

Fire-wise Landscaping (year round in So Cal)

As the California drought deepens and the hillsides dry out quickly, firewise landscaping is a year-round responsibility. If you live in high fire risk area, it is a question of *when* you will encounter fire not if.

No plants are fire-proof; any plant will burn under the right conditions. However, some landscapes can minimize the heat generated and reduce the ability of fire to travel to structures.

- Keep plants properly watered, especially within 30' of home but do not overwater.
- Use of hard scape materials, such as stone/brick/concrete pathways and patios, and inorganic mulches adjacent to home adds to your fire resistant landscape.
- Prune back tree limbs to 10' from chimney.
- Clear leaves and needles out of gutters and roof valleys.
- Native plants can be used. Some may require trimming up lower branches.
- Eliminate fuel ladders from ground to lower then upper branches.
- Remove invasive plant species, such as, Arundo, castor bean, and ivy.
- Ensure that fuel management activities do not disturb birds' nests, especially hummingbirds', which are walnut-sized and easily overlooked.
- Maintain defensible space around your home. Check with your local fire dept for the required distance.
- Defensible space around your home reduces the risk of fire transmission to your property and allows firefighters safe access around structures.
- Contact local fire dept for further requirements for trimming back vegetation.