERS WHEN IN BLOOM.

Fire-Safe Landscaping

Fire-resistant landscaping isn't necessarily the same thing as a well-maintained yard. Fire-resistant landscaping uses fire-resistant plants that are strategically planted to resist the spread of fire to your home.

The good news is that you don't need to spend a lot of money to make your landscape fire-safe. And fire-safe landscaping can increase your property value and conserve water while beautifying your home.

Join your local Fire Alliance or Fire Safe Community

Placer County Fire Alliance

www.placefirealliance.org

Fire Safe Council of Nevada County

www.areyoufiresafe.com

Yuba Watershed Protection and Fire Safe Council

yubafiresafe.org/

Ready, Set, Go!

- In California, wildfires aren't a question of if, but a question of when. YOU choose to live near a natural area of the state, YOU are at risk for wildfires and it's YOUR responsibility to prepare yourself, your family, and your home. And that preparation starts with three simple steps: READY, SET, GO!

WILDFIRE IS COMING.
ARE YOU...

READY?

**DEFENSIBLE SPACE AND
HARDENING YOUR HOME.**



THOUSANDS OF WILDFIRES STRIKE CALIFORNIA
EVERY YEAR. IT'S NOT A MATTER OF IF YOUR
HOME IS AT RISK, BUT WHEN.

ReadyForWildfire.org

Ready

Being Ready for wildfire starts with maintaining an adequate Defensible Space and by hardening your home by using fire resistant building materials. Hardening your home means using construction materials that can help your home withstand flying embers finding weak spots in the construction, which can result in your house catching fire.

It takes the combination of both Defensible Space and the hardening of your home to really give your house the best chance of surviving a wildfire.

To really be Ready for a wildfire, a Family Disaster Plan needs to be created. The plan should include:

- Several different evacuation routes
- A meeting location outside the fire hazard area
- Having a Disaster Kit



Set

Prepare yourself and your home for the possibility of having to evacuate. This means going through a checklist of items you will need to take when evacuating. And be ready to implement your Family Disaster Plan.



GO!

This is the simplest step. Go... Evacuate early before the fire arrives. By leaving early, you give your family the best chance of surviving a wildfire, while helping firefighters by keeping roads clear of congestion, enabling them to move more freely and do their job.

Find more information Download the Ready for Wildfire App!

