



Wildfire in Colorado

If you live in the mountains, foothills, or grasslands of Colorado you are at risk for wildfires. The increasing number of people moving into these natural environments, is contributing to the growth and development of the wildland/urban interface. The addition of homes in forested areas disrupts the natural fire regime, leads to build-up of vegetation, and potential for large scale wildfires. Fire is a natural process that helps to maintain and promote the health of our forests. Many decades of fire suppression have significantly altered the historical fire regime.

Wildfires occur regularly, whether they are naturally or human caused. So it is not **if** a major wildfire is likely to occur, but **when** and where will the fire burn.

The wildland/urban interface fire problem will continue to grow until the homeowners take responsibility to build and maintain their homes in a FireWise manner. Preparation is the best way to protect your property against destruction by wildfire.

Be A FIREWISE Advocate

Use your house and property as an example of what a defensible space looks like. Invite neighbors over and show them what can be done.

Work in your neighborhood to spread the word about FireWise. Discuss how your neighborhood can work together to prevent a wildfire disaster. Also, create and share an evacuation plan with members of your community (involve your local fire department).

If you would like more information on how to obtain a FireWise wildfire risk assessment, for your home or neighborhood, or just would like to ask some questions please contact:

ARE YOU



Here are **50** things you can do to help protect your home from wildfire.



50 *FIREWISE* Things You Can Do ...to protect your home

No Cost, Just A Little Time.

- Contact someone to perform a FireWise assessment of your home.
- Contact your local Fire Company
- Clean your roof/gutters of leaves/needles.
- Clear the view of your house number so it can be easily seen from the street.
- Put a hose (at least 100' long) on a rack and attach it to an outside faucet.
- Trim all tree branches overhanging your house.
- Trim all tree branches within 15ft. of chimney.
- Rake debris accumulation away from house 15ft. or more.
- Cut back trees/shrubs from shoulder of driveway.
- Trim tree branches overhanging the driveway to a 14ft. vertical clearance for emergency vehicles.
- In fall mow dry grasses to less than 6in. for 30ft. around the house.
- Cut lower branches of trees 7-10ft off the ground within the defensible space.
- Clear deadwood and dense flammable vegetation within the defensible space.
- Remove any wood/flammable materials from underneath decks/balconies.
- Relocate woodpiles at least 30ft. from structures.
- Clear away flammable vegetation within 10 feet of woodpiles.
- Compost leaves, etc.
- Use cut trees/branches for firewood.
- Discuss/plan an escape route with your family.

- Have practice drills. Include all family and pets.
- Check fire extinguishers. Are they charged? Accessible? Does everyone know where they are kept and how to use them?
- Get involved with community mitigation efforts.
- Review your homeowner's insurance policy for adequate coverage.
- Talk to children about fire and matches.
- Larimer County website www..co.larimer.co.us/wildfire/
- Colorado State Forest Service website www.colostate.edu/Depts/CSFS

Minimal Cost Actions \$

- Install visible house numbers on your home (at least 4 inches tall).
- Post house numbers at end of long driveways using non-flammable material.
- Install a spark arrestor or non-flammable screen with mesh less than 1/2 inch on chimneys.
- Cover exterior attic, soffit and underfloor vents using non-flammable screen with mesh less than 1/8 inch.
- Install fire extinguishers in the kitchen and garage.
- Host a neighborhood meeting to talk about mitigation and fire safety.
- Separate an attached wood fence from your house with a metal shield, block pillar or other non-flammable material.

Moderate Cost Actions \$\$

- Build a turn around in your driveway big enough to accommodate an emergency vehicle.
- Modify driveway gates to allow emergency vehicle access. They should be at least 10ft. wide, set back 30ft. from road, accessed easily or lock should be able to be broken if necessary.
- Enclose decks/balconies with fire-resistive materials.
- Replace vinyl gutters/downspouts with non-flammable metal gutters/downspouts.
- Enclose foundations with concrete block or other fire-resistive building material.
- Use fire resistant plants and materials for home landscaping

High Cost Actions \$\$\$

- Replace your roof with fire-resistive materials such as Class A shingles.
- Install a roof irrigation or sprinkler system to protect your home's roof.
- Replace siding or outside walls with fire-resistive or non-combustible materials.
- Replace single-paned windows with double or triple-paned glass.
- Improve road, driveways, and bridges to carry at least 45,000 lbs.
- Relocate propane tanks at least 30ft. from structures, preferably on the same contour.
- Improve your driveway by widening, straightening sharp curves and filling in dips.