



HOME-OWNER'S FIRE SAFETY INSPECTION



DURING A WILDFIRE, COULD YOUR HOME “STAND ALONE” WITHOUT FIREFIGHTER PROTECTION?

- A fast-moving fire may reach your home before firefighters arrive.
- During a large fire, more homes will be threatened than there are resources to protect them.
- Every home needing firefighter protection takes firefighters and fire engines away from putting out the fire.

As a resident and/or owner of property near or adjacent to wildland areas, you are required by California’s Public Resources Code (PRC) Section 4291, to maintain a defensible space around your house and other structures. Included are additional requirements under the California Fire Code (CFC), and California Building Code (CBC). Completing these items increases the chances that your home will survive a wildfire, and will reduce the danger to firefighters, neighbors, and surrounding natural resources.

It’s YOUR PROPERTY, YOUR RESPONSIBILITY

FAILURE TO CORRECT VIOLATIONS MAY RESULT IN A CITATION AND FINES OF \$400 OR MORE PER VIOLATION.

The checklist below will help you determine what you need to do to comply with the law and reduce your vulnerability to the threat of wildfire.

- | Yes | No | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <u>ALL STRUCTURES:</u> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | A. Address permanently posted at each driveway entrance, visible from both directions of travel along road. 14 CCR 1274.10(a) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | B. Address numbers: 3” min. height, 3/8” stroke, reflectorized, contrasting with background color of sign. 14 CCR 1274.09 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | C. Propane tanks: remove all flammable material and vegetation 10 feet around and above tank. Large trees may remain. 14 CCR 1299.03(c)(1) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | D. Roofs (and gutters, decks, porches, stairways): remove dead/dying needles, leaves, or other vegetation. PRC 4291(a)(6) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | E. Chimney/stovepipe spark arrestor: cover chimney/stovepipe opening with 3/8”-1/2” mesh screen. 19 CCR 3.07(b)(6) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | F. Chimney/stovepipe opening: remove ALL branches or vegetation within 10 feet of opening. PRC 4291(a)(4). |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | G. Remove all dead or dying trees, branches, shrubs or other plants adjacent to or overhanging buildings. PRC 4291(a)(5) |
| | | <u>WITHIN 30 FEET OF ALL STRUCTURES, decks, stairs, or to the property line, whichever is closest (Defensible Space Zone):</u> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | H. Dead/dying needles, leaves, grass, weeds: Remove ALL , including within and under groundcover vegetation. PRC 4291(a)(1) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | I. Mountain misery/bear clover: remove ALL. PRC 4291(a)(1) |
| | | <u>BETWEEN 30-100 FEET OF ALL STRUCTURES, decks & stairs, or to the property line, whichever is closest (Reduced Fuel Zone)</u> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | J. Mountain misery/bear clover: maintain 4” high or less, and remove all overhanging vegetation 15 feet above. PRC 4291(a)(1) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | K. Dead/dying needles, leaves, grass, weeds: may remain, but must be no more than 4” tall or deep. PRC 4291(a)(1) |
| | | <u>WITHIN 100 FEET OF ALL STRUCTURES, decks * stairs, or to the property line, whichever is closest (Both Zones)</u> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | L. Dead/dying trees or brush: Remove all. Dead branches: remove all from ground level up to 15 feet. PRC 4291(a)(1) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | M.. LIVE brush, shrubs, ground-covers, small trees: thin, prune and space according to table on reverse (remove ALL DEAD material from live vegetation). Remove ___% of live brush; ___% of small trees less than 6 inches in diameter at base. PRC 4291(a)(1) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | N. Mature trees: Prune <u>LIVE branches</u> 6-15 feet from the ground, or 1/3 of tree height for trees less than 18 feet tall. Steep slopes require the highest pruning. See “Guidelines” on reverse, for vegetation under trees. PRC 4291(a)(1) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | O. Logs or stumps embedded in the soil: remove, or clear 10’ around. PRC 4291(a)(1) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | P. Woodpiles: clear 10 feet around and 15 feet above. We recommend moving woodpiles as far as possible from structures, trees, or other vegetation or combustibles during fire season, and covering with fire resistant material. PRC 4291(a)(1) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Q. Other combustible material: remove or clear around and cover with fire resistant material. PRC 4291(a)(1) |

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

Easy to read →

7 9 0 5 8

7
9
0
5
8

Harder to read →

- **Address signs:** Address signs must be visible from both directions of travel. Emergency responders recommend that address signs be placed at right angles to the roadway for best visibility. Signs are easiest to read if the numbers are horizontal rather than vertical. Your Sheriff's Department may carry these signs.
- **Propane tanks:** Non-volatile vegetation or decorative enclosures are allowed if they do not hide the tank's location from firefighters, or impede firefighters' access to the valve assembly. Mature trees, pruned 10 feet above the tank, are allowed.
- **Woodpiles:** During fire season, store firewood as far as possible from structures and overhanging trees. Clear 10 feet around and 15 feet above piles; keep piles free of all needles, leaves, debris. We recommend covering piles with fire resistant material.
- **Other combustible material** (household debris, tires, building material, scrap/recycling products, etc): remove, or clear 10' around and cover with fire-resistant material so wind-driven embers landing on or in this material won't start a fire.
- **Break up continuous masses of vegetation:** separate trees, bushes, and clumps of ground-cover vegetation with cleared areas, according to the table below. For privacy and fire safety, arrange plants in a checkerboard pattern, not solid masses.
- **Ground covers:** remove all dead material within all plants, especially in volatile plants such as **juniper** or **rosemary**. Within 30 feet of structures, remove all dead needles, leaves, weeds within groundcovers (vinca, hypericum/St. John's-wort, etc.).
 - **You may keep** well-maintained and appropriately-watered lawns, ground cover plants, ornamental shrubbery, or native shrubs such as manzanita, and trees, which are well-spaced, well-pruned, completely **free of all dead material**, and which will not spread fire to structures or other vegetation. See "Minimum Horizontal Spacing Guidelines" below.
 - **You may keep** ornamental trees or shrubs which have branches down to the ground, but you must remove all dead material within, beneath and surrounding them.
 - **You may keep** a "continuous forest canopy" (the branches of one tree touch the branches of adjacent trees) **IF** you remove dead branches 15 feet from the ground, and live branches 1/3 of the trees' height (for trees less than 18 feet tall), or at least 6 feet for mature trees **IF** there's no vegetation beneath the tree. If there is vegetation below, see the "Vertical Spacing Guidelines" below. More pruning will provide more protection from wildfires, especially on slopes.

Minimum Horizontal Spacing Guidelines	
SLOPE	SHRUBS, GROUND-COVERS & OTHER ORNAMENTAL PLANTS Space required between clumps of ground-cover plants, bushes, shrubs, small trees. etc.
Flat or gentle slope (0% to 20%)	2 times the height of the plant
Moderate slope (20% to 40%)	4 times the height of the plant
Steep slope (Greater than 40%)	6 times the height of the plant

Vertical Spacing Guidelines for Vegetation Under Trees
Minimum vertical space between tops of lower plants and overhanging limbs should be:
"3 times the height of the lower plant"

PRC §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. Fuels shall be maintained in a condition so that a wildfire burning under average weather conditions would be unlikely to ignite the structure. This paragraph does not apply to single specimens of trees or other vegetation that are well-pruned and maintained so as to effectively manage fuels and not form a means of rapidly transmitting fire from other nearby vegetation to a structure or from a structure to other nearby vegetation. The intensity of fuels management may vary within the 100-foot perimeter of the structure, the most intense being within the first 30 feet around the structure. Consistent with fuels management objectives, steps should be taken to minimize erosion. **For the purposes of this paragraph, "fuel" means any combustible material, including petroleum-based products and wildland fuels.**

- (2) A greater distance than that required under paragraph (1) may be required by state law, local ordinance, rule, or regulation Clearance on adjacent property shall only be conducted following written consent by the adjacent landowner.
- (3) An insurance company that insures an occupied dwelling or occupied structure may require a greater distance than that required under paragraph (1) if a fire expert, designated by the director, provides findings that the clearing is necessary to significantly reduce the risk of transmission of flame or heat sufficient to ignite the structure, and there is no other feasible mitigation measure possible to reduce the risk of ignition or spread of wildfire to the structure. The greater distance may not be beyond the property line unless allowed by state law, local ordinance, rule, or regulation.
- (4) Remove that portion of a tree that extends within 10 feet of the outlet of a chimney or stovepipe.**
- (5) Maintain a tree, shrub, or other plant adjacent to or overhanging a building free of dead or dying wood.**
- (6) Maintain the roof of a structure free of leaves, needles, or other vegetative materials.**

PRC §4119. The department, or its duly authorized agent, shall enforce the state forest and fire laws. The department may inspect all properties, except the interior of dwellings, subject to the state forest and fire laws, for the purpose of ascertaining compliance with such laws.

For more information defensible space clearance requirements, visit www.readyforwildfire.org, or www.fire.ca.gov.