

# Protecting your home from wildfires: The Yellow Zone



Red Zone

Orange Zone

10m <-----> 30m

Yellow Zone

**Protecting your home and family against wildfires may seem overwhelming. But it doesn't have to be.**

Consider the 30-metre area surrounding your home as three separate zones: the **Red Zone** (the area immediately surrounding your home), the **Orange Zone** (the area between 1.5 and 10 metres around your home) and the Yellow Zone (the area that extends up to 30 metres from your home).

From regular home and yard maintenance to simple upgrades, there are proactive measures you can take in each of these zones to lower the risk of a wildfire destroying your biggest investment. Here are some things you can do in the zone furthest away from your home.

**The Yellow Zone: 10 metres to 30 metres around your home**

## Space trees 3 metres apart

When a fire is spreading from treetops, it can move quickly if trees are close together. By spacing trees at least 3m apart (and ensuring that there are 3 metres between the outermost branches of trees as well), you can help reduce the risk of this happening.

### Fire-resistant trees:

Deciduous trees are leafy and resistant to wildfire. These include:

- Poplar
- Birch
- Aspen
- Cottonwood
- Maple
- Alder
- Ash
- Cherry

### Flammable trees:

Coniferous trees have cones and needles, are highly flammable and should not be planted within 10 metres of your home. These include:

- Spruce
- Fir
- Pine
- Cedar



## Types of wildfires

There are two kinds of wildfires: surface fires and crown fires. Surface fires are when ground material like leaves, pine needles, shrubs and grass burn. These fires can quickly surround a home and cause damage, if not contained. Crown fires are those that burn along the tree canopy. These wildfires travel from tree to tree and can result in embers and sparks travelling by wind to other areas, spreading the fire quickly.

Ensure you have addressed the threats closest to your home by fireproofing your Red Zone. In your Orange Zone, you should look any threats caused by landscaping, deck and outer buildings. In your Yellow Zone, your focus should be on the trees surrounding your property. The goal of this zone is not to stop fire, but to reduce the fire's intensity. You don't have to forgo having trees around your home, just think about what trees you plant, and where.

## Prune your trees often

A surface fire can climb trees quickly, so don't give it a chance to spread. Remove all branches within 2 metres of the ground so fire can't travel up to the treetops. Prune the branches close to the tree trunk, being careful not to get so close that you damage the trunk or bark. It is recommended to prune all trees within 30 metres of your home, and within 100 metres of your home if possible.

## Thinning large areas of trees

Thinning and pruning trees and reducing vegetation and branches in larger areas can help reduce the intensity and spread rate of a fire. Here's how:

- Remove smaller trees that can help fire climb into the treetops.
- Clear any dry debris and flammable shrubs on the ground.
- Remove all low hanging branches
- If you live on a hill, take extra precautions since fire moves fastest uphill. Do some extra pruning and thinning on the area below your home.

While addressing your Yellow Zone threats can go a long way to help prevent wildfires from spreading towards your home, it is also important to work on the threats in the **Orange** and **Red Zones**. By minimizing the threats in each of the zones you can maximize the ways to keep your family and home safe during wildfire season.