

Protecting your home from wildfires: The Orange Zone



Red Zone



1.5m <-----> 10m

Orange Zone



Yellow Zone

When you're tackling fire threats, visually divide the area around your home into three Zones.

Consider the area closest to your house as the **Red Zone**. Since it poses the biggest threat, it makes sense to start your fireproofing there. Once you have taken proactive steps to minimize fire threats there, you can begin to move away from your home and address the Orange Zone. Here, too, it's critical to manage any potential threats so that flammable elements don't spread fire to your home. Here are some of the steps you can take.

The Orange Zone: 1.5 metres to 10 metres from your home

Planting a low-threat yard

FireSmart Canada suggests choosing **fire-resistant plants and shrubs** to help slow down a fire from reaching your home. Avoid highly flammable plants such as cedar, juniper, pine, tall grass, and spruce trees in this zone. Plant at least 1.5 metres away to help reduce the risk of spreading fire. When deciding on your plants, consider the following:

Fire-resistant plants have:

- Moist and supple leaves
- Minimal accumulation of dead vegetation
- Low amount of sap or resin
- Water-like sap with little odour

Highly flammable plants have:

- Aromatic leaves or needles
- Accumulates fine, dry, dead vegetation
- Resins or oils
- Loose, papery, or flaky bark



Use your yard work to help fireproof

Regular yard maintenance doesn't just keep your yard looking great, it can also greatly reduce your chances of a wildfire spreading to your home.

- Keep grass shorter than 10 cm.
- Remove dry leaves, branches, pine needles and debris in your yard and gutters to reduce the chances for embers to ignite.
- The rot on older deciduous trees can be susceptible to wildland fire, so consider replacing these trees.
- Remove combustible shrubs located beneath trees.

Pile firewood at least 10 metres from your home

Without question, a wood pile at the side of your home is very convenient in the winter. Unfortunately, it's also very fire friendly. Instead of piling wood steps from your home, store your wood in your Yellow Zone (10-30 metres from your home) or in a fireproof building.

Choose non-flammable groundcover

Instead of using highly flammable bark or pine needle mulch near your home, use gravel or crushed rock mulch. These will significantly lower the risk of spreading wildland fire.

Power lines should be clear of branches and vegetation

Are your plants touching overhead electrical lines? These can cause a fire or help a fire to spread. Contact your local utility provider before attempting remove these yourself.

Shoring up the Red and Orange Zones around your home will help reduce potential wildland fires from invading your home. Take the final step and tackle the **Yellow Zone** to help reduce the intensity of any approaching fires.