



## **Fire Safety and Prevention**

### **What is Defensible Space?**

Defensible space is the area around a structure that is free of flammable plants and objects, which creates a zone in which firefighters can operate safely in order to help protect a home during a wildfire. This space is wide enough to prevent direct flame impingement and reduce the amount of radiant heat reaching the structure. The defensible space for each structure varies depending on the type of vegetation and topography.

If you live next to a natural area, you must provide firefighters with the defensible space they need to protect your home. The buffer zone you create by removing weeds, brush and other vegetation helps to keep the fire away from your home and reduces the risks from flying embers.



A home within one mile of a natural area is in the Ember Zone. Wind-driven embers have the potential to attack your home or other structures on your property. Being well prepared before a fire occurs is critical. Ember fires can destroy homes or neighborhoods far from the actual flame front of the wildfire.



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### Defensible Space 101

#### ZONE 1

Extends 30 feet out from buildings, structures, decks, etc.

Remove all flammable vegetation or other combustible growth within 30 feet of any structure or within 50 feet of any structure in areas determined to be high hazard. Single trees, ornamental shrubbery or cultivated ground covers may be permitted provided they are maintained in such a manner that they do not readily transmit fire from native vegetation to the structure.

#### ZONE 2

Thin out and remove additional vegetation an additional 70 feet from the structure, for a total of 100 feet. The inspecting officer may require an additional 100 feet of thinning or removal (for a total of 200 feet) due to high fire hazard.

**Note:** Special attention should be given to the use and maintenance of ornamental plants known or thought to be high hazard plants when used in close proximity to structures. Examples include Acacia, Cedar, Cypress, Eucalyptus, Juniper, Pine, and Pampas grass. These plantings should be properly maintained and not allowed to be in mass plantings that could transmit fire from the native growth to any structure.



Information courtesy of CAL FIRE.



**Looking for more resources?** Visit CAL FIRE's website at <http://www.readyforwildfire.org/Defensible-Space/> for guidance on plant and tree spacing and fire-safe landscaping.