

## HOW-TO TIPS: Create a *Defensible Space* for Your Home

**Defensible space** is an area that will help protect your home and provide a safety zone for firefighters. Your Firewise home has a better chance of surviving a wildland fire.

### **Inspect the perimeter of all structures**

- Remove or mow vegetation and combustible materials from perimeters and under decks. Screen windows and openings. Remove Liquid Propane (LP) tanks from outdoor grills.

### **Treat vegetation** between 30 to 100 feet from your home (increase distances downslope)

- Thin needle-bearing trees to 15 feet between extending branches.
- Prune tree branches up 6-8 feet from the ground.
- Remove shrubs and mow grass under trees.
- Remove dead vegetation.

### **Locate fuels** and label fuel tanks, clear vegetation within a 10-foot perimeter of fuel storage. Relocate mobile tanks such as gasoline and LP to a safe zone if possible.

- Wood piles should be at least 30 feet from any structure and have a clear 10-foot perimeter.
- Junk piles are fire hazards. Move discarded items outside of the home's 30 foot perimeter.

### **Wet vulnerable surfaces** & make your water supply accessible

- When you learn of an approaching fire, use your regular hose system to wet down the roof, decks and yard.
- Have an alternative water supply available that does not require electricity. Water barrels that can be accessed by fire crews can be an asset for fire protection.

### **Provide Fast Access to Your Home**

- Maintain a 12-foot wide driveway with a turnaround.
- Clear vegetation back away from driveway edges.
- Maintain a 14 foot vertical clearance for the length of your driveway.
- Clearly Identify Your Home; post your address number on your home.
- Community road signs should be maintained to support emergency response; Post street and road names in your area.

### **Have a Safety Plan**

- Have a Home fire safety and an escape plan to help ensure your family's safe exit in the event of a house fire.
- Test fire alarms, Carbon Monoxide Alarms and Fire Extinguishers for proper function.
- Stay alert and informed.

Find these tips and more at: <http://forestry.alaska.gov/pdfs/firewise09.pdf>

or <http://www.firewise.net/>