

## FIREWISE CONSTRUCTION

To create your firewise structure, remember that the primary goals are fuel and exposure reduction.

- ✓ Use construction materials that are fire-resistant or non-combustible whenever possible.
- ✓ Use shingles such as Class-A asphalt, slate or clay tile, metal, or cement and concrete products for roof construction.
- ✓ Construct a fire-resistant sub-roof for added protection.
- ✓ Use fire resistant materials such as stucco or masonry for exterior walls. These products are much better than vinyl which can soften and melt.
- ✓ Consider both size and materials for windows; smaller panes hold up better in their frames 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 underfloor vents with wire mesh no larger than 1/8 of an inch.
- ✓ Keep your gutters, eaves and roof clear of leaves and other debris.
- ✓ Clear dead wood and dense vegetation within at least 30 feet from your house, and move firewood away from your house or attachments like fences or decks.

Any structure attached to the house, such as decks, porches, fences and sheds should be considered part of the house. These structures can act as fuses or fuel bridges, particularly if constructed from flammable materials.

- ✓ 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 patio deck or elevated porches; screen underneath or box in areas below the deck or porch with wire mesh no larger than 1/8 of an inch.

[www.firewise.org](http://www.firewise.org)

## BEWARE & PREPARE

Over 90% of all wildfires in Wisconsin are caused by people. The number one cause is debris burning.

Firefighters need your help.  
Use these tips to PREPARE your home and PROTECT your family and pets.  
**BEWARE of accidentally starting a wildfire!**

### For more information

**Firewise Communities**  
[www.firewise.org](http://www.firewise.org)

**WDNR, Forest Fire Program**  
[www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/land/forestry/fire](http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/org/land/forestry/fire)

**USDA Forest Service**  
[www.fs.fed.us](http://www.fs.fed.us)

**National Association of State Foresters**  
[www.stateforesters.org](http://www.stateforesters.org)

**National Fire Protection Association**  
[www.nfpa.org](http://www.nfpa.org)

**U.S. Fire Administration**  
[www.usfa.fema.gov](http://www.usfa.fema.gov)

**Federal Emergency Management Agency**  
[www.fema.gov](http://www.fema.gov)

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## FIREWISE LANDSCAPING

To create a landscape that will make your home less vulnerable to wildfire, the primary goal is fuel modification. Think of the area around your home in zones. Zone 1 is closest to structures, Zone 4 is the farthest away.

**Zone 1** The area 3 to 5 feet around structures should be kept free of all flammable materials, including plants. You may want to consider filling in these areas with decorative stone or some other non-flammable material.

**Zone 2** This area encircles structures for at least 30 feet on all sides, providing space for fire suppression equipment in the event of an emergency. This area should be kept mowed short, raked free of fallen leaves and needles, and green throughout the growing season. Plantings should be widely spaced and have more fire-resistant qualities. Remember that deciduous plants, shrubs, and trees are generally more fire-resistant than evergreens.

**Zone 3** This zone extends out 30 to 100 feet beyond structures. Place low-growing plants and well-spaced trees in this area, remembering to keep the volume of vegetation (fuel) low.

**Zone 4** If your home or seasonal residence is in or near a pine plantation, it is important that you maintain the vegetation an additional 100 feet beyond Zone 3. Thin trees and shrubs selectively here, removing highly flammable vegetation.

### Also remember to:

- ✓ Take out the "ladder fuels" - vegetation that serves as a link between grass and tree tops. These fuels can carry fire from vegetation to a structure or from a structure to vegetation.
- ✓ Talk to your neighbors. Wildfire doesn't understand property boundaries.

### When maintaining a landscape:

- ✓ Keep trees pruned six to ten feet from the ground.
- ✓ Water and maintain your lawn regularly.
- ✓ Mow dry grass and weeds.
- ✓ Dispose of cuttings and debris properly - burning should be your **last** alternative!
- ✓ Landscape with less-flammable plants. Contact your local forester, county extension office, or landscape specialist for plant information.

[www.firewise.org](http://www.firewise.org)



## 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 dead leaves, pine needles, dry vegetation, and even stacked firewood.

**Green** - Plant fire-resistive vegetation that is healthy and green throughout the year.



**Defensible Space provides a safety zone around your home.**

## Fire-Resistant Attachments

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

## A Disaster Plan

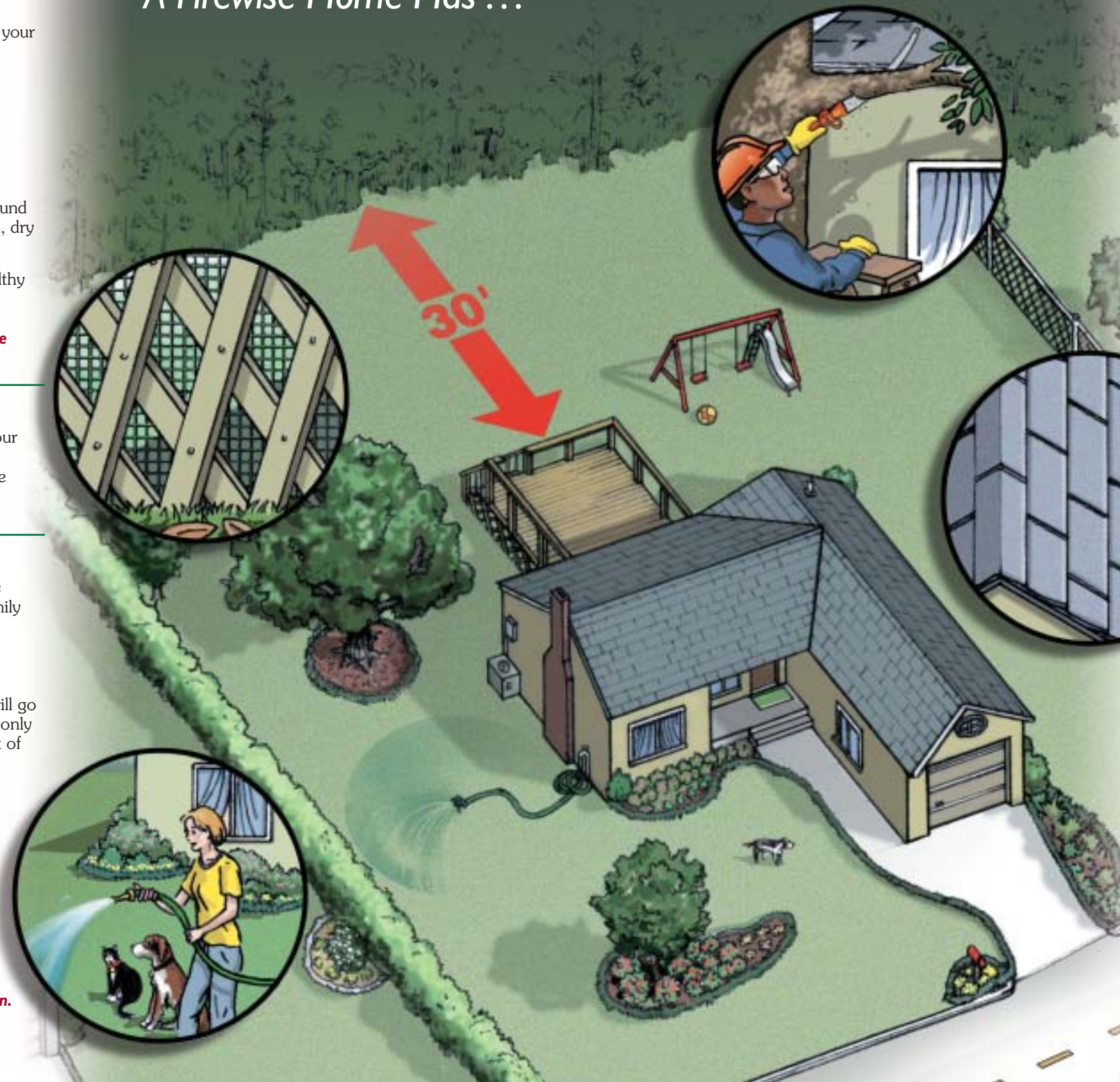
The time to plan for any emergency is prior to the event. Take a few minutes to discuss with your family what actions you will take.

- ✓ 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. With fire, you may only have a moments notice. Two escape routes out of your home and out of your neighborhood are preferable.
- ✓ Have tools available, such as a shovel, rake, axe, handsaw, chainsaw, and 100 feet of garden hose.
- ✓ Maintain an emergency water source.
- ✓ Have a plan for your pets.
- ✓ Practice family fire drills.



**Evacuations for a wildfire can occur without notice; When wildfire conditions exist, be ready to take action.**

# A Firewise Home Has ...



## Lean, Clean and Green Landscaping

With Firewise landscaping, you can create defensible space around your home that reduces your wildfire threat. Large trees should be pruned so that the lowest branches are at least 6 to 10 feet from the ground to prevent a fire on the ground from spreading to the tree tops. Within the defensible space, remove flammable plants that contain resins, oils, and waxes that burn readily: ornamental junipers, cedar, and young pine. Contact your local forester, county extension office, or landscape specialist for more information on which plants are less flammable.



**Although mulch helps retain soil moisture, when dry, it can become flammable. Mulch, as well as all landscaping, should be kept at least 3 to 5 feet from structures and well-watered to prevent it from becoming fire fuel.**

## Fire-Resistant Roof 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.



**Something as simple as making sure that your gutters, eaves and roof are clear of debris will reduce your fire threat.**

## Fire-Resistant Exterior Construction

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.**

## 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 apparatus. Long driveways and driveways with curves may need to be wider than 12 feet.