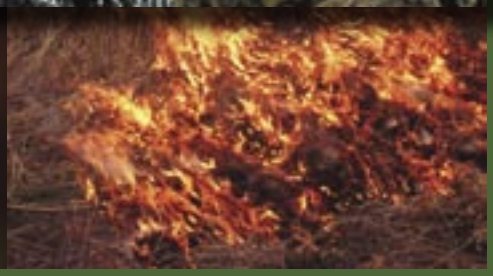
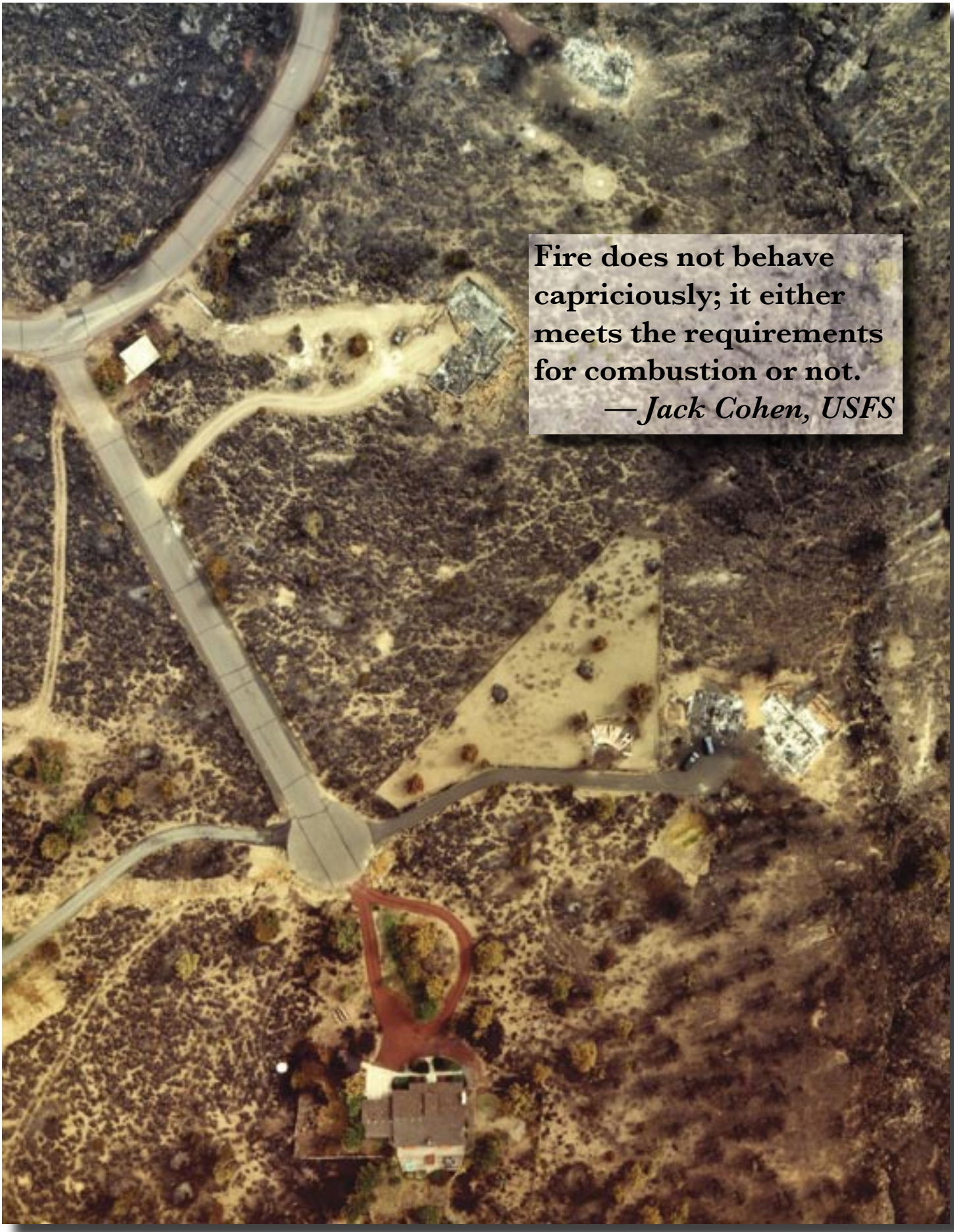
Oregon Forestland-Urban Interface Fire Protection Act

Property Evaluation & Self-Certification Guide

For Deschutes County





SKELETON FIRE, 1996, BEND. ODF PHOTO.
COVER PHOTOS BY ODF & NIFC.

This publication is produced by the Oregon Department of Forestry for the purpose of aiding people who own property within a forestland-urban interface area in Deschutes County. The information within this document is intended to help a property owner evaluate a property and structure's vulnerability to damage or destruction by wildfire, and choose measures which will make a property compliant with the standards of the Oregon Forestland-Urban Interface Fire Protection Act of 1997. Once a property complies with the act's standards, a property owner may certify that his or her property is in compliance by responding with the certification form that accompanied this guidebook.

If you have questions, or need assistance, please call the Oregon Department of Forestry at (541) 549-6761, or write:

Fire Protection Act
Oregon Dept. of Forestry
P.O. Box 190
Sisters, OR 97759

Information is also available online at: www.odf.state.or.us

AUGUST 2004

Contents

The Oregon Forestland-Urban Interface Fire Protection Act

In 1997, the Oregon Legislature passed the Oregon Forestland-Urban Interface Fire Protection Act. The law responded to several escalating problems: wildfires burning homes, firefighters risking their lives in conflagrations, and the rising cost of fire suppression.

The act provides four important steps that lead toward an effective protection system by establishing legislative policy regarding forestland-urban interface fire protection; defining forestland-urban interface areas in Oregon, and establishing a process and system for classifying fire risk in these areas; establishing standards for forestland-urban interface property owners so they can manage or minimize fire hazards and risks; and providing the means for establishing adequate, integrated fire protection systems in forestland-urban interface areas, including education and prevention efforts.

Evaluate your property

Fuel breaks around structures

Research has shown that fuel reduction around a structure can significantly increase the structure's chance of surviving a wildfire.

Fuel, to a wildfire, is anything that can burn — needles, leaves, dry grass, firewood, cedar shake roofing, wood siding, wooden decking. Fuel reduction means to lessen the amount of fuel available to a fire, to increase the distance between fuels, and to insulate fuels so fire can't get to them.

In another way, fuel reduction ***does not*** mean cutting down all trees and shrubs around a structure, or creating a bare-earth ring around a home. It ***does*** mean to arrange trees, shrubs and other fuel sources in a way that makes it difficult for fire to transfer from fuel source to fuel source.

For example, a continuous carpet of ponderosa pine needles is a source of fuel for a fire. If this carpet of pine needles leads, unbroken, from the yard to the underside of a wooden deck, the needles act like a fuse to dynamite. If the wooden deck catches fire, the entire house is jeopardized. However, by raking foot-wide fuel breaks through the carpet of needles, and removing burnable debris from beneath the deck, the fire-transmission problem is dramatically reduced. The fuels have either been dispersed or eliminated.

Fuel reduction in regard to trees and other plants means to favor plants that are fire-resistant, and to reduce — and isolate — plants that are more vulnerable to fire.

When evaluating the area around structures on your property, focus on the first 30-50 feet from the structure's outside walls and think like a fire (see page 13). What will burn easily and spread fire rapidly?

Is the ground cover around the structure green, well-watered lawn? Or is it tall, dry grass? If it is green lawn, it is fire resistant (especially when frequently watered). If it is dry grass, it will ignite easily and carry fire rapidly.

Are the trees fire-resistant species, or are they fire-vulnerable? Ponderosa pine, Douglas-fir and quaking aspen are three fire-resistant species. Western juniper, on the other hand, is fire-vulnerable. In general, favor trees that are mature and in good health. Consider removing trees that are suppressed or damaged, or that can act like a ladder for fire — transferring ground fire to the crowns of taller trees (see page 10). Remember to consider the role a tree may play if fire threatens your property. If the tree is large, healthy and green, it can shield a structure from intense radiant heat and airborne embers. Strongly consider retaining such trees, but help them by removing fuel sources that may transmit flames to their branches and crowns.

Shrubs can help protect taller trees and structures if the plants are fire-resistant, kept in a healthy condition, and are well-watered. Examples of fire-resistant shrubs are Pacific rhododendron, Oregon boxwood and mockorange. Shrubs that are more fire-friendly include bitterbrush, manzanita and ceanothus. Also, ornamental junipers are hazardous because they catch fire easily and create intense flames quickly.

When evaluating trees and shrubs around a structure, take into account the plants' species, health and size. Also, imagine how fire would behave if it were in the yard. Ask yourself:

- will thinning (not eliminating) the trees around the structure help to keep fire from transferring to other trees?
- will thinning shrubs from beneath trees help to keep fire from climbing into the crowns of trees? Or will removing the lower branches of trees accomplish this better?
- are there fire-vulnerable plants next to the house?

One helpful resource about selecting native, fire-resistant landscaping plants is this brochure. To get a copy, write, visit or call:
Deschutes County
Extension Service
Oregon State University
3893 SW Airport Way
Redmond, OR 97756-8697
Phone: (541) 548-6088

The roof

A home's rooftop is a large landing zone for airborne embers and glowing ash — even surprisingly large chunks of cone and slabs of bark — propelled aloft by a nearby wildfire. Accumulations of dry needles, leaves and twigs on a roof can be easily ignited on a summer day. Finding and eliminating rooftop fuels is a big step toward protecting a home against wildfire damage.

Gutters are excellent catchbasins for tree needles and leaves — which, when dried in a few hours of sun, are easily ignitable. Once a gutter fire gets started, the flames can get beneath roofing material — even

nonflammable roofing — and ignite plywood sheathing, tar paper, or the ends of wooden stringers that support tile and slate.

Are there hidden accumulations of dry needles and leaves on the roof? Look in downwind collection points. As wind travels around and over a house, it wraps around rooftops, chimneys and walls. It eddies in sheltered areas and drops whatever it has been carrying. Find these windborne fuel deposits and clear away potentially flammable debris — because the next summer wind could bring hot embers, and the wind will drop them in exactly the same place.

Open attic and soffit vents should be covered so burning debris can't get in. During a wildfire, a blizzard of glowing embers can be unleashed. It doesn't take long before a quantity of this hot stuff finds it way through attic openings, and settles down to start fires in the very dry lumber supporting your roof. Firefighters may overlook a germinating attic fire — their attention occupied with more visible fires at the ground level. It may take hours before an attic fire becomes visible, but by that time it is often too late to save the home from severe damage.

Last but not least, assess the flammability of your home's roof covering. If the material is metal, tile or slate, it will be nonflammable. Asphalt shingles are also resistant to burning. Untreated cedar shakes, conversely, are highly flammable.

Wind and slope

If your home sits on a slope, pay particular attention to fuels on the downhill side of the house because fire burns rapidly upslope. Take note, too, of the prevailing wind direction during the hot months of summer. If a hot summer wind could push a fire toward your house, you'll likely want to increase your fuel reduction efforts on the upwind side of your home.

Likewise for homes sited on a steep slope, the fuel reduction emphasis should be on the downslope side of the home.

Access

Firefighters can't defend a home against a wildfire if they can't get to the home. The driveway is an important factor in helping firefighters in their endeavor to protect your home.

Is your driveway able to accommodate a fire truck? The minimum width necessary is 12 feet, and the minimum overhead clearance is 13 ½ feet. Clearing away excess brush and tree branches also helps firefighters see up the driveway. If they can see where they're going, firefighters can be more certain that they have a safe environment to make a stand against the wildfire.

The driveway is also important for the residents. Oftentimes, when a large wildfire threatens homes, the residents are asked to evacuate the area. Once an area is evacuated, firefighters are able to perform their tasks without having to worry about residents becoming trapped by the flames. However, if residents are unable to leave their homes because escape routes are blocked or otherwise unusable, then residents may have little choice but to stay home.

If you have a long driveway and it is bordered by thickets of trees and brush, strongly consider these actions:

- meet or exceed the driveway and structure fuel break requirements of the Oregon Forestland-Urban Interface Fire Protection Act
- meet or exceed the act's standards for primary and secondary fuel breaks around structures on your property
- invite a member of your local fire department to evaluate your driveway and the area surrounding your home for access and defensibility.

Other considerations

Well-established and maintained fuel breaks around structures and driveways are strong steps toward protecting your home and property against severe wildfire damage. Here are some additional steps that will make your home and the area around it more fire-resistant:

- cover under-deck openings with screening or skirting
- move firewood and lumber piles away from structures, or fully enclose the piles
- remove dead branches overhanging the roof, and clear all branches away from chimneys

Also ...

- develop a water source that isn't dependent on municipal power for flow and pressure
- employ fire prevention practices and follow local restrictions when burning debris
- dispose of fireplace and barbecue ashes in a safe place
- keep hoses and sprinklers where you can easily find them, and decide where to set them up to do the most good (i.e. on top of a cedar shake roof, or a wooden deck)
- practice what you and your family will do, and where you will go, in a fire emergency
- follow American Red Cross guidelines for packing an emergency survival kit
- if you have pets or livestock, plan how to care for them during a fire emergency, or find out whether there is an animal evacuation center in your area
- review insurance policies you have purchased on your home and its contents. What are the conditions for replacement? Are the dollar amounts sufficient to rebuild?

Planning for a fire emergency will help to keep it from turning into a disaster.

BRIAN BALLOU

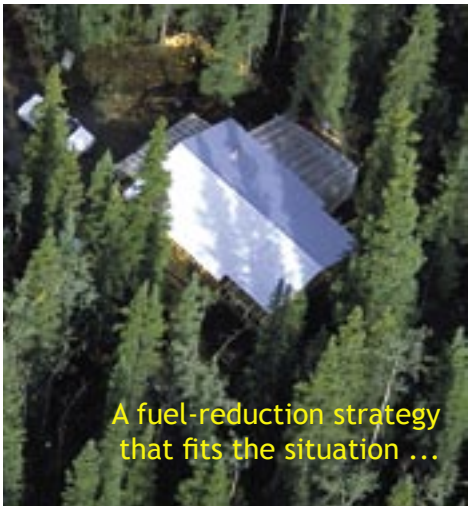
The fuel-reduction standards

There are three categories of standards to choose from to satisfy the fuel reduction goals of the Oregon Forestland-Urban Interface Fire Protection Act. The Default and Optional standards prescribe fuel reduction steps to take to make a structure and its surrounding landscape more fire-resistant. Review the steps for each set of standards on the following pages to decide which standards will work best for you and your situation.

Alternate standards are a unique plan to be developed between a property owner and the Oregon Department of Forestry. Essentially, Alternate standards are steps that a property owner will take to meet the same goals of the other standards, but in a manner that better suits the property.

The Default, Optional and Alternate standards may be applied to any property with structures. Only the Default standards may be applied to a property without structures.

If after reviewing the standards you feel unsure about which standards to follow, consult with an Oregon Department of Forestry fire prevention advisor, or secure the services of an accredited assessor. These people can advise you about the best course of action to take.



A fuel-reduction strategy that fits the situation ...

... can keep a fire emergency from becoming a disaster

NIFC

Default Standards

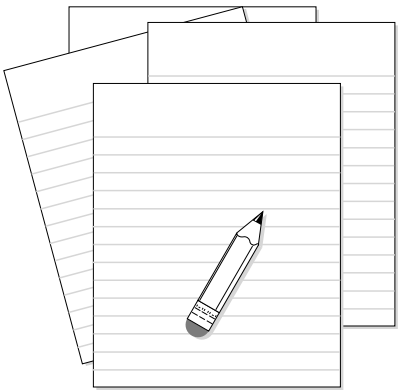
- Establish a fuel break around structures
- Improve driveway access for fire trucks
- Remove tree branches near chimneys
- Remove dead branches overhanging a roof
- Move firewood away from structures, or cover it
- Remove flammables from under decks and stairways
- Create fuel breaks along roadsides and property lines [1]

Optional Standards

- Establish a primary fuel break around structures
- Create fuel breaks along roadsides and property lines [2]
  - Option 1: Make structures fire resistant
  - Option 2: Extend fuel breaks around structures
  - Option 3: Improve access for fire trucks
  - Option 4: Reduce ignition risks on property

Alternate Standards

- A unique fuel-reduction plan



1. Applies only to properties with a fire-risk classification of High-Density Extreme.

2. Applies only to properties with a structure and a fire-risk classification of High-Density Extreme.

Default standards

Following the steps described in the Default standards will make a home and its surrounding property less vulnerable to damage or destruction by a wildfire. It will also make a property eligible for certification under the Oregon Forestland-Urban Interface Fire Protection Act.

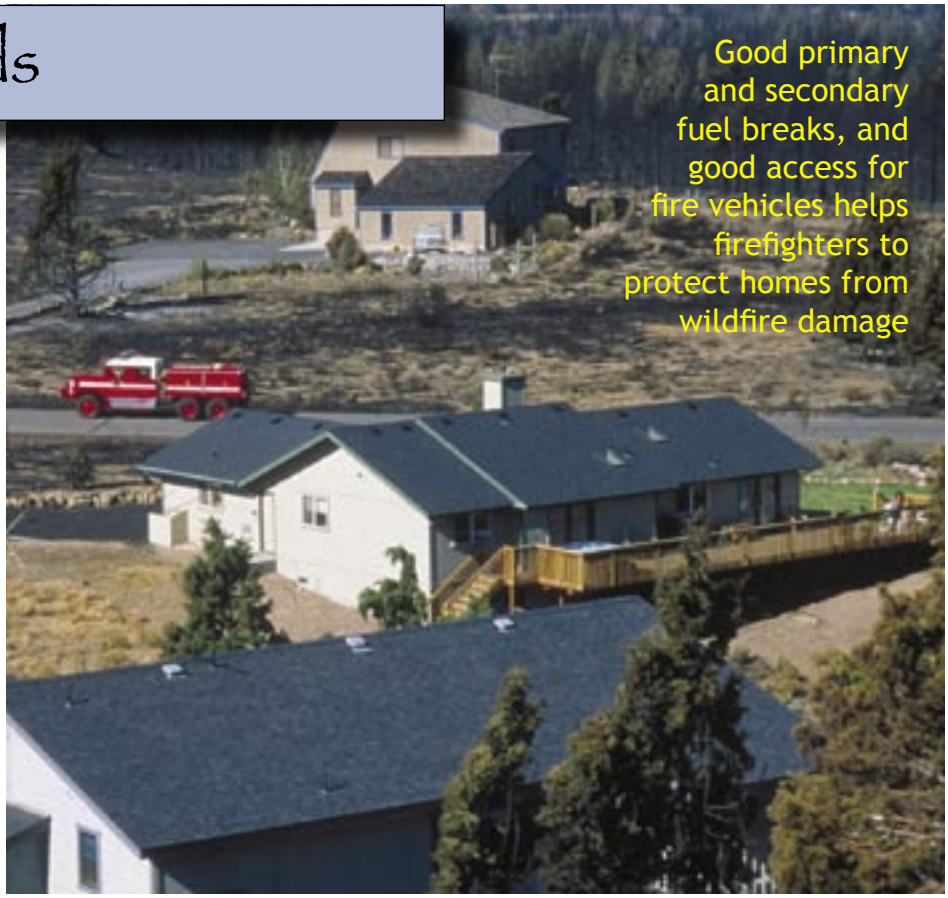
If at any point you find that the Default standards cannot be applied to your situation, or a different approach will provide better protection, you may instead choose the Optional or Alternate standards.

Default standards Step 1: Establish a 30-foot primary fuel break around the home, and any other structures on the property. Find out more about creating a primary fuel break on page 8.

Step 2: Determine whether a secondary fuel break is necessary. There are two determining factors: a property's fire-risk classification and whether the roofing material on the structure is of flammable or nonflammable material. See the "Secondary fuel break table" on page 9.

Step 3: Determine whether it is necessary to create a fuel break around the driveway. If the driveway on the property is shorter than 150 feet, a fuel break does not need to be created. If the driveway is 150 feet long or longer, a fuel break must be established. The driveway fuel break standards are on page 14.

Steps 4 & 5: Remove any portion of a tree that is within 10 feet of a chimney, and remove all dead vegetative material overhanging the roof. Read more on page 15.



Good primary and secondary fuel breaks, and good access for fire vehicles helps firefighters to protect homes from wildfire damage

NIFC

Step 6: Clear flammable material out from beneath decks. More details are available on page 16.

Step 7: Move firewood and lumber piles at least 20 feet from structures. This must only be done during the months of fire season. See page 17.

Step 8: Create fuel breaks along roadsides and property lines. This step applies only to properties with a fire-risk classification of High-Density Extreme.

Once all of the Default standards are satisfied, a property can be certified.

Roofing: is it flammable or nonflammable?

Examples of nonflammable roofing material are:

- slate
- ceramic tile
- composition asphalt
- metal

NIFC

Untreated cedar shakes and shingles are flammable.

BRIAN BALLOU

Primary fuel break

The first step in both the Default and the Optional standards is to establish a 30-foot primary fuel break around structures.

A correctly developed fuel break should slow the rate of spread and the intensity of an advancing wildfire, and create an area in which fire suppression operations may safely occur.

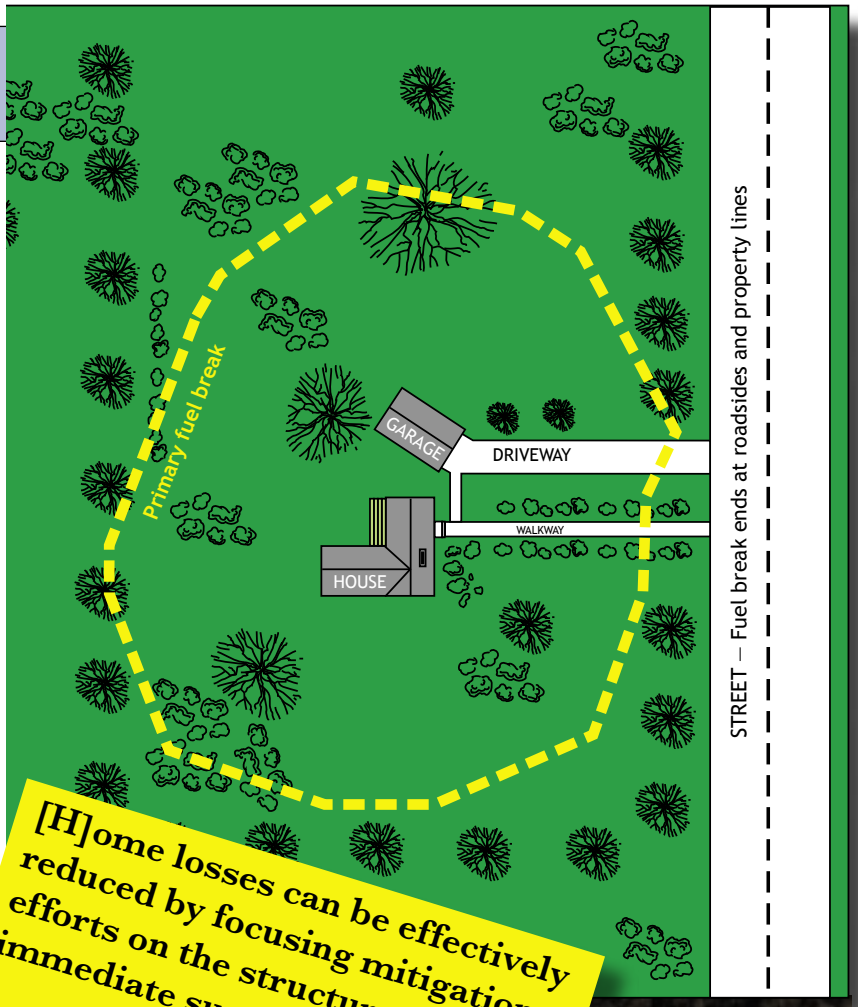
The primary fuel break begins at the outside edge of a structure's furthest extension. This may be the edge of the roof eave, or the outside edge of a deck attached to the structure. The shape of the fuel break mirrors the footprint shape of the structure and anything that is attached to it.

Fuel break distances are measured along the slope. No fuel break needs to extend beyond the property line.

The fuel break may use natural firebreaks, such as a rock outcropping or a water body, or it can be completely man-made.

In the primary fuel break zone:

- Ground cover should be substantially non-flammable. Examples of this include asphalt, bare soil, clover, concrete, green grass, ivy, mulches, rock, succulent ground cover or wildflowers.
- Dry grass should be cut to a height of less than four inches.
- Cut grass, leaves, needles, twigs and similar small vegetative debris should be broken up so that a continuous fuel bed is not created.
- Shrubs and trees should be maintained in a green condition, be substantially free of dead plant material, and have any potential "ladder fuels" removed.
- Trees and shrubs should also be arranged so that fire cannot spread or jump from plant to plant. Some thinning may be necessary to accomplish this.



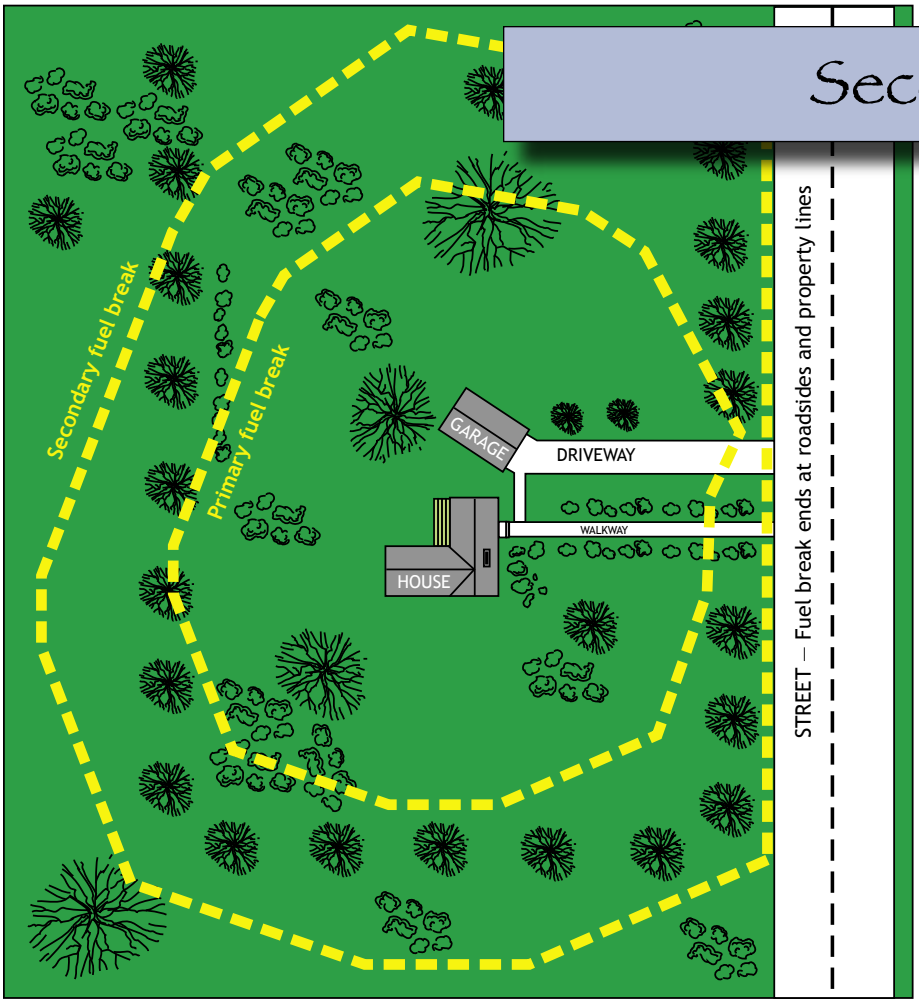
[H]ome losses can be effectively reduced by focusing mitigation efforts on the structure and its immediate surroundings.
—Jack Cohen, USFS

BRIAN BALLOU

AVOID INVASION!

Keep noxious weeds off your property. Learn to identify them and remove them whenever you find them. Treat bare soil areas with weed-free seed to deprive noxious weeds of growing space. For more information, contact the Deschutes County Extension Service at (541) 548-6088.

Secondary fuel break



The secondary fuel break increases a structure's distance from potentially flammable natural vegetation. It also helps to create a safer zone for firefighters to operate in. The added fuel break distance will also create an emergency safety zone for residents who may have to stay at home during a wildfire emergency.

The secondary fuel break begins where the primary fuel break ends and continues an additional 20-70 feet (depending on your property's fire-risk classification and the type of roofing on the structure), or to the property line. See the "Secondary fuel break table" below to determine how big the secondary fuel break needs to be on your property.

Characteristics of the secondary fuel break include shrubs or trees that are:

- green and healthy
- substantially free of dead branches
- pruned where necessary to keep fire from "laddering" into tree crowns
- thinned to whatever degree necessary to prevent fire from transferring from plant to plant.

Secondary fuel break table

1. Fire-risk classification	2. Nonflammable roofing material	3. Flammable roofing material
Low	None	None
Moderate	None	None
High	None	20 feet
Extreme & High-Density Extreme	20 feet	70 feet

To use this table, find your property's fire-risk classification in column 1. If the structure on the property has nonflammable roofing, find the value in column 2 that is on the same line as your fire-risk classification. If the structure has flammable roofing, use the values in column 3.

NIFC

Properly constructed primary and secondary fuel breaks help keep fire on the ground (above) where firefighters can work to safely contain it.

A secondary fuel break adds distance between flames and a house. A fuel break that is too small is little defense against a forest fire's intense heat (left).

Ladder fuels

To keep fire out of tree crowns, it is necessary to disrupt a fire's pathway to branches, needles and leaves. The strategic removal of lower tree limbs — which act like rungs of a ladder that a fire can climb — can make the difference between a scorched trunk and a tree stripped of all foliage.

OSU EXTENSION

NIFC

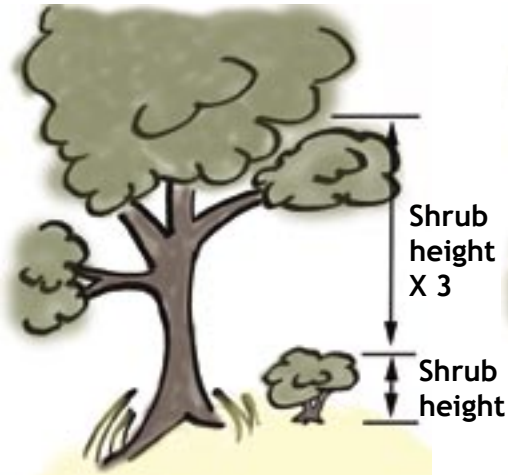
Most wildfires start on the ground in the smallest fuels — needles, leaves and dry grass. Fire will continue to spread upward — up a hill, up a tree — unless pathways to fresh fuel are interrupted (left). Removing ladder fuels helps to keep fire on the ground, where it is manageable, rather than in the tree crowns, where fire is difficult to control.

How high can flames fly?

About three times higher than the height of the plant that is burning.

Shrub or tree height	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Ladder fuel pruning height	3	6	9	12	15	18	21	24	27

All measurements in feet

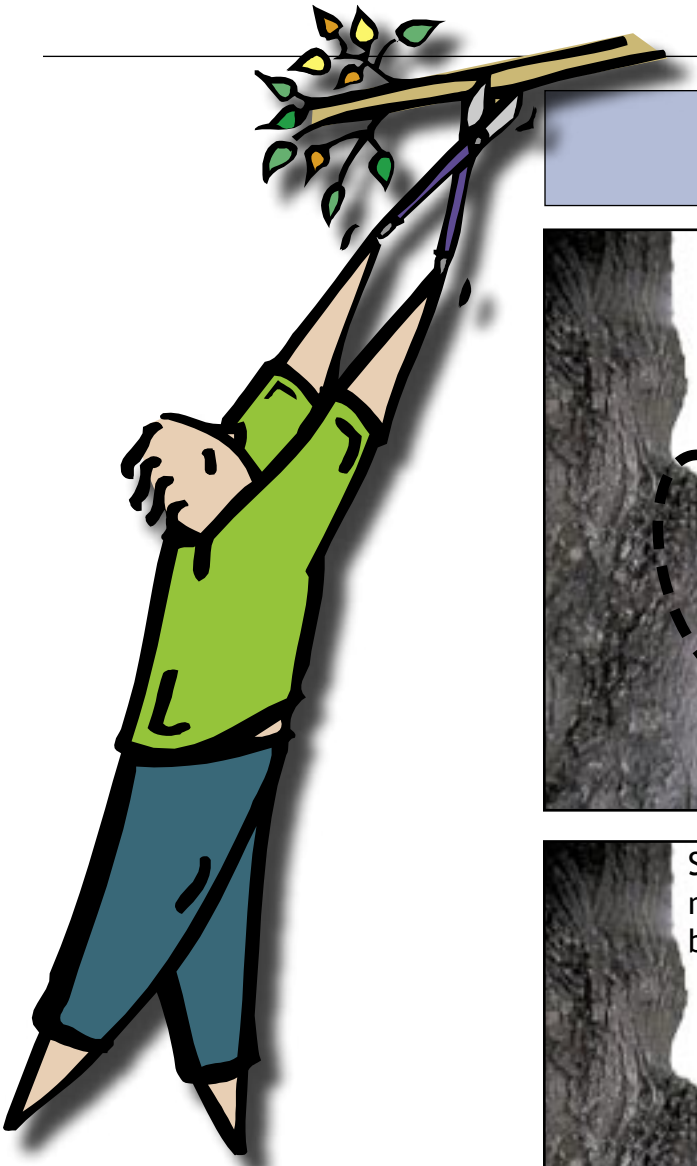


Ladder fuel trim zone: Shrub height X 3

Option 1: Remove tree limbs within the trim zone

Option 2: Remove the shrub

Pruning tips



Pruning Do's

Remove live branches from hardwood trees during late winter or early spring, when the tree is dormant.

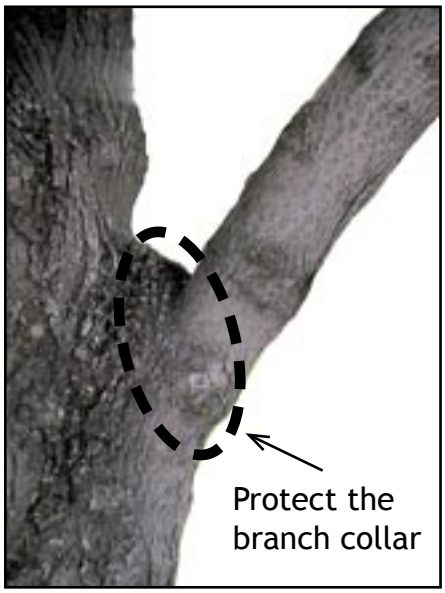
Conifer trees may be limbed any time, except during early summer.

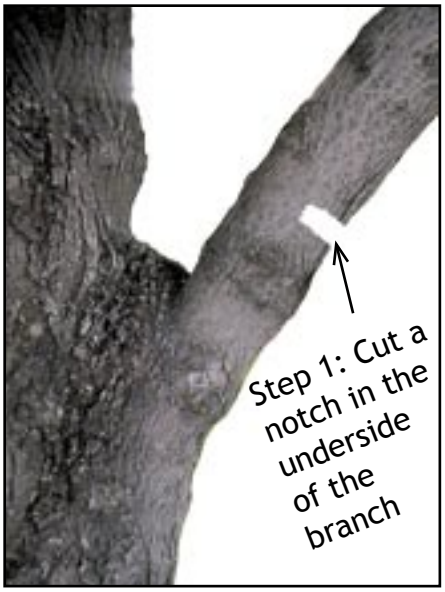
When deciding which live branches to remove, first choose those with poor health or little green foliage.

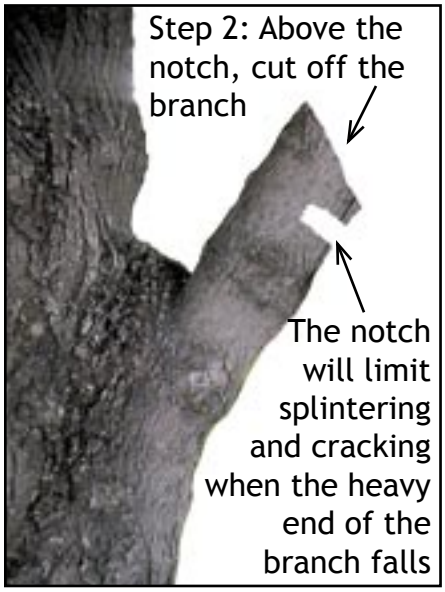
Next, choose branches that are damaged, misshapen, or interfering with other branches.

Remove dead branches any time of the year.

Use sharp tools and make clean cuts.







Pruning Don'ts

Painting wound dressing on pruning cuts is unnecessary and can actually hurt the tree by causing the pruning cut to seal slower.

Cutting branches flush with the trunk will rob the tree of natural chemicals used to close the wound. This will lead to decay in the tree.

Never remove more than one-third of a tree's live crown.

BRIAN BALLOU

Thinning basics

The purpose of thinning trees and shrubs is to reduce the likelihood that fire will jump from plant to plant. Once a fire's ability to transfer to other plants is reduced, it will quickly and dramatically lose intensity.

When choosing which trees or shrubs to remove, choose the ones that have the poorest vigor. Signs of poor vigor include numerous bare or spindly branches, poor color in the leaves or needles, and evidence of parasites, such as insects or fungus.

ODF

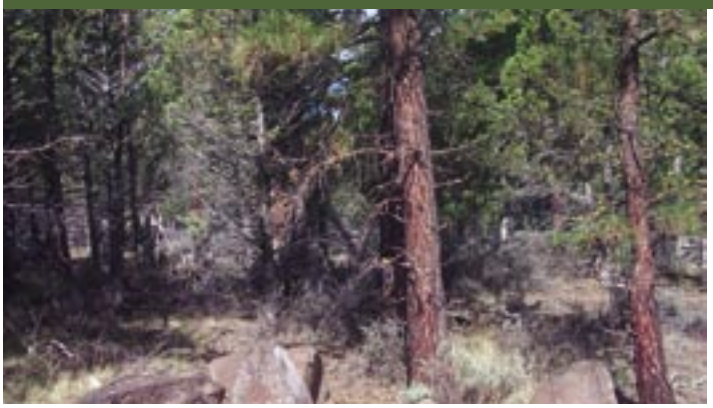
Trees and brush growing tightly together can create a fire-friendly environment. Thinning trees and shrubs — and pruning potential ladder fuels — limits a fire's ability to jump from plant to plant, and from the ground to the trees' crowns.

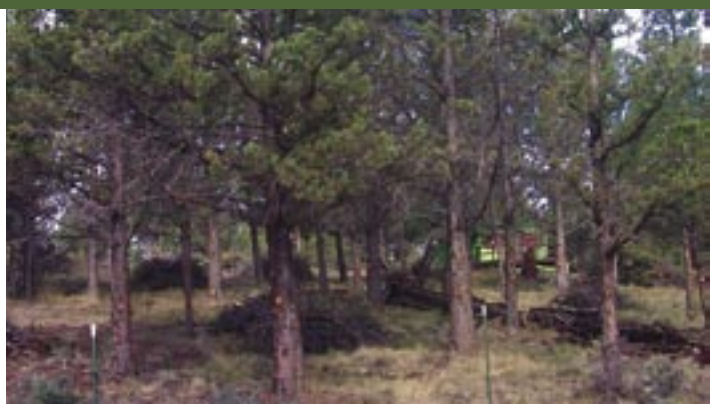
ODF

No moonscaping

Thinning is good but don't overdo it. Healthy trees can shield a home from airborne firebrands. If you aren't sure what to cut, consult a forester or tree care professional before using the saw.

A dense stand of trees and brush can burn intensely. This stand becomes less of a fire-risk problem after lower tree limbs are pruned, the brush is thinned, and suppressed trees are removed. The remaining trees will thrive — and likely survive a fire.





ODF X 2

Fire needs three fundamental elements for it to occur:

1. There must be fuel
2. There must be oxygen
3. There must be heat

Remove any one of these elements and fire will go out — or fail to start.

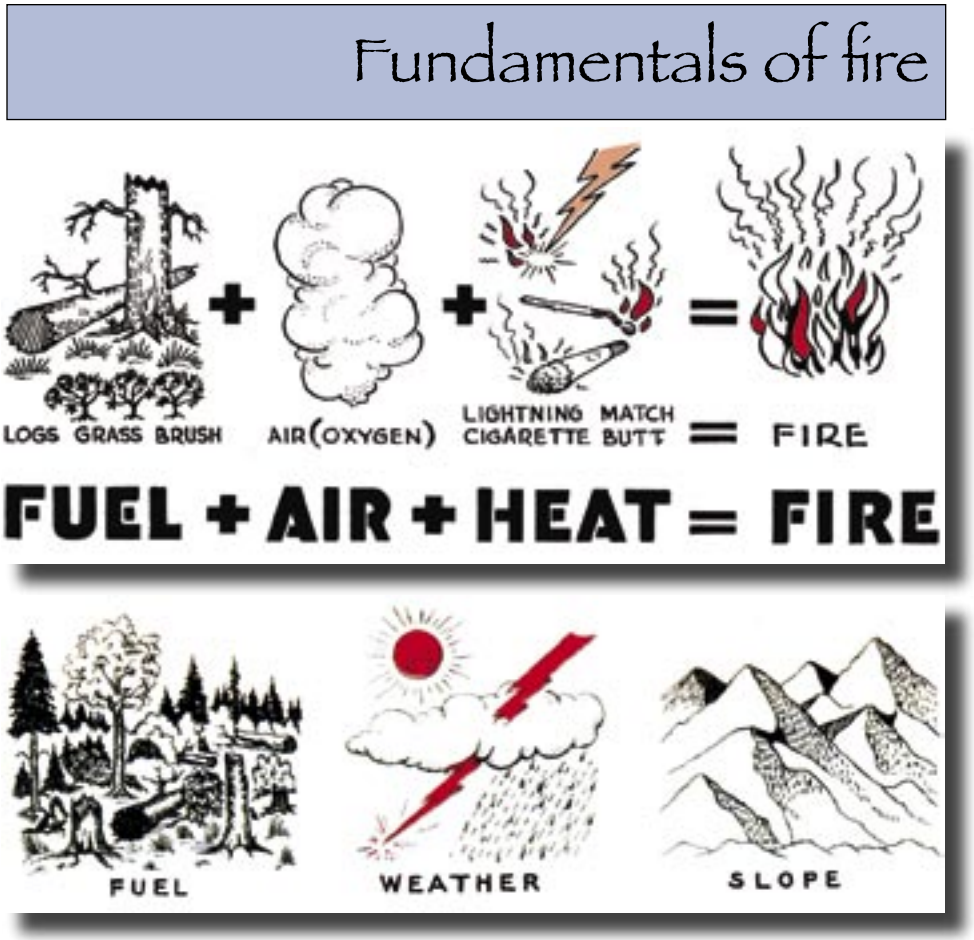
Since you cannot control the amount of oxygen in the atmosphere, and have limited control over natural sources of heat (such as lightning), it becomes all the more important to focus on the element you can control: fuel.

A fire's behavior — how it moves — is also controlled by elements in its environment. Basically, fire behavior is influenced by:

1. Available fuel
2. Weather factors, such as sun and wind
3. Topography

You cannot change the weather, and — in most cases — you can't flatten mountains or fill in valleys. But you can control the amount of fuel available to a fire.

The common denominator in the fundamentals of fire and the fundamentals of fire behavior is fuel. This is something that you can control that will reduce the likelihood of a fire starting and spreading.



Common denominator = fuel

ODF

1. What sources of fuel for a fire do you see in this photo?

A. Tall, dry grass
B. Wooden deck
C. Shake roofing
D. Wooden siding
E. Wooden posts
F. Trees
G. Pine needles
H. All of the above

2. Which fuel is of <u>greatest</u> concern?

3. Which fuel is of <u>least</u> concern?

Pop Quiz Answers: 1 - H. Nearly everything in this photo will burn, except the metal ladder and the metal vent pipes. The glass won't burn, but it will burst – letting fire into the house – especially if the deck catches fire. **2 - C.** The shake roof is this home's greatest liability. Firebrands from a wildfire a mile away could set this house on fire, and the resulting intense fire could burn the house to its foundation in minutes. **3 - F.** The trees are of least concern. Green, healthy tree crowns can protect a roof from airborne sparks and firebrands. These trees have had their lower branches removed, making them less likely to transfer fire from the ground to the crowns.

Driveway fuel break

The driveway fuel break is intended to create clearance for a fire truck, as well as to slow the rate of spread and intensity of a wildland fire. It also is where fire suppression may more safely occur.

The clearance space in the driving area must meet these specifications:

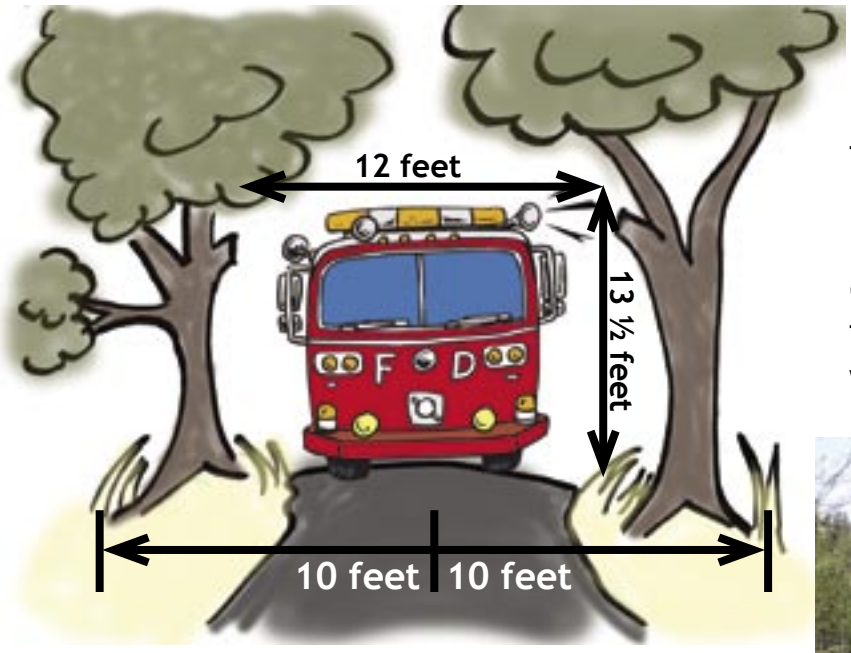
- the horizontal clearance must be at least 12 feet
- the vertical clearance must be at least 13 ½ feet

The fuel break can be natural or man-made and must have these characteristics:

- the fuel break must extend 10 feet from each side of the driveway's centerline, creating an area that is at least 20 feet wide, including the driving surface
- the ground cover must be substantially nonflammable, as detailed in the section about the primary fuel break on page 8
- healthy trees and shrubs must be thinned and pruned to minimize a wildfire's spread
- the plants must be substantially free of dead material
- for further guidance, see the secondary fuel break, ladder fuel and thinning sections on pages 9, 10 and 12

NIFC

Standards for driveways apply to driveways longer than 150 feet. If you have a long driveway, you'll need to make sure a fire truck can fit beneath limbs and between trees and shrubs, and create a roadside fuel break so firefighters will have a safe place in which to set up and work.



A properly developed driveway fuel break has plenty of horizontal and vertical clearance.

ODF

Roof and chimney clearance

Sparks from a chimney connected to a fireplace or wood-burning stove could catch tree branches on fire. To reduce the chance of this happening, trim all branches ten feet away from a chimney that vents a wood-burning fireplace or stove.

BRIAN BALLOU

All dead branches overhanging any portion of the roof must be removed. Dead wood catches fire easier than live, green wood. Airborne embers could cause dead branches to ignite, starting a crown fire in the trees above your home's roof, or dropping burning debris onto your roof's surface.

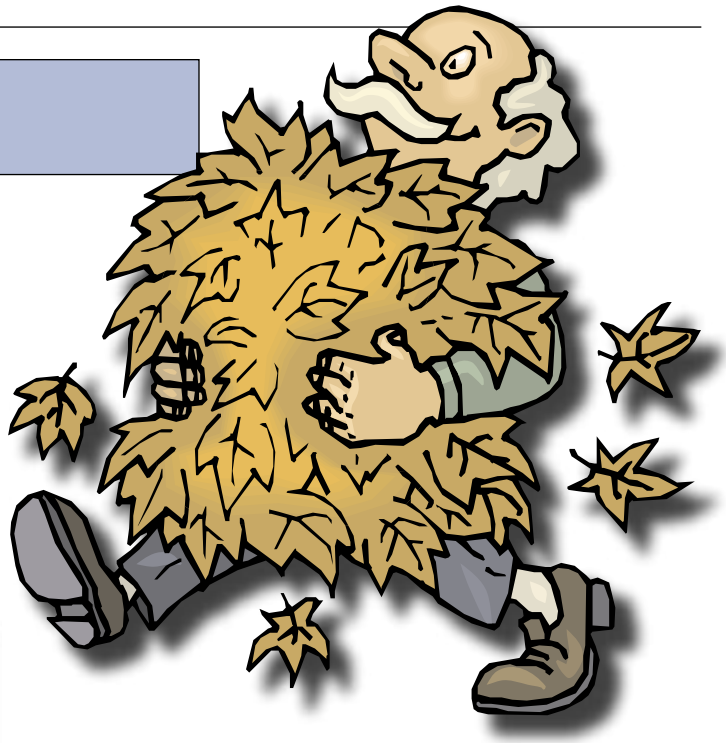
Trimming limbs hanging over the roof can be dangerous. Consider hiring a certified arborist or tree care professional for this job.

Under-deck flammables

A burning wooden deck or stairway may catch the rest of the house on fire. The best way to keep that from happening is to clean flammable material out from beneath exterior wooden decks and stairways.

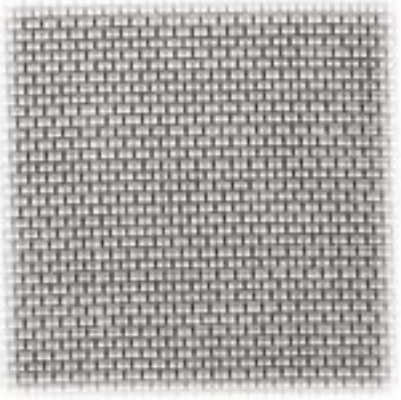
Firewood and lumber need to be removed. Dry needles, leaves and other litter needs to be raked out and removed.

Keeping the space under wooden decks and stairways clean — and enclosed — is one of the best ways to keep a house safe during fire season.



NIFC

Removing flammable debris from under a deck is only half the battle. Keeping this debris out is the other half. Metal screen, with 1/4-inch mesh or smaller, will help keep needles, leaves and other potential fuels from accumulating in hidden places. Screening, or skirting, will also help to keep out hot ash, airborne embers, and other fire-causing debris.



A forest fire like this one (☞) can send tons of glowing debris skyward. If your property is downwind of an inferno like this, expect lots of hot stuff to land in your yard and on your roof, and to drift under your deck.

ODF

Firewood pile location

Firewood stacked next to a house (illustration 1) is a ready source of ignition and can become a source of intense, sustained heat if it should catch fire. This could ignite the house's siding or eaves, and cause the windows to break, allowing fire to enter the house.

To eliminate this problem, either move the firewood 20 feet from the house (2) during fire season, or build an enclosure around the firewood (3).

BRIAN BALLOU

BRIAN BALLOU

A bit more distance, please.
A flaming firewood pile that's too close to a home (left) could catch the wood siding on fire and blow out windows — giving fire access to the home's interior. Twenty feet of open space between the firewood pile and the house will greatly help the home outlive the firewood pile.

Roadside & property line fuel breaks

ODF

Properties with a fire-risk classification of "High-Density Extreme" must have fuel breaks along all property lines and roadsides. This is to reduce the potential of a wildfire crossing from a neighboring property onto your property, and vice versa. These fuel breaks will also act as safety zones for firefighters working to defend homes and properties against wildfire damage.

A roadside fuel break:

- begins at the edge of any road that is adjacent to or runs through the property
- extends for a distance of at least 20 feet from the roadside, or to the property line, whichever is shortest

A property line fuel break:

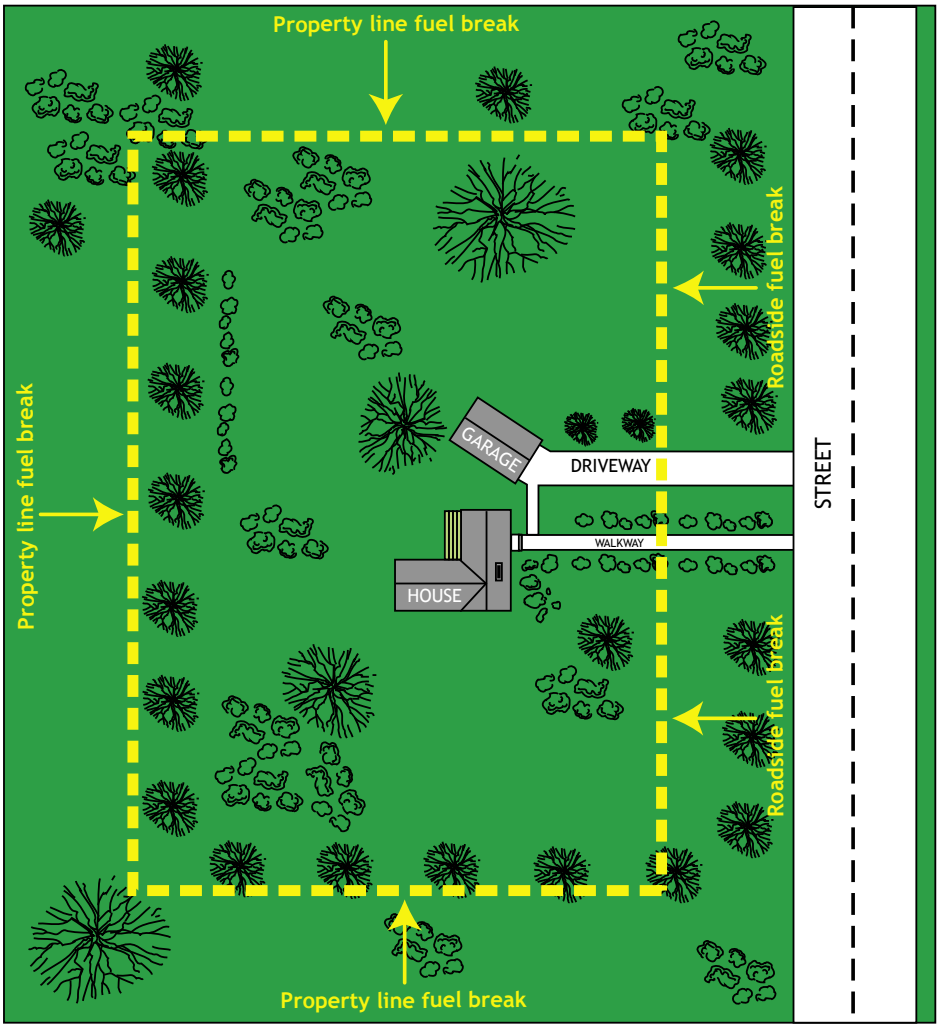
- begins at the boundary with an adjacent property
- extends for at least 20 feet from the boundary, or to another property line, whichever is shortest

The distance for both the roadside fuel break and property line fuel break shall be measured along the slope.

Natural features, such as rockfields and water bodies, may be incorporated into fuel breaks.

In general, the fuel breaks shall have these characteristics:

- ground cover will be substantially nonflammable; that is, the ground shall be covered with nonflammable material, such as asphalt or concrete, or covered with fire-resistant plants, such as green grass, ivy or wildflowers
- dry grass shall be mowed to a height of four inches or lower
- areas of continuous cut dry grass, leaves, needles and other fine, dry natural fuel shall be broken up or separated with fuel breaks to disallow the transfer of fire
- trees and shrubs shall be green and healthy, and free of dead vegetative material
- potential ladder fuels shall be removed (see page 10)
- trees and shrubs shall be thinned to an extent that the potential transfer of fire from one plant to another is disrupted (see page 12)



Optional standards

In the event that the Default standards cannot be applied to your property, then the Optional standards may better suit your situation. If neither the Default nor the Optional standards are suitable for your property, then an Alternate standards plan must be written (see page 22).

The Optional standards may be applied to properties that have a structure. In all cases, a 30-foot primary fuel break must be developed around structures. Properties rated "High-Density Extreme" must develop 20-foot-wide fuel breaks along roadsides and property lines.

The minimum number of options that must be employed depends on the property's fire-risk classification. A property rated "High" must employ at least two of the options. Properties rated "Extreme" or "High-Density Extreme" must employ at least three of the options.

Primary fuel break

The primary fuel break is required of everyone who chooses to follow the Optional standards. The characteristics of the primary fuel break are:

- the fuel break must extend 30 feet from a structure's furthest extension
- the ground cover must be substantially nonflammable, and dry grass must be mowed to a height of 4 inches or shorter
- trees and shrubs must be green and healthy, substantially free of dead branches and other material, pruned where necessary to deter fire laddering, and thinned to whatever degree necessary to prevent fire from transferring from plant to plant

See more about creating a primary fuel break on page 8.

PHOTO BY ANDREA BOOHER/FEMA

Roadside and property line fuel breaks

Properties classified "High-Density Extreme" must have fuel breaks along property lines and roadsides. These fuel breaks must be at least 20 feet wide. In general, the guidelines for these fuel breaks are the same as for fuel breaks around structures:

- the fuel breaks will slow a wildfire's rate of spread
- they will also reduce a wildfire's intensity
- the ground cover in the fuel breaks will be substantially nonflammable
- trees and shrubs within the fuel breaks will be maintained in a green, healthy condition and kept substantially free of dead plant material

See more about developing fuel breaks along roadsides and property lines on page 18.

Secondary fuel break option

The secondary fuel break option is to increase a structure's distance from potentially flammable natural vegetation. The secondary fuel break begins where the primary fuel break ends and continues for an additional 20 feet, or to the property line. Characteristics of the secondary fuel break include shrubs or trees that are

- green and healthy
- substantially free of dead branches and other material
- pruned where necessary to deter fire laddering
- thinned to whatever degree necessary to prevent fire from transferring from plant to plant

See more about developing a secondary fuel break on page 9.

Wildfire-safe access option

The wildfire-safe access option is intended to create horizontal and vertical clearance to accommodate a fire truck. This option also requires a fuel break adjacent to the driveway. The standards require:

- horizontal clearance above the driving surface to a width of 12 feet, and vertical clearance to a height of 13 ½ feet
- a fuel break that extends 10 feet from each side of the driveway's centerline
- in the fuel break, the ground cover must be substantially nonflammable, and dry grass must be mowed to a height of 4 inches or shorter
- trees and shrubs must be green and healthy, substantially free of dead branches and other material, pruned where necessary to deter fire laddering, and thinned to whatever degree necessary to prevent fire from transferring from plant to plant

For more information creating a driveway fuel break, see page 14.

See more options on pages 20 & 21.

Fire-resistant structures

The standards of this option are intended to significantly reduce the chance that a structure will incur damage from a wildfire.

To meet this standard, a structure must have:

- nonflammable roofing material
- exterior openings, such as attic vents and the undersides of decks, covered with metal screen having a mesh no larger than ¼ inch
- potentially flammable debris cleared from beneath all attachments to the structure, such as decks and porches (see page 16)
- tree limbs within 10 feet of a chimney or stovepipe, and dead vegetation overhanging the structure, removed (see page 15)
- firewood and lumber piles moved 20 feet from the structure during fire season, or the piles must be fully enclosed (see page 17)

ODF PHOTO

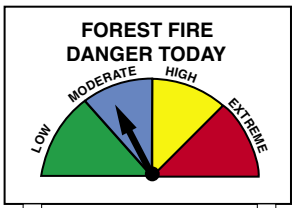
Other tips for fire-resistant structures -

- use double-pane windows for increased heat resistance
- don't put highly flammable plants (such as arborvitae) beneath windows
- keep rain gutters free of easily ignitable debris, such as needles, leaves and twigs
- make sure chimneys and stovepipes for wood-burning devices have spark arresters
- ensure all exterior doors and windows close tightly and have good weatherstripping
- find and clean collection points for needles, leaves and other wind-transported, flammable debris (so airborne embers won't start a fire)

Low ignition-risk property

Following the standards for this option will reduce the likelihood that a wildfire will be started on the property. To comply, landowners must follow these fire prevention practices:

- open fires will be started only when permits have been obtained and fire safety requirements have been met
- no one under the age of 16 shall tend or maintain an open fire
- open fires shall only take place when weather conditions permit safe burning
- fire lines shall be constructed around the place where an open burn is to occur
- fire tools and water shall be close at hand whenever an open burn is conducted
- chimneys and stovepipes shall have 12-gauge metal spark arrester screens with mesh size no larger than ½ inch
- grills, outdoor fireplaces and similar devices shall be in good condition and have spark arresters or screens over all openings
- ashes and coals shall be disposed of in a manner to prevent the unintended start of a wildfire
- outdoor equipment capable of generating heat, sparks or fire shall be used only when in compliance with permits and fire safety requirements.



Be part of the fire-prevention solution, *not part of the problem!*

Open burning regulations and restrictions

Burning restrictions may not be the same throughout Deschutes County. Call the nearest fire department, fire protection district or Oregon Department of Forestry office for current information.

- Bend Fire Department and Deschutes County Rural Fire Protection District #2, (541) 322-6335
- Redmond Fire Department, (541) 504-5000
- La Pine Rural Fire Protection District, (541) 536-9056
- Sisters-Camp Sherman Rural Fire Protection District, (541) 549-2333
- Black Butte Fire District, (541) 595-2288
- Sunriver Fire Department, (541) 593-8622
- ODF Central Oregon District, (541) 447-5658

To report a fire, call 9-1-1

Only you ...

Alternate standards

If you are unable to follow either the Default or Optional standards because of unique circumstances on your property, you may choose to develop an Alternate standards plan. This may also be the preferred course of action if an Alternate plan would provide better fuel-reduction results than if you had applied either the Default or Optional standards.

Alternate standards may be applied on properties with structures, regardless of fire-risk classification.

It is recommended that you work with an accredited assessor or other wildland fire protection professional on developing the Alternate standards plan.

The Alternate standards plan must be written on an Alternate Standards form, which may be obtained from a Department of Forestry office, or may be downloaded from the department's World Wide Web site at www.odf.state.or.us. Before a plan can be used, it must be approved by the district forester. To be approved, the plan must provide equal or better protection from wildfire than the Default standards or the Optional standards. The Alternate standards plan must also provide better protection than the roadside and property line fuel break standards required on properties classified as High-Density Extreme. The final plan must be signed by both the district forester and the property owner.

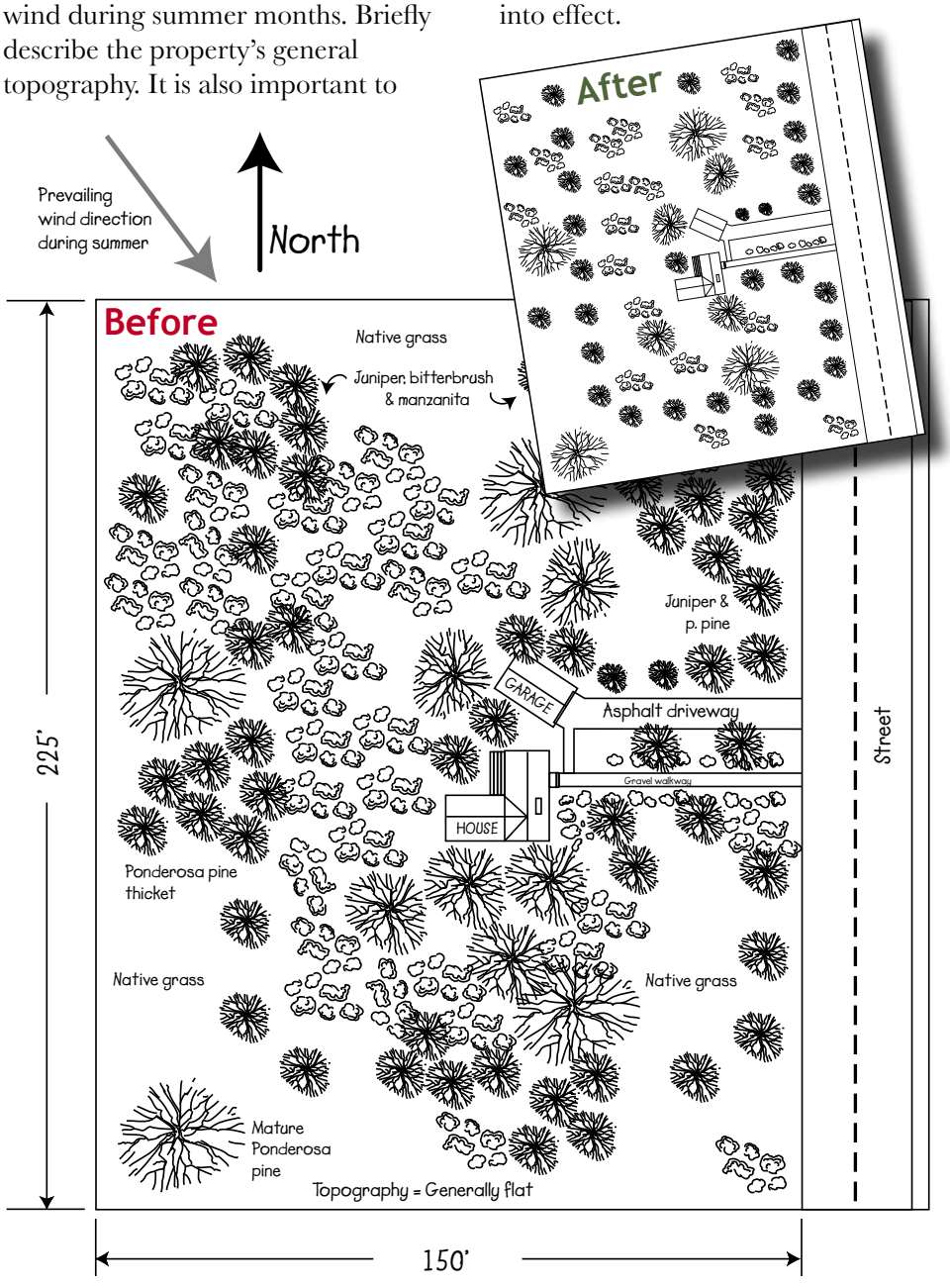
An important component of an Alternate standards plan is a map of the property. Use the following conventions and illustrate essential elements:

- Orient the map so north is at the top of the page
- Mark the property's boundary lines
- Give dimensions of property
- Show locations of structures
- Illustrate locations of driveways, walkways and roads

The map needs to show the arrangement of plants. Highlight those that are particularly vulnerable to wildfire (such as juniper, bitterbrush and manzanita). Also, illustrate fire-resistant features such as driveways, rock formations and water bodies.

Note the direction of prevailing wind during summer months. Briefly describe the property's general topography. It is also important to show or note other elements, such as property easements, public utilities, reliable water sources, and established debris-burning sites.

Describe how your Alternate standards plan provides wildfire protection for structures, and reduces wildfire potential on the property. What steps must be taken to achieve these goals? Draw a map to illustrate what the property will look like after the Alternate standards plan is put into effect.



What must a property owner do to comply with the Oregon Forestland-Urban Interface Fire Protection Act?

Forestland-urban interface property owners will receive a property evaluation guide, instructions for how to comply with the act's fuel-reduction standards, and a certification form from the Oregon Department of Forestry. Once a property is brought into compliance with the act's fuel-reduction standards, the property owner signs and returns the certification form to the Department of Forestry.

How often must property recertification occur?

A property must be recertified every five years, or when a property is sold, or when a structure is added to the lot.

Is a property owner responsible for creating a fuel break in an easement?

The property owner is responsible for creating a fuel break in an easement if the easement is a legally platted portion of the property. In the event that a property owner is prohibited from creating a fuel break in an easement on his or her property, an appeal may be made by the property owner to the local ODF district forester for a modification of the fuel reduction standards. This appeal must be made in writing.

Questions and answers

What happens if a property isn't certified and a fire occurs?

Under this act, the state is empowered to collect up to $100,000 of certain suppression costs from a landowner if:

- a landowner does not certify his or her property
- a fire originates on the property
- the fire spreads within the protection zone around a structure and driveway that does not meet the standards
- and the Oregon Department of Forestry incurs extraordinary costs for suppression.

The cost collection may be greater than $100,000 if a landowner is found to be willful, negligent or malicious in the origin of the fire.

Will certification reduce a property's fire-risk classification?

No. A forestland-urban interface area's fire-risk classification can only be changed by the county forestland-urban interface classification committee. The committee meets at least every five years to identify forestland-urban interface areas within its area of jurisdiction, and to assign fire risk classifications to those areas.

Can a homeowner be fined if his or her property isn't certified?

No. There is no fine for not complying with the act.

What's an accredited assessor?

An accredited assessor is a professional who can evaluate forestland-urban interface properties and certify a property for a property owner. There are three types of accredited assessor:

- An independent contractor who holds an Oregon Construction Contractor's Board or Oregon Landscape Contractors Board license
- An authorized agent of a structural fire department or fire protection district
- An authorized agent of a home or property owners association

In all cases, accredited assessors must have wildfire suppression or prevention experience, or forestland management experience, and a signed accreditation agreement from the Department of Forestry.

Is it necessary to cut down a lot of trees to comply with the act's standards?

In most cases, no. Healthy trees can protect a home from a fire's radiant heat, or airborne embers. It may be necessary to thin some young trees to reduce the volume of fuel on a property, but it is generally wise to leave the biggest trees, if they are healthy, since mature trees are quite resistant to damage from low- to medium-intensity wildfire.

Does the act replace or supersede other laws?

The act and its administrative rules do not supersede or replace any federal law or regulation, any other state agency law or regulation, or any more restrictive local government ordinance or code.

Conflicts with other laws and regulations, for which the state forester is responsible and has jurisdiction, shall be resolved within the scope of the state forester's authority.

Compliance with the act does not relieve a property owner of the requirements of any other law or regulation that applies to the lands in question.

BILL OSTRANDER, ODF

A wildfire often starts in dry leaves, needles or grass, which may quickly spread to heavier fuels, such as a firewood pile, which in turn may cause significant damage.

In areas where local defensible space standards, codes or ordinances exist, do property owners need to meet the standards of the Oregon Forestland-Urban Interface Fire Protection Act, too?

Maybe. If local government standards, codes or ordinances meet or exceed the defensible space standards within the Oregon Forestland-Urban Interface Fire Protection Act, the local standards take precedence over the act.

Can fuel breaks be created in areas that are designated as State Scenic Waterways?

Follow these guidelines if forestland-urban interface property is within a State Scenic Waterway along the Deschutes River. Riparian vegetation is high in moisture content and will not need to be removed or manipulated. Landscaping (trees, brush, etc.) that provides screening between structures and the river must be maintained in a healthy condition. To ensure that your fuel-reduction plan doesn't compromise a scenic waterway:

- Make a plan as to how to achieve primary and secondary fuel breaks around structures
- Draw a map that shows structures, and trees and brush to be thinned or trimmed
- Submit the plan and map to the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department for approval prior to removing or manipulating any vegetation

For more information or questions regarding state scenic waterways contact the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department at the following locations:
20300 Empire Avenue, Suite B1
Bend, OR 97701
541-388-6073

725 Summer Street NE, Suite C
Salem, OR 97301
503-986-0707

World Wide Web resources for additional information

FireFree, a voluntary fuel reduction program in central Oregon. See www.firefree.org

Firewise, a national program that helps communities plan and develop fire-resistant homes and neighborhoods. See www.firewise.org

Oregon State University Extension Service offers a wealth of advice and information about plant care and fire-resistant landscaping. See www.extension.oregonstate.edu/deschutes

At Home in the Woods is a new publication by the Federal Emergency Management Agency, and is a useful resource for individual homeowners and groups developing community fire plans. See www.fema.gov/regions/viii/athome_woods.shtm

The American Red Cross offers excellent advice about preparing for a fire emergency. See www.redcross.org/services/disaster. Under "Disaster Services," choose the link to "wildfires."

Oregon Forestland-Urban Interface Fire Protection Act of 1997 — Administrative Rules —

(Excerpted from Oregon Administrative Rules Chapter 629, Division 44)

629-044-1005 Definitions

(1) The definitions set forth in ORS 477.001, 477.015 and OAR 629-041-0005 shall apply to OAR 629-044-1000 to 629-044-1110, unless the context otherwise requires.

(2) The following words and phrases, when used in OAR 629-044-1000 to 629-044-1110, shall mean the following, unless the context otherwise requires:

(a) "Concentration of structures" means dwellings in a density of four or more per quarter of a quarter section (an area approximately 40 acres in size), as determined by the Public Land Survey.

(b) "Classification" means the process set forth in ORS 477.031 to 477.052 and 477.057.

(c) "Classified by a committee" means the end result of the classification process set forth in ORS 477.031 to 477.052 and 477.057.

(d) "Current zoning" means zoning which allows the siting of a dwelling as an outright use.

(e) "Driveway" means the primary, privately owned vehicle access road that serves a dwelling, which is controlled by the owner of the dwelling, and which is longer than 150 feet.

(f) "Dwelling" means a structure, or a part of a structure, that is used as a home, as a residence, or as a sleeping place by one or more people who maintain a household in the structure.

(g) "Fire resistant roofing " means roofing material that has been installed and is maintained to the specifications of the manufacturer and which:

(A) Is rated by Underwriter's Laboratory as Class A, Class B, Class C, or is equivalent thereto; or

(B) Is metal.

(h) "Fuel break" means a natural or a human-made area immediately adjacent to a structure or to a driveway, where material capable of allowing a wildfire to spread does not exist or has been cleared, modified, or treated to:

(A) Significantly reduce the rate of spread and the intensity of an advancing wildfire; and

(B) Create an area in which fire suppression operations may more safely occur.

(i) "Geographic area" means an area which results from the partitioning of all or portions of a district into smaller segments, based on the presence of differing hazard factors, risks, or dwelling concentrations.

(j) "Hazard factor" means one of the three factors which most influence the potential of a wildfire to spread. The three hazard factors are topography, natural vegetative fuels, and wildfire weather.

(k) "Homeowner's association" means a non-profit corporation organized under ORS Chapter 65 and which is subject to the provisions of ORS 94.625 to 94.700.

(L) "Included rural lands" means lands which meet the definition of "rural" but which have been classified by a committee as "suburban."

(m) "Ladder fuel" means branches, leaves, needles, and other combustible vegetation that may allow a wildfire to spread from lower growing vegetation to higher growing vegetation.

(n) "Lands" means one or more tax lots.

(o) "Non-fire resistant roofing" means roofing material that is not fire resistant including, but not limited to, cedar shakes.

(p) "Private fire department" means a private entity which provides structural fire prevention and suppression services and which meets the safety requirements set forth in OAR 437-002-0182.

(q) "Road" means a road over which the public has a right of use that is a matter of public record.

(r) "Rural" means a geographic area which has not been classified by a committee as suburban or urban and shall include:

(A) Lands zoned primarily for farm or forestry uses;

(B) Lands which have an average tax lot size of 10 acres or larger;

(C) Lands not zoned to allow a concentration of structures; and

(D) Lands which do not contain a concentration of structures.

(s) "Safety zone" means an adequately sized area, which is substantially free of flammable materials, and which can be used as a refuge to protect human life from an advancing wildfire.

(t) "Standards" means the actions, efforts, or measures which owners of suburban and urban lands shall take on their property, prior to a wildfire occurrence which originates on the property.

(u) "Structural fire service provider" means a local government agency or a private fire department which provides structural fire prevention and suppression services.

(v) "Structure" means a permanently sited building, a manufactured home, or a mobile home that is either a dwelling or an accessory building, which occupies at least 500 square feet of ground space, and which has at least one side that is fully covered.

(w) "Suburban" means a geographic area which includes one or more of the following:

(A) Lands where a concentration of structures exists;

(B) Lands on which current zoning allows a concentration of structures; or

(C) Included rural lands.

(x) "Urban" means a geographic area that includes one or more of the following:

(A) Lands within a city limit; or

(B) Lands within an urban growth boundary

(y) "Urban growth boundary" is defined by ORS 197.295.

(z) "Wildfire" means an uncontrolled fire which is burning on forestland and which is damaging, or is threatening to damage, forest resources or structures.

(aa) "Zoning" means a local governmental zoning ordinance, a land division ordinance adopted under ORS 92.044 or 92.046, or a similar general ordinance establishing standards for implementing a comprehensive plan.

629-044-1050 Purpose And Intent Of Standards

(1) The standards required by OAR 629-044-1055 are designed to minimize or mitigate a wildfire hazard or risk on an owners property which arises due, singly or in combination, to the presence of structures, to the arrangement or accumulation of vegetative fuels, or to the presence of other wildfire hazards.

(2) It is recognized that owners have a variety of objectives to achieve while applying the standards, including objectives related to aesthetics, dust barriers, fish and wildlife habitat, gardening, soil stabilization, sound barriers, and visual barriers. It is the intent of the standards to allow owners to meet such objectives, provided there is no compromise of the standards needed to mitigate wildfire hazards or risks.

(3) The standards are considered to be minimum measures which are intended to improve the survivability of structures during a wildfire, but which will not guarantee survivability.

629-044-1055 Standards

(1) Owners of lands classified by a committee as Low are not required to comply with the standards, however, they are encouraged to review their individual situation and to apply those standards which may be appropriate.

(2) Owners of lands classified by a committee as Moderate, High, Extreme, or High Density Extreme shall comply with the standards applicable to their lands. In meeting this requirement, owners shall apply one or more of the following:

(a) The default standards set forth in OAR 629-044-1060, which are intended for the majority of owners;

(b) The optional standards set forth in OAR 629-044-1065, which are intended for owners who are unable to meet the default standards; or

(c) The alternate standards developed pursuant to OAR 629-044-1070, which are intended for owners who wish to address site specific conditions or unique situations.

(3) Owners are encouraged to exceed the standards and to apply additional wildfire safety measures.

629-044-1060 Default Standards

(1) Where structures exist on lands classified by a committee as Moderate, High, Extreme, or High Density Extreme owners shall:

(a) Provide and maintain primary fuel breaks which comply with the requirements of OAR 629-044-1085 and which are:

(A) Immediately adjacent to structures, for a distance of at least 30 feet, or to the property line, whichever is the shortest distance. The distance shall be measured along the slope and from the furthest extension of the structure, including attached carports, decks, or eaves.

(B) Immediately adjacent to driveways, for a distance of at least ten feet from the centerline of a driveway, or to the property line, whichever is the shortest distance. The distance shall be measured along the slope. Including the driving surface, a fuel break shall result in an open area which is not less than 13 1/2 feet in height and 12 feet in width or to the property line, whichever is the shortest distance.

(b) Provide and maintain secondary fuel breaks which comply with the requirements of OAR 629-044-1085 and which are immediately adjacent to primary fuel breaks, for the distance necessary to comply with the total fuel break distance specified in Table 2 of this rule (above), or to the property line, whichever is the shortest distance. The distance shall be measured along the slope and from the furthest extension of the structure, including attached carports, decks, or eaves.

(c) Remove any portion of a tree which extends to within 10 feet of the outlet of a structure chimney or a stove pipe;

(d) Maintain the portion of any tree which overhangs a structure substantially free of dead plant material;

(e) Maintain the area under decks substantially free of firewood, stored flammable building material, leaves, needles, and other flammable material; and

(f) During times of the year when wildfire may be a threat, locate firewood, flammable building material, and other similar flammable material:

(A) At least 20 feet away from a structure; or

(B) In a fully enclosed space.

TABLE 2 • Secondary Fuel Break Distance

Fire-risk classification	Nonflammable roofing material	Flammable roofing material
Low	None	None
Moderate	30 feet	30 feet
High	30 feet	50 feet
Extreme & High-Density Extreme	50 feet	100 feet

(2) On all lands classified by a committee as High Density Extreme, owners shall comply with subsection (1) of this rule and with the standards set forth in OAR 629-044-1075.

629-044-1065 Optional Standards

(1) Where structures exist on lands classified by a committee as Moderate, High, Extreme, or High Density Extreme, owners shall provide fuel breaks which comply with the requirements of OAR 629-044-1085 and which are immediately adjacent to structures for a distance of thirty feet or to the property line, whichever is the shortest distance. The distance shall be measured along the slope and from the furthest extension of the structure, including attached carports, decks, or eaves.

(2) Where structures exist on lands classified by a com-

mittee as Moderate, owners shall comply with subsection (1) of this rule and with one or more of the options set forth in subsection (6) of this rule.

(3) Where structures exist on lands classified by a committee as High, owners shall comply with subsection (1) of this rule and with two or more of the options set forth in subsection (6) of this rule.

(4) Where structures exist on lands classified by a committee as Extreme, owners shall comply with subsection (1) of this rule and with three or more of the options set forth in subsection (6) of this rule.

(5) Where structures exist on lands classified by a committee as High Density Extreme, owners shall comply with subsection (1) of this rule, with three or more of the options set forth in subsection (6) of this rule, and with subsection (7) of this rule.

(6) Optional standards are:

(a) Option 1, fire resistant structures. This option is intended to reduce the likelihood of a structure being ignited by a wildfire. To comply with this option, owners of structures shall:

(A) Have fire resistant roofing material;

(B) Have all permanent openings into and under the structure completely covered with noncombustible, corrosion-resistant, mesh screening material, which has openings no greater than 1/4 inch in size;

(C) Where there are attachments to the structure, such as decks and porches:

(i) Maintain the area under the attachments substantially free of firewood, flammable building material, leaves, needles, and other flammable material; or

(ii) Cover openings to the area under the attachments with noncombustible, corrosion-resistant mesh screening material, which has openings no greater than 1/4 inch in size;

(D) Remove any portion of a tree which extends to within 10 feet of the outlet of a structure chimney or a stove pipe;

(E) Maintain the portion of any tree which overhangs a structure substantially free of dead plant material; and

(F) During times of the year when wildfire may be a threat, locate firewood, flammable building material, and other similar flammable material:

(i) At least 20 feet away from the structure; or

(ii) In a fully enclosed space.

(b) Option 2, secondary fuel break. This option is intended to provide additional separation between structures and natural vegetation. To comply with this option, owners of structures shall provide and maintain secondary fuel breaks which comply with the requirements of OAR 629-044-1085 and which are immediately adjacent to primary fuel breaks, for the distance necessary to create a total fuel break of 100 feet, or to the property line, whichever is the shortest distance. The distance shall be measured along the slope and from the furthest extension of the structure, including attached carports, decks, or eaves.

(c) Option 3, wildfire safe access. This option is intended to provide a more safe vehicle access to and from structures during a wildfire. To comply with this option, owners of a driveway shall provide and maintain a primary fuel break which complies with the requirements of OAR 629-044-1085 and which is immediately adjacent to a driveway for a distance of ten feet from the centerline of the driveway, or to the property line, whichever is the shortest distance. The distance shall be measured along the slope. Including the driving surface, a fuel break shall result in an open area which is not less than 13 1/2 feet in height and 12 feet in width or to the property line, whichever is the shortest distance.

(d) Option 4, low ignition risk property. This option is intended to reduce the likelihood of a wildfire ignition. To comply with this option, owners shall at all times use the following fire prevention practices:

(A) Open fires shall be:

(i) Built, ignited and maintained in compliance with all applicable permit and fire safety requirements;

(ii) Tended and maintained under the control of a person 16 years of age or older;

(iii) Conducted only when weather conditions permit safe burning;

(iv) Conducted in a location which has had all surrounding material cleared of flammable material sufficient to prevent unintended spread of the fire; and

(v) Conducted only when adequate and appropriate fire tools and/or a water supply are present to assist in preventing unintended spread of the fire.

(B) Grills, incinerators, outdoor fireplaces, permanent barbecues, and similar outdoor devices shall be maintained in good repair, in safe condition, and all openings shall normally be completely covered by a spark arrester, by a screen, or by a device which prevents unintended spread of a fire.

(C) Ashes and coals resulting from the use of grills, incinerators, outdoor fireplaces, permanent barbecues, and similar outdoor devices shall be disposed of in a manner which prevents unintended spread of a fire.

(D) The use of outdoor equipment or devices capable of generating heat, open flame, or sparks shall be conducted in compliance with all applicable permit and fire safety requirements; and

(E) Chimneys and stove pipes shall be used only if their openings are completely covered with a spark arrester which meets or exceeds the following standard: constructed of 12 USA standard gauge wire which has openings no larger than 1/2 inch in size.

(7) On all lands classified by a committee as High Density Extreme, owners comply with the standards set forth in OAR 629-044-1075.

629-044-1070 Alternate Standards

(1) Where structures exist on lands classified by a committee as Moderate, High, Extreme, or High Density Extreme, owners shall comply with all standards described in a cooperative agreement made pursuant to ORS 477.406.

(2) Cooperative agreements which describe alternate standards shall be valid only if:

(a) On forms provided by the State Forester or in a format prescribed by the State Forester;

(b) Signed by the District Forester and by the owner; and

(c) The alternate standards provide, in the judgement of the District Forester, for equal or better protection from wildfire than do the standards of OAR 629-044-1060, 629-044-1065, and 629-044-1075 which apply to the classification of the lands for which the cooperative agreement is made.

629-044-1075 Additional Standards For Lands Classified As High Density Extreme

On all lands classified by a committee as High Density Extreme, owners shall provide fuel breaks which comply with the requirements of OAR 629-044-1085 and which are immediately adjacent to all:

(1) Property lines, for a distance of twenty feet or an adjacent property line, whichever is the shortest distance. The distance shall be measured along the slope; and

(2) Roads, for a distance of at least twenty feet from the side of every road, or to the property line, whichever is the shortest distance. The distance shall be measured along the slope and from the furthest extension of the driving surface.

629-044-1085 Fuel Break Requirements

(1) The purpose of a fuel break is to:

(a) Slow the rate of spread and the intensity of an advancing wildfire; and

(b) Create an area in which fire suppression operations may more safely occur.

(2) A fuel break shall be a natural or a human-made area where material capable of allowing a wildfire to spread:

(a) Does not exist; or

(b) Has been cleared, modified, or treated in such a way that the rate of spread and the intensity of an advancing wildfire will be significantly reduced.

(3) A primary fuel break shall be comprised of one or more of the following:

(a) An area of substantially non-flammable ground cover. Examples include asphalt, bare soil, clover, concrete, green grass, ivy, mulches, rock, succulent ground cover, or wildflowers.

(b) An area of dry grass which is maintained to an average height of less than four inches.

(c) An area of cut grass, leaves, needles, twigs, and other similar flammable materials, provided such materials do not create a continuous fuel bed and are in compliance with the intent of subsections (1) and (2) of this rule.

(d) An area of single specimens or isolated groupings of ornamental shrubbery, native trees, or other plants, provided they are:

(A) Maintained in a green condition;

(B) Maintained substantially free of dead plant material;

(C) Maintained free of ladder fuel;

(D) Arranged and maintained in such a way that minimizes the possibility a wildfire can spread to adjacent vegetation; and

(E) In compliance with the intent of subsections (1) and (2) of this rule.

(4) A secondary fuel break shall be comprised of single specimens or isolated groupings of ornamental shrubbery, native trees, or other plants, provided they are:

(a) Maintained in a green condition;

(b) Maintained substantially free of dead plant material;

(c) Maintained free of ladder fuel;

(d) Arranged and maintained in such a way that minimizes the possibility a wildfire can spread to adjacent vegetation; and

ODF

Flammable plants next to a house can cause serious problems if the plants catch fire. In this situation, if the arborvitae plants were to catch fire, the flames could blow out the windows, which would let flames inside the house. Also, the wood siding could catch fire, as could the underside of the roof eave. Within minutes, much of the house could be aflame. Solution? Remove the arborvitae.

(e) In compliance with the intent of subsections (1) and (2) of this rule.

629-044-1090 Apparent Conflicts With Standards

Pursuant to ORS 477.023:

(1) The standards set forth in OAR 629-044-1060 to 629-044-1085 do not supersede or replace any federal law or regulation, any other state agency law or regulation, or any more restrictive local government ordinance or code.

(2) Apparent conflicts with other laws and regulations, for which the forester is responsible and has jurisdiction, shall be resolved within the scope of the forester's authority and documented, as provided in OAR 629-044-1070 or 629-044-1080.

(3) Compliance with OAR 629-044-1070 to 629-044-1080 does not relieve the owner of the requirements of any other law or regulation which applies to the lands in question.

629-044-1095 Written Evaluation

(1) Pursuant to ORS 477.059, the forester shall provide to the owners of lands classified by a committee a copy of OAR 629-044-1000 to 629-044-1110 and an evaluation form:

(a) Two years before the obligations of ORS 477.059(4) become effective on the lands for the first time;

(b) Every five years thereafter; and

(c) When requested by an owner.

(2) The intent of an evaluation form provided pursuant to subsections (1), (5) or (6) of this rule is to allow owners to self-certify compliance with the standards of OAR 629-044-1060 to 629-044-1085. Completion and return of the evaluation form to the forester is optional.

(3) In lieu of completing and returning an evaluation form provided pursuant to subsections (1), (5) or (6) of this rule, an owner may have it completed and returned by an accredited assessor.

(4) Completed and returned evaluation forms shall become void:

(a) Five years after they are provided by the forester;

(b) When the ownership of a tax lot changes;

(c) When a structure is added to a tax lot; or

(d) Pursuant to a determination made in accordance with the provisions of subsection (3) of OAR 629-044-1100.

(5) When the ownership of a tax lot changes, the previous owner shall notify the new owner of the voiding of the evaluation form under subsection (4)(b) of this rule. The new owner may, as provided in subsection (1)(c) of this rule, request that the forester provide a current copy of OAR 629-044-1000 to 629-044-1110 and a new evaluation form.

(6) When a structure is added to a tax lot, the owner may request that the forester provide a current copy of OAR 629-044-1000 to 629-044-1110 and a new evaluation form.

629-044-1100 Certification

(1) An owner of lands classified by a committee shall be considered to be certified as meeting the standards set forth in OAR 629-044-1060 to 629-044-1085 if:

(a) They sign and return to the forester an evaluation form provided pursuant to OAR 629-044-1095; or

(b) They use the services of an Accredited Assessor who signs and returns to the forester an evaluation form provided pursuant to OAR 629-044-1095; and

(c) The evaluation form has not become void pursuant to OAR 629-044-1095(4).

(2) The forester may make a determination of whether the lands of an owner meet the standards set forth in OAR 629-044-1060 to 629-044-1085 at any time following the completion and return of an evaluation form provided pursuant to OAR 629-044-1095. Such a determination must be made prior to the occurrence of a wildfire on an owners tax lot.

(3) If the forester determines that an evaluation form provided pursuant to OAR 629-044-1095 was returned by the owner and that it incorrectly or falsely indicated the lands meet the standards set forth in OAR 629-044-1060 to 629-044-1085, the owner shall be notified in writing that both the evaluation form and the certification granted under subsection (1) of this rule will become void on a specified date. In making such a determination, the forester shall:

(a) Not base the determination on technicalities or omissions which, in the sole judgment of the forester, are minor in nature; and

(b) First provide the owner a reasonable time to:

(A) Provide evidence that the property does meet the standards set forth in OAR 629-044-1060 to 629-044-1085; or

(B) Bring their property into compliance with the standards set forth in OAR 629-044-1060 to 629-044-1085.

... More Web Resources

To read the entire set of administrative rules for the Oregon Forestland-Urban Interface Fire Protection Act, log onto arcweb.sos.state.or.us/rules/OARS_600/OAR_629/629_044.html

SKELETON FIRE, 1996, BEND. ODF PHOTO.

OREGON DEPARTMENT OF FORESTRY

OREGON FORESTLAND-URBAN INTERFACE FIRE PROTECTION ACT