



ORACLE FIRE DEPARTMENT



Firewise News

News from Oracle Fire Department to the community . . .

VOLUME VI / ISSUE NO. 1

1475 W. American Ave. • Oracle, AZ

SPRING 2015

Defensible Space? What's that?

Defensible Space is your property's front line defense against wildfire. *Creating and maintaining defensible space around your home can dramatically increase your home's chance of surviving a wildfire and improves the safety of fire-fighters defending your property.*

Three Zones make up your Defensible Space:

ZONE 1: Lean, Green & Clean, Intensive Fuel Reduction Zone.

This is the area immediately surrounding your home within **30 feet** where the area of *maximum* modification and treatment should be done. You should remove all dead grass, plants, and weeds. Remove dead leaves, debris and pine needles from your roof and gutters. Trees here are considered part of the structure, the fewer the better – and at least 10 feet away. Remove "ladder fuels" under tree limbs. Replace close flammable materials with non-flammable decking, decorative stone, and fire-resistant plants.

ZONE 2: Moderate Fuel Reduction Zone.

30-100 feet out. This area depends on the slope of the ground and where the structure is placed. You should cut annual grass down to a max height of 4 inches, create horizontal and vertical spacing between grass, shrubs and trees. Remove stressed, dying trees and shrubs. Thin and prune remaining trees and shrubs and thin at least 10 feet between crowns and under large trees at least 10 feet to remove "ladder fuels."

ZONE 3: Managed Wildland Zone.

This area may extend at least 200 feet out – For larger properties, this area is managed by thinning, depending on species and land objectives. This improves the forest stand by removing dead or dying trees while leaving larger healthier trees. Trails and fire access roads should be pruned.

Property Assessments

Would you like to have your property checked for Home Wildfire Hazard & Security? A qualified member of the OFD support team will be glad to stop by at your convenience to do a home assessment of your home and surrounding area. Some of the elements reviewed are:

1. Your ingress and egress, road widths, accessibility, lot size, street and address signs
2. Vegetation – grasses, trees, brush, timber, hardwoods and defensible space
3. Your topography and slope as well as terrain, local fire and weather conditions in this area
4. Roofing types and condition
5. Building construction and condition
6. Doors, screens, gutters
7. Local fire protection
8. Utilities

The visit will result in a property assessment report that will be sent to you with a rating and suggestions, if needed, on improvement. This rating is only to give you some ideas of how to improve your wildfire vulnerability.

Contact OFD or go on our website to get an Assessment form to request a visit. www.oraclefire.org

Way to Go, Oracle!



The Brush Dump . . . Open All Day, Every Day!

Who knew . . . when we started the Brush Dump we would have so many people using it?

It really has been a major source of revenue to do many things for our firewise community. Besides maintenance & operation of the Brush Dump, we have:

- purchased equipment to assist with emergencies, prevention and education
- purchased & maintained the Emergency Notification System, including Oracle evacuation mapping along with special needs support
- purchased & installed several community AEDs
- provided Prevention Signage
- provided public workshops and education related to safety and prevention of fire risks
- Property Risk Assessments
- worked with & funded CERTs/Firewise training
- supported Preventive Legislative issues
- helped maintain our informative website
- provided financial support for good will services: Santa Claus, ADOT highway cleanup, HOPE week participation, and Oaks Festival participation. . . . Thank You, Oracle residents!

The 2014 BD Numbers: 1827 TOTAL TRIPS

(Includes 33 no/charge or Free Coupon)

Trips per Month:

JAN - 118	JULY - 154
FEB - 104	AUG - 159
MAR - 168	SEPT - 188
APR - 132	OCT - 174
MAY - 179	NOV - 159
JUNE - 210	DEC - 82

We were astounded when we took a look at the annual numbers for 2014.

Good job . . . keep it up!



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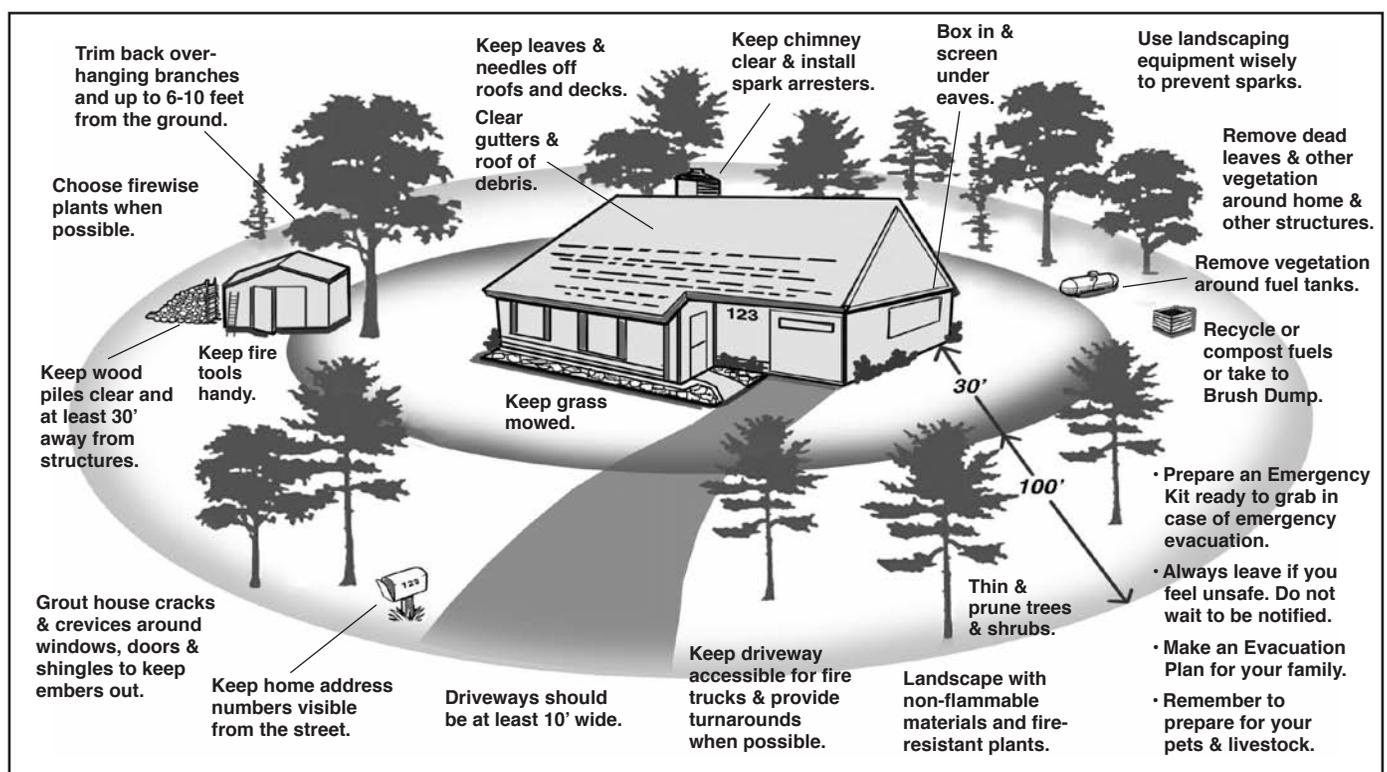
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Learn how YOU can create Defensible Space around your home . . .



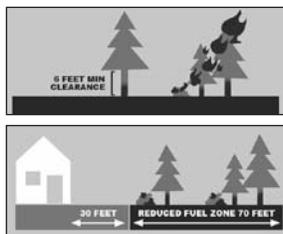
Why 100 feet? . . . While the initial space of 30 feet is a wise move for anyone creating defensible space, the recommended area clearance around homes and structures has now extended to 100 feet. Proper clearance to 100 feet dramatically increases the chance of your house surviving a wildfire. This also provides for firefighter safety when protecting homes.

Defensible Space is YOUR Responsibility . . . BUT WE CAN HELP!



Vertical & Horizontal Spacing

Clearance between shrubs should be 4 to 40 feet depending on the slope of the land and size and type of vegetation. Check the chart below for an estimation of clearance distance.



HORIZONTAL SPACING Create horizontal and vertical spacing between plants, the amount of spacing will depend on how steep the slope is and the size of the plants.

VERTICAL SPACING Large trees do not have to be cut and removed as long as all of the plants beneath them are removed. This eliminates a vertical "fire ladder."

More Tips . . .

Recommendations for Dead Vegetation . . . Removing dried vegetation is important in creating defensible space. Layers of leaves or pine needles for mulch and erosion purposes should be three inches or less.

Breaking Up Continuous Vegetation . . .

The possibility of wildfire increases as the vegetation becomes thicker and the property slope steeper. The steeper the slope, the wider the space should be between trees. Fire jumps from the tree top (crown) to other crowns when trees are close to each other. Break up the space by removing trees and other vegetation carefully to minimize soil erosion.

Ladder Fuels . . . Ladder fuels can be avoided by creating a separation between the plants, shrubs and trees. A vertical separation of three times the height of the lower vegetation is recommended.

Lean, Green and Clean . . . Vegetation around the home should be healthy. Flammable vegetation should be kept at a minimum and well watered. Dead or dried vegetation should be immediately removed.

Vegetation Maintenance . . . Practice the four Rs:

- Remove leaves and litter before fire season leaving only a layer of decomposing plant matter if present.
- Reduce trees and shrubs by pruning as needed.
- Replace fire-prone plants with fire-resistant plants, boulders and decorative rock.
- Relocate firewood, fuel tanks, etc. to at least 30 feet from the home or structure.

Roofing Materials . . . Preferred roofing materials which are more fire resistant include tile, metal and asphalt shingles.

For more information visit: <http://www.firewise.org/co/contruction.html>

Remember the effectiveness of a fire department or firefighters in stopping wildfire starts with YOU!

Survivable Space Checklist

- Has dead vegetation within the recommended space been removed?
- Has continuous dense cover of shrubs and/ or trees been broken up?
- Have "ladder fuels" been removed?
- Is the area surrounding structures "lean & clean" to at least 30 feet?
- Are vegetation and other fuels surrounding structures regularly maintained?
- Is roofing material fire-resistant?



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This publication paid for by a federal grant from Secured Rural Schools, Title III, for Firewise Communities.