

YOUR HOME

Defensible Space: Your home's first line of defense against an approaching wildfire. 100' of Defensible Space is required by law to help slow or stop the spread of wildfire, protecting your home from direct flame contact and radiant heat while catching or redirecting wind-blown embers.

<http://www.firesafemarin.org/defensible-space>

FIRE RESISTANT PLANTS: Fire Resistant plants are the cornerstone of a home's Defensible Space, however all plants will burn if poorly maintained. Choose a fire resistant species, maintain plant health, irrigate, and remove all dead material regularly.

<http://www.firesafemarin.org/plants>

Fire Safe Landscaping: Fire resistant landscaping uses fire-resistant designs and materials, in conjunction with careful selection of plants, to strategically resist the spread of fire to your home. The good news is, you don't need to spend a lot of money to make your landscaping fire resistant. A fire safe landscape can increase your property value and conserve water while beautifying your home.

<http://www.firesafemarin.org/landscaping>

How Topography Influences Wildfire Risk: Wildfires burn up a slope much faster and flame lengths can also be very long. Homes located midway or at the top of a slope are at a higher risk from increased flame length, so it is wise to increase the defensible space around the home.

<http://www.firesafemarin.org/topography>

Hardening Your Home Against Wildfire: Homes ignite from contact with flames or embers. Flying embers can destroy homes up to a mile ahead of a wildfire. Homeowners should "harden" their homes long before a fire starts.

A wildfire-safe home must be resistant to ignition from wind-blown embers. Even if the flames never reach your home, it must be able to withstand exposure to millions of tiny embers that can be carried a mile or more in front of a wildfire.

To provide maximum wildfire protection for your home, a combination of near-home vegetation management, appropriate building materials, and related design features must be used.

<http://www.firesafemarin.org/hardening-your-home>

Fire Resistant Roofing: HOMEOWNERS NEED TO IMPLEMENT RISK REDUCTION ACTIONS THAT MAKE HOMES BETTER ABLE TO SURVIVE A WILDFIRE - AND THE ROOF IS A GREAT PLACE TO BEGIN! Homes ignite in one of three ways: embers/firebrands, radiant heat exposure or direct flame contact. An example of an ember ignition is when wind-blown embers accumulate on combustible materials such as a wood shake roof. An untreated wood shake or shingle roof covering is the greatest threat to a home.

<http://www.firesafemarin.org/hardening-your-home/roofs>

Fire Resistant Decks: Did you know that choosing the right kind of materials to build your deck and keeping it clear of combustible materials (both on the top and underneath) are critical steps in reducing the risk of a wildfire damaging your home? Use your deck for entertaining, but remember – when a wildfire threatens, move combustible deck furniture and cushions inside or move as far away from the house as possible. Treat other combustible items, such as a broom, as your furniture and move them inside or far away from the house. Any LP tank for a grill should be moved off the deck and away from the home.

<http://www.firesafemarin.org/hardening-your-home/decks>

Vents: Vents on homes create openings for flying embers. Ember entry through vents can result in ignition of combustible materials in the attic, and result in a building burning from the inside out. The importance of ember and flame entry into vents during wildfires has resulted in the development of commercially available vents designed to resist the intrusion of embers and flame, and recommendations for new or retrofit vents to protect existing openings. Ember resistant vents are addressed in Chapter 7A of the California Building Code.

<http://www.firesafemarin.org/hardening-your-home/vents>

Fire Resistant Exterior Siding: Siding products can be classified into three basic categories: combustible, non-combustible, and ignition-resistant. The California Building Code defines the terms based on a material's ability to pass a standard test.

<http://www.firesafemarin.org/hardening-your-home/siding>

Fire Resistant Windows: What types of windows do you have? Improving window performance Replace windows with dual-pane, tempered glass; this will provide significant wildfire protection against flames and wind-blown embers; these windows have the added benefits of greater energy conservation and insulation during cooler and warmer months; the cost increases are relative to the opening size and the number of windows that must be replaced.

<http://www.firesafemarin.org/hardening-your-home/windows>

How Homes Ignite: Wildfires spread by a combination of a moving, flaming fire "front," and airborne embers carried by smoke and wind.

<http://www.firesafemarin.org/how-homes-ignite>

Embers: Embers are the most important cause of home ignition. These embers are capable of igniting and burning your home in several ways. Flying embers destroy homes up to a mile from wildland areas. In order to have a wildfire-safe home, two equally important factors must be implemented: 1) the wise selection of building materials and designs that will help the home resist the wildfire; and 2) the home must have adequate defensible space, based on the wise selection, placement, and maintenance of near-home vegetation.

<http://www.firesafemarin.org/wildfire-embers>

Resources for Homeowners: FIRESafe MARIN offers a range of fire safe education tools for individuals, business, and homeowner groups to raise awareness of the need to prepare for wildfires. In addition to our website resources, please visit the links below for detailed information, background, and tools from our partners and experts in wildfire science, below.

<http://www.firesafemarin.org/resources>

YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD

NOVATO NEIGHBORHOODS CAN HELP SAVE LIVES AND PROPERTY FROM WILDFIRE BY BECOMING FIREWISE!

The **Firewise USA™** program has empowered neighbors to work together in reducing their wildfire risk. Using a five-step process, communities develop an action plan that guides their residential risk reduction activities, while engaging and encouraging their neighbors to become active participants in building a safer place to live.

The five steps of becoming a Firewise neighborhood

- Obtain a [wildfire risk assessment](#) as a written document from your state forestry agency or fire department.
- Form a board or committee, and [create an action plan](#) based on the assessment.
- Conduct a [“Firewise Day” event](#).
- [Invest a minimum of \\$2 per capita in local Firewise actions](#) for the year.
- [Create a Firewise Portal account](#) and submit an application to your state Firewise liaison.

Firewise Benefits:

1. Framework for Action

Meeting the criteria for becoming a Firewise Communities/USA site helps communities get organized and find direction for their wildfire safety efforts. Like the first rungs on a ladder, the criteria help get a community started toward annual, systematic action to reduce their risks from brush, grass and forest fires.

2. Learning About Wildfire

As people go through the Firewise process, they learn about wildfire risks in the community and the simple things they can do to reduce them. They connect with experts – local fire fighters, state forestry professionals, and national researchers – to continue to learn about fire and find resources to accomplish Firewise actions.

3. Peace of Mind

People who work with experts to learn about wildfire and take action start to see results quickly. Knowing that they are using the best information available and actually taking steps to reduce the risk of damage from fire helps people start to feel safer in their environment and in their homes. Having a plan for what to do in the event of a fire helps people become calmer and more prepared to act quickly.

4. Community-Building

As neighbors get together to do Firewise work, often meeting one another for the first time, they build a stronger bond with each other. Firewise activity can help rally people to a common cause for the good of the neighborhood. This strengthening of community ties can benefit residents in many ways, and is especially helpful during an emergency

5. Citizen Pride

While Firewise work can be fun, it isn't always easy. Neighbors work very hard in Firewise communities to remove brush and debris, clean up common areas, and dispose of green waste. They are rightly proud when they achieve national recognition for their efforts.

6. Publicity

The national Firewise program provides communities with metal signs, a plaque and other materials that can be presented publicly to honor their status as a Firewise Communities/USA recognition site. These recognition ceremonies are great ways to shine the spotlight on community efforts. News media find this to be a great story to cover, and the national program features community stories regularly on the website and in its publications. All this publicity results not only in satisfaction for the residents involved, but also provides one more way to reach large numbers of people with information about wildfire safety.

7. Access to Funding and Assistance

Preference is sometimes given to Firewise Communities/USA sites over other candidates when allocations of grant money are made for wildfire safety or fuel mitigation. The reason is that there are invariably more requests than available funds when grants are available through state or federal agencies. If requests are equally worthy, some officials tend to have more confidence in communities that have demonstrated the foresight of becoming a recognized Firewise Communities/USA site.

8. USAA Provides Policyholder Discounts in Seven States:

- California - Policies effective on or after 10/1/2014
- Colorado - Policies effective on or after 5/30/2015
- Texas - Policies effective on or after 6/30/2015
- Arizona - Policies effective on or after 2/15/2016
- Oregon – Policies effective on or after 6/30/2016
- New Mexico - Policies effective on or after 1/1/2017
- Utah - Policies effective on or after 1/5/2017

For more information go to

<http://www.firewise.org/usa-recognition-program.aspx>

