

# Landscaping Checklist



## Fuel Reduction

To create a Firewise landscape, remember that the primary goal is fuel reduction. The **fuel is vegetation**. To this end, initiate the zone concept. Zone 1 is closest to the structure; Zones 2-4 move progressively further away.

- **Zone 1.** This area encircles the home 5 feet on all sides. Have nothing flammable here. Keep this area clean and clear of trees, brush, debris and tall grass.
- **Zone 2.** Maintain a well-kept lawn that encircles the house at least 30 feet on all sides. Place low-growing plants and well-spaced trees in this area, remembering to keep the volume of vegetation (fuel) low. Plantings should be kept small and limited to carefully spaced fire resistant species. Hardwood trees should be at least 10 feet from the house, with at least 15 feet between tree crowns. Avoid highly flammable species like cedar and pines.
- **Zone 3.** This area encircles the home up to 100 feet on all sides. Reduce forest debris and thin trees and vegetation in this area. Homes on steep slopes and in pine forests are particularly vulnerable; so more vegetation removal is necessary.
- **Zone 4.** This furthest area from the home is the natural area or forest. If you have such an area, thin selectively here, and remove highly flammable vegetation.

## Important Points

- Leave a minimum of 30 feet of open space around the house to accommodate fire suppression equipment, in the event of an emergency.
- Carefully space the trees you plant.
- Take out the "ladder fuels" vegetation that serves as a link between grass and tree tops. These fire ladders can act as a path for fire to climb from the ground into tree branches, then onto homes.
- Give yourself added protection with "fuel breaks" like a lawn, driveways, gravel walkways, raised beds, rock gardens, patios and a swimming pool.

## Maintaining a Landscape

- Keep trees and shrubs pruned.
- Remove leaf clutter and dead and overhanging branches.
- Mow your lawn regularly.
- Dispose of cuttings and debris promptly, according to local regulations.
- Store firewood away from the house.
- Store and use flammable liquids properly.
- Dispose of smoking materials carefully.
- Become familiar with local regulations regarding open-air burning, debris disposal and vegetative clearances.