



Shared Responsibility, Shared Success Take Action Now!

Community Action begins with you!

By: Vicki Yorty, Executive Coordinator, EDCFSC

Living with the threat of catastrophic wildfire is the reality of living in El Dorado County. While our public fire agencies do an awesome job in protecting lives and property, their first line of defense is you and what you do to create defensible space around your home. Because wildfires recognize no property lines or boundaries, this must be a neighborhood and community joint responsibility.

The mission of the El Dorado County Fire Safe Council (EDCFSC) is to help residents help themselves

make their property and communities more fire safe. Toward this goal in 2006, we are encouraging residents to get together and organize Community Clean-Up Days. The EDCFSC is committed to helping you make this happen by providing guidelines and educational material, arranging green waste dumpsters and use of our Residential Chipping Program and assisting you and your neighbors in preparing for a wildfire disaster.

It is not IF but WHEN you will be threatened by a wildfire. However,

ultimately, the responsibility to create and maintain your defensible space is yours.

Our website, www.edcfiresafe.org, is a great educational source to assist you and also has contact information for the nearest local community-based Fire Safe Council. If there is not one in your area, get your neighbors together and organize one. I will be happy to assist you in any way – I know we are all in this together, and together, we can make a difference.

Email me at edcfiresafe@comcast.net or call (530) 647-1098. Be Fire Safe!

New Guidelines for 100 feet of Defensible Space

By Teri Mizuhara, CDF-AEU Fire Prevention Specialist II

As of January 1, 2005 the Public Resource Code (PRC) 4291 Defensible Space requirements increased from 30 feet around every structure on a property to 100 feet around

every structure or to the property line. As a result and in support of the new changes, the Board of Forestry and Fire Protection created the General Guidelines for Creating Defensible Space to assist the homeowner in accomplishing the task.

The guidelines are intended to provide homeowners with examples of fuel modifi-

cation measures that they can use to create an area around buildings/structures where fire is slowed or stopped in its tracks. Vegetation surrounding a building is fuel for a fire as is the structure itself. Research has shown that reducing fuels around a structure increases the probability of it surviving a

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wildfire. Fuel reduction through vegetation management is the key to creating good defensible space.

PRC 4291 General Guidelines for Creating Defensible Space

These guidelines apply to any person who owns, leases, controls, operates, or maintains a building or structure in, upon, or adjoining any mountainous area, forest-covered lands, brush covered lands, grass covered lands, or any land that is covered with flammable material and located within a State Responsibility Area.

Terrain, climate and vegetation interact to affect fire behavior and fuel reduction standards. Properties with greater fire hazards will require more clearing. These requirements will be greater for those lands with steeper terrain, larger, denser fuels and fuels that are highly flammable.

A homeowner's defensible space responsibility is limited to 100 feet from each structure on their property or to the property line, whichever is closest. While individual property owners are not required to clear beyond 100 feet, groups of property owners are encouraged to extend clearances beyond the minimum 100 foot requirement in order to create community-wide defensible spaces.

CLEARANCE COUNTS:

The more defensible space around your home, the better chance it will survive.

The effectiveness of defensible space increases when multiple property owners work together.

Important details to keep in mind:

Homeowners who do fuel reduction activities that remove or dispose of vegetation are required to comply with all federal, state, or local environmental protection laws and obtain permits when necessary. Environmental protection laws include but are not limited to



threatened and endangered species, water quality, air quality, and cultural/archeological resources.

Care should be taken when using gas powered equipment (i.e. chain saws, lawn mowers, weed eaters

etc.) when creating the defensible space zones. Make sure your equipment is in proper working order (approved spark arrestors) and make sure you are using the appropriate equipment for the job (do not use a riding lawnmower to mow DRY weeds or grass; they are designed to cut green vegetation). Metal blades should be used with caution when weather conditions are hot and dry. Metal blades can cause a fire when they contact a rock or other hard surface.

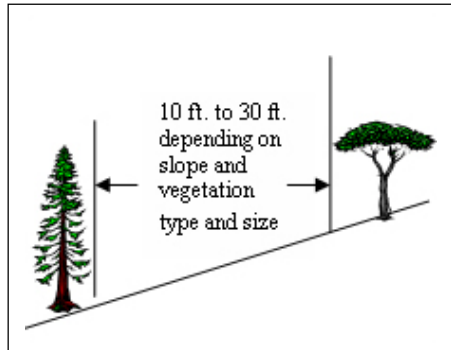
Vegetation removal can also cause soil disturbance, soil erosion, regrowth of new vegetation and introduction of non-native invasive plants (star thistle). Always keep soil disturbance to a minimum, especially on steep slopes. Erosion control techniques such as minimizing use of heavy equipment, avoiding stream or gully crossings, using mobile equipment during dry conditions, and covering disturbed soil areas will help reduce soil erosion and plant regrowth.

Areas near water such as streams, creeks, or ponds are a particular concern for protection of water quality. To help protect water quality in riparian areas, avoid removing vegetation associated with water, avoid using heavy equipment and do not clear vegetation to bare minimum soil.

Fuel Treatment Guidelines

FIREBREAK = 0-30 feet

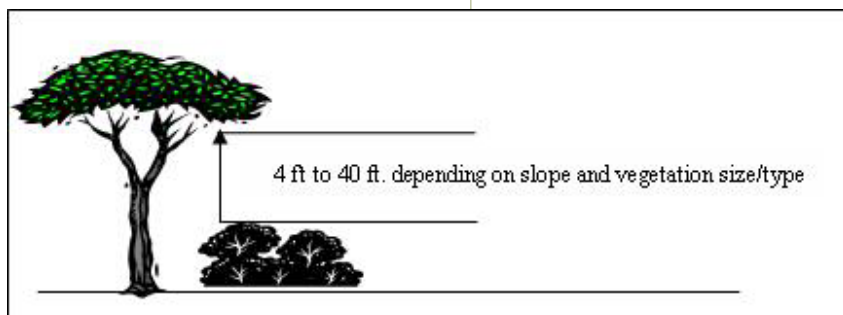
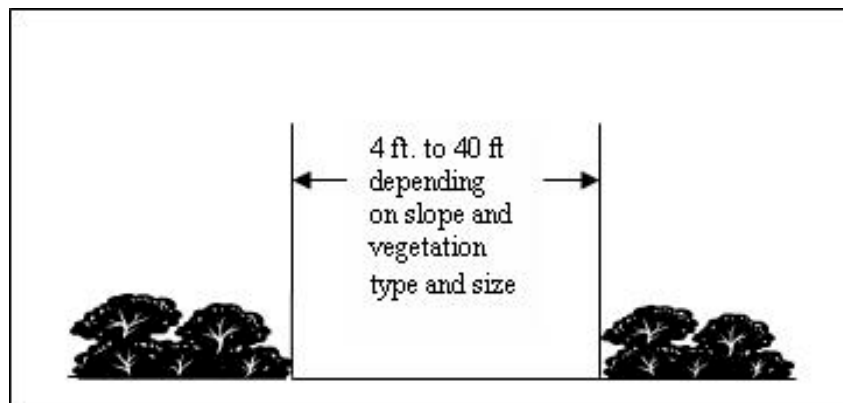
Remove all highly flammable vegetation, dead and dying woody ground and aerial (standing) fuels. Single specimens of trees or other vegetation may be retained provided they are well-spaced, well-pruned and create a condition that avoids the spread of fire. Irrigation systems are recommended.



REDUCED FUEL ZONE =

30-100 feet This means arranging vegetation in such a way that it makes it difficult for fire to transfer from one fuel source to another. Clearance distances between vegetation will depend on slope, vegetation size, vegetation type (grass, brush, trees) and other fuel characteristics (fuel compaction, chemical content, etc.). Dead and dying

woody surface fuels and aerial fuels should be removed. Loose surface fuels (fallen leaves/needles, twigs, barks, cones and small branches) may be retained no more than 4 inches in depth. Downed logs or stumps embedded in the soil may be retained if they are isolated from other fuels. One dead standing tree per acre can be retained if they are well spaced from other vegetation and will not fall on buildings, driveways or roadways.



There are two options available for the Reduced Fuel Zone:

Option #1 Fuel Separation (both horizontal and vertical)

- 10-30 feet between trees depending on the slope*
- 4-40 feet between shrubs depending on slope*
- 4-40 feet vertical separation between shrubs and tree canopy (rule of thumb is three times the height of the shrub) – groundcover should be no higher than four inches in height, in cases where erosion is a problem, keep vegetation less than 18 inches in height

*the steeper the slope the greater the separation required

Option #2 Defensible Space with a Continuous Tree Canopy

- Trees should be limbed up 6 to 15 feet but do not remove more than 1/3 of the canopy of any tree
- Keep surface fuels at four inches in height or less



Fuel Separation (both horizontal and vertical)



Defensible Space with a Continuous Tree Canopy

MAINTENANCE, MAINTENANCE, MAINTENANCE!

Defensible Space is a life long endeavor. It requires some level of maintenance annually and must be continued as long as you own the property. The initial vegetation management project will take a lot of time and effort but will be worth it in the long run. Your families' lives may depend on it in the event a major wildfire burns through your area. Remember it is a matter when not if a wildfire occurs in your neighborhood.

Plant Spacing Guidelines

Guidelines are designed to break the continuity of fuels and be used as a "rule of thumb" for achieving compliance with Regulation 14 CCR 1299.

Trees	Minimum horizontal space from edge of one tree canopy to the edge of the next	
	Slope	Spacing
	0% to 20 %	10 feet
	20% to 40%	20 feet
	Greater than 40%	30 feet
Shrubs	Minimum horizontal space between edges of shrub	
	Slope	Spacing
	0% to 20 %	2 times the height of the shrub
	20% to 40%	4 times the height of the shrub
	Greater than 40%	6 times the height of the shrub
Vertical Space	Minimum vertical space between top of shrub and bottom of lower tree branches: 3 times the height of the shrub	

NOTE: Fuel Separation distances are measured between the outer edge of the tree or shrubs canopy to the next tree or shrubs outer edge, NOT the trunk or main stem of a tree or shrub.

Adapted from: Gilmer, M. 1994. California Wildfire Landscaping

Wildfire! Evacuate Now!

By Teri Mizuhara, Fire Prevention Spec. II

What would you do if you had 5 minutes to vacate your house with your 8 year old son home sick from school, one dog, one cat, one hamster, an elderly parent, and all those important papers? Your spouse is at work, your second child is in grade school and you remember that you meant to tank up the minivan and have less than an 1/8 of a tank of gas left.

Sound like a nightmare? Disaster can strike at any time but with a little pre-planning an evacuation may go smoother than you thought. So where do you begin? Start with a creating a plan with your family, friends and neighbors. Include several options as you never know where you will be when disaster strikes. Then periodically review the plan before fire season. Update the plan annually and make sure all those involved are updated too.

What goes into a plan?

Make sure one of your emergency contacts is outside the state and that family members know the number and to call to check in. It can be easier to call outside the state during a disaster. Keep important papers in a fire-proof container or keep copies off site. If you have children, what is the school's plan in case of a wildfire? Make sure you know and understand this well in advance of a disaster. Meet your neighbors, make a community plan and know who has special needs and who can meet those needs in an emergency.

Preplanning a wildfire

Create and maintain a minimum 100' of defensible space around each structure or to your property line, whichever is nearer. Make sure your home address is a minimum of 4" high and reflective. Place the numbers on a non-flammable post and make sure you can see it clearly driving from either direction on your street. Keep roofs and rain gutters clear of all needles, leaves and other flammable debris. Never stack your firewood close to your home or other structure

Preparing an Evacuation Checklist

Critical medications
 Important personal papers, photos, etc.
 Essential valuables
 Change of clothing, toiletries, etc for each member of the family
 Battery operated radio and spare batteries
 Cell phone, spare battery, charger
 Evacuation route and local map
 Pet carrier, food, water, meds, collars and tags, leashes, etc.
 Livestock transport, food, etc.

As the wildfire approaches

If you still have electricity, turn on your television to a local station or turn on your radio to a local station. Consider logging on to the El Dorado Fire Safe Council website for fire information at www.eldfiresafe.org

- If your power is out, turn on your battery powered radio to get the

latest emergency information. Review your evacuation checklist and gather necessary items and place them inside your car.

- If you have a ladder, place it against the house so emergency personnel and others have access to the roof.
- Remove combustible materials surrounding your home (deck furniture, wood piles, barbecues, anything that can burn).
- Attach hoses to faucets, but do not turn them on, just have them ready if you need them.
- Inside the house, turn on a light in each room, remove light-weight window coverings and upholstered furniture from windows, close blinds if you have them and close all interior doors.
- Turn off air conditioning or other air circulating systems.
- Detach electrical garage doors, back your car into your garage or driveway and carry the keys with you.
- Secure pets and livestock for transport.
- Most importantly, stay calm.

During an evacuation

Stay calm If you have time post a large sign at the end of your driveway that you have evacuated and note if there are animals left behind in the home. Follow the Sheriff Departments orders for evacuation.

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Wildfire! Evacuate Now! continued

If you become trapped...

In your vehicle:

Stay calm Park your vehicle in an area clear of vegetation. Close all windows and vents. Cover yourself and others with wool blankets or cotton or wool jackets. Lie on the floor of the vehicle. Use your cell phone and call 911

On foot

Stay calm. Go to an area clear of vegetation, a ditch or depression if possible. Lie face down and cover up. Use your cell phone to call 911.

In your home

Stay calm. Keep family members together INSIDE the house. Call

911 and inform authorities of your location. Fill sinks and tubs with cold water for drinking and putting out small fires. Keep doors and windows closed but unlocked. Stay away from outer walls and windows. It will get hot in your home, but it will be much hotter outside.

After the fire passes and you are sure it is safe, check the following areas for fire:

- The roof and exterior
- Under the deck and inside your attic
- Your yard for burning trees, woodpiles, etc.

Extinguish burning embers and sparks.

Resource List:

CDF can be found online at www.fire.ca.gov

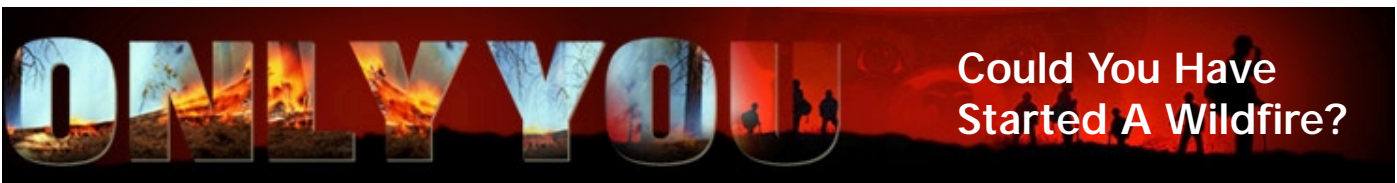
EDC FSC can be found at www.edcfiresafe.org

OES can be found online at www.oes.ca.gov

FEMA can be found online at www.fema.gov

Red Cross can be found online at www.redcross.org

US Forest Service can be found online at: www.fs.fed.us



PREVENTION TRIP PLANNING

When planning a trip to an Outdoor area, you should first develop an Outdoor Safety Trip Plan to make sure you are traveling to a safe environment and that you are prepared with the proper equipment to help keep the environment free of accidental wildfire.

1. KNOW YOUR AREA

It is important to be familiar with the area you are traveling to – if camping, you should make sure to plan an escape route should you need to evacuate the area.

2. ARE FIRE OR TRAVEL RESTRICTIONS IN EFFECT?

Call the Forest Service, local Fire Department, BLM, State or other Federal Agency to make sure the area you are traveling to is restriction free.

3. WEATHER PREDICTIONS

If you are traveling during fire season, it is best to avoid potentially dangerous weather patterns.

4. SELECT YOUR CAMPSITE WISELY

You should always use existing campsites and established fire rings when camping or building a fire.

5. MAKE SURE YOU HAVE YOUR CAMPFIRE PERMIT!

IT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO KNOW THE RULES AND REGULATIONS WHEN VISITING YOUR NATIONAL FORESTS.

ELDORADO NATIONAL FOREST

Supervisor Office	530-622-5061
Amador Ranger District	209-295-4251
Placerville Ranger District	530-622-2324
Pacific Ranger District	530-644-2349
Georgetown Ranger District	530-333-4312

El Dorado County Air Quality Burning Regulations For Residential Open Burning



Do I need a Burn Permit from my local Air District?

If you are burning material in a pile greater in size than 4 feet x 4 feet, you **MUST** obtain a Burn Permit from El Dorado County Air Quality Management District (AQMD). For piles 4 feet x 4 feet or less you need a State burn permit from May 1st through the end of Fire Season that you can obtain from your local fire district, CDF or US Forest Service station.

insulation, caulking tubes, paints or coatings, metal wire, or other miscellaneous construction and demolition debris, are **SOME** of the materials that are illegal to burn.

When burned, these materials may release chemicals which cause illnesses.

How should I burn my material?

Prior to burning, vegetative material must be dry and reasonably free of dirt. Burn piles should be constructed in such a way as to allow fresh air

intake to promote more efficient burning for reduced smoke generation.

Material Size Drying Times

Smaller than 6 inches in diameter: 3-6 weeks

Greater than 6 inches in diameter: 6 weeks

*Only material that will likely burn in 24 hours can be ignited. To prevent your pile from getting wet, cover it with a tarp. If your pile is wet, let it dry a few days before burning. Avoid causing a smoke nuisance to your neighbors.

Can I burn stumps?

The El Dorado County AQMD discourages the burning of very

large stumps. Stumps greater than 12 inches in diameter should be split and dried for at least 6 weeks prior to burning. Stumps less than 12 inches in diameter do not have to be split, but must be dry and reasonably free of dirt prior to burning.

Are there alternative to burning?

Our air quality is **YOUR** responsibility. Consider chipping, shredding, mulching and composting yard waste. Any material larger than 3 inches in diameter can be cut for firewood.

Who can I contact for information on Burning and Air Quality?

In El Dorado County, contact the local Air Quality Management District with air quality and burning regulation questions at:

El Dorado County Air Quality Management District
2850 Fairlane Court Building C
Placerville, CA 95667
530- 621- 6662 Fax: 530-295-2774

For State burning permit laws, burning and fire safety information, call your local fire district or CA Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

2840 Mt. Danaher Road
Camino, CA 95709
530-644-2345 Fax: 530-647-5276

A violation of the Air Quality Management District Rules and Regulations or State Burning Permit Laws IS A MISDEMEANOR and could COST YOU MONEY!

When can I burn?

All burning must take place on a designated Burn Day. Please call 530-621-5897 or toll free 866-621-5897 immediately prior to igniting your pile for Burn Day status.

What material can I legally burn?

Residential burning is limited to tree trimmings, vines, brush, leaves, lawn clippings and dry plants collected from the property on which you are burning.

Burning poison oak is strongly discouraged due to potential respiratory problems.

Note: Effective Jan. 1, 2004, the use of BURN BARRELS for ALL BURNING was prohibited by the State Airborne Toxics Control Measure.

What is ILLEGAL to burn?

Household garbage such as paper, junk mail, cardboard, cans, glass, furniture, plastics, rubber, tires, tar paper, asphalt shingles, dimensioned lumber, treated lumber,



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We're On The Web!
www.edcfiresafe.org

Guidelines Inside!
100 Feet Of Defensible Space...