



Is Your Home Hardened to Survive a Wildfire Ember Storm?

FIRE HARDENED means your home is prepared for wildfire and an ember storm. It does not mean fireproof. Home hardening addresses the most vulnerable components of your house with building materials and installation techniques that increase resistance to heat, flames, and embers that accompany most wildfires.

Learning to live with wildfire includes taking steps to reduce the risk to homes. Homes built to modern (2008 or later) building codes, with an adjacent and well-maintained defensible space, have a much better chance of surviving wildfire. Maintenance and upgrades to older homes can significantly improve the chance of your home surviving a fire.

Part of learning to live with wildfire is understanding that we have some control in how we prepare for and address this hazard, and how we manage fire in our individual communities.

This brochure can help you better understand options for hardening your home and where to find more information.



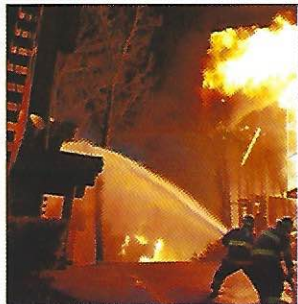
How Homes Catch Fire

THREE WAYS YOUR HOME CAN BE EXPOSED TO FIRE



EMBER STORM

Embers are small pieces of burning material that can travel more than a mile ahead of a wildfire. They can create spot fires when they land on combustible materials, such as leaves in your gutter or plants under your windows.



RADIANT HEAT

Radiant heat generated from burning structures or plants can be hot enough to ignite a house without direct flame contact. This is particularly challenging in densely populated areas, where the heat from one burning home can ignite the next.



DIRECT FLAME

Depending on time and exposure, direct flame contact can ignite your home. The flaming front of a wildfire is often not hot enough to ignite a house, but plants under windows ignited by embers or direct flame can break glass, allowing fire to enter the house.

Embers are responsible for most damage during wildfires. They can accumulate on your home, deck, or porch and ignite plants, mulch, leaves, fencing, or furniture. They can also be forced into gaps in the home (e.g. attic vents or an open or broken window) and burn the home from the inside out. When this happens, there can be little damage to the surrounding vegetation, leaving people puzzled as to what caused the home to burn.

Embers cause the majority of wildfire home ignitions.

Home and Property

WE'VE LEARNED FROM RECENT FIRES. HARDENING YOUR HOME and keeping the 5 feet closest to your house clear of flammable materials (including patio furniture and décor) greatly improves its chance of surviving a fire.

Maintaining defensible space is the law within 100 feet of a home in wildfire-prone areas, and highly recommended elsewhere. If a garage, shed, your neighbor's house, or the property line is closer than 100 feet, it is especially important to harden your home to reduce vulnerability to radiant heat and to work together with your neighbors to reduce risk—a great way to build community while protecting assets.

See the *California Fire Safe Council, Defensible Space* brochure for more information.



KEY ELEMENTS OF DEFENSIBLE SPACE

- ✓ Keep your gutters and roofs clear of leaves and debris.
- ✓ Maintain a 5-foot noncombustible zone around your home and deck.
- ✓ Break up fuel by creating space between plants, and between the ground and the branches of trees.
- ✓ Mow grass to a height of 4 inches.
- ✓ Keep mulch away from the house. Bark mulch helps plants retain water but ignites and becomes flying embers during a wind-driven fire.
- ✓ During a wildfire move anything burnable—such as patio furniture or gas BBQ tanks—30 feet away from structures.

Helpful Resources

The **CALIFORNIA FIRE SAFE COUNCIL** (CFSC) helps coordinate a strong network of partnerships with local, regional, state, and national organizations in order to help California residents acquire the education, resources, and tools they need to be better prepared for wildfire.

For more information:

FireSafeCouncil.org • ReadyForWildfire.org

Contact your local Fire Safe Council to get involved.



For building codes in California, visit
Office of the State Fire Marshal:
[OSFM.Fire.ca.gov/CodeDevelopment/
WildFireProtectionBuildingConstruction](http://OSFM.Fire.ca.gov/CodeDevelopment/WildFireProtectionBuildingConstruction)

Additional Hardened Home Information:
ReadyForWildfire.org/Hardening-Your-Home
DisasterSafety.org/ibhs/ibhs-Wildfire-Publications
UCANR.edu/Sites/Fire/Prepare/Building

Sign up for CAL FIRE Alerts:

ReadyForWildfire.org/Ready-for-Wildfire-App

Look for an emergency alert system in your county.

ALWAYS CALL 911 FOR EMERGENCIES

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