

#PlantsDoThat To Reduce Wildfire Risk!

Landscape plants play an important role in creating a defensible space to help protect homes from wildfires.

Healthy Lawns Defend Homes

Well-maintained, healthy lawns help prevent the spread of fire and can be used in creating a defensible space around homes.¹

Remove Invasive Plants

If you have non-native, invasive plants on your property, take steps to remove them. These plants can impact native ecosystems increasing fire intensity or frequency.²

Right Plant, Proper Care

Proper plant selection can help reduce wildfire risk around homes and other structures. Even more important than plant selection, proper plant care and maintenance (pruning and watering) can help reduce wildfire risk around homes and other structures.^{3,4}



Landscape Design Reduces Vulnerability

Fire-wise landscape design and proper placement and maintenance of plants immediately surrounding a home (home ignition zone), can help reduce your home's vulnerability to wildfire.⁵

Moisture-Rich Leaves Resist Fires

All plants are capable of burning under the right circumstances, but plants that are more fire-resistant tend to have a high level of moisture content in their leaves.⁶

Choose Fire Wise Trees

In addition to higher moisture content in their leaves, fire-wise trees and shrubs generally have: an open and loose branching pattern, tend not to accumulate a lot of dead branches and leaves in the canopy, broad and thick leaves, and low resins and oil content.⁷

This infographic was produced by the NICH Environmental Committee: Amy Jo Detweiler, Carl Evensen, Allison Gault, Sarada Krishnan, Lauren Garcia Chance, Gail Langellotto, Julie Weisenhorn, Sabrena Schweyer. Design provided by the Horticultural Research Institute.

¹Healthy Lawns Defend Homes: Barkley et al. 2005. Protecting and landscaping homes in the wildland/urban interface. University of Idaho Extension Station Bulletin No. 67.

²Remove Invasive Plants: Brooks et al. 2004. Effects of invasive alien plants on fire regimes. BioScience 54(7): 677-688.

³White & Zipperer. 2010. Testing and classification of individual plants for fire behaviour: plant selection for the wildland-urban interface. International Journal of Wildland Fire 19:213-227.

⁴Schwilke. 2003. Flammability is a niche construction trait: canopy architecture affects fire

intensity. Am Nat. 162:725-733.

⁵Landscape Design Reduces Vulnerability: Doran et al. 2004. Fire in the wildland-urban interface: selecting and maintaining fire-wise plants for landscaping. University of Florida, Institute of Food and Agricultural Services, Florida Cooperative Extension Service Circular 1445. (Gainesville, FL)

⁶Moisture Rich-Leaves Resist Fires: Doran et al.

2004. Fire in the wildland-urban interface: selecting and maintaining fire-wise plants for landscaping. University of Florida, Institute of Food and Agricultural Services, Florida Cooperative Extension Service Circular 1445. (Gainesville, FL)

⁷Choose Firewise Trees: Etlinger & Beall. 2004. Development of a laboratory protocol for fire performance of landscape plants. International Journal of Wildland Fire 13: 479-488.

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