Landscaping Fire Safety

Helpful landscaping tips:
- Select plants that are drought tolerant and maintain high moisture content.
- Install fire-resistant structures such as decks and patios.
- Use low-maintenance plants to reduce the risk of fire.
- Keep shrubs pruned and leave space between them as a natural break.
- Keep trees at least 10 feet away from the house and deck.

Fire spread:
- Avoid planting vegetation close to the house and deck.
- Do not allow vegetation to touch the house or deck.
- Keep firewood at least 10 feet away from the house and deck.
- Install fire-resistant screens on windows and doors.

Fire prevention:
- Install smoke and carbon monoxide detectors.
- Regularly check and maintain fire extinguishers.
- Keep flammable materials away from the house and deck.
- Use a fireproof barrier around the house and deck.

Fire awareness:
- Be aware of potential fire hazards in the area.
- Know the location of fire hydrants and emergency exits.
- Practice fire drills with family members.
- Stay calm and use a bell or horn to alert others in an emergency.
Survivable space is your defense against wildfires. Your home within the urban wildland interface (where homes lie adjacent to or within undeveloped areas of grass, brush and trees) has the best chance of surviving a wildfire if survivable space is created and integrated into your surroundings. The landscaping within 30 to 100 feet around your home and the materials with which you build or remodel your home can make the difference in whether or not your home remains intact after a wildfire.

Survivable space doesn’t have to be devoid of vegetation. On the contrary, it is space that uses vegetation—specifically selected, placed and maintained—to reduce the fire hazard rather than invite wildfire to your home. Aesthetics can be maintained even as your home’s ability to survive a wildfire is increased.

Implementation of the following basic survivable space measures can significantly reduce the wildfire risk to your home and loved ones.

Helpful building and remodeling tips:

- Use fire resistant roofing materials such as tile, metal or asphalt. Avoid wooden shingles.
- Inspect for gaps in roofing that can expose roof decking or roof supports.
- Enclose or box-in eaves and install a metal screen behind roof vents so that sparks cannot enter the attic.
- For your home’s outside walls, select heat and fire resistant siding such as metal, brick, block or stone, cement board or fire retardant treated lumber.
- Install windows made of tempered glass.
- Use drapes and shutters that are fire resistant to help reduce the likelihood of fire spread.
- Install metal screens under decks to keep sparks and embers from being blown into corners and other spots where they could lodge and ignite a fire.
- Remove boards, vegetation and other flammable materials from under decks so they won’t trap sparks and burning embers that could spread a fire to the deck and house.