

How resilient to wildland fire is your home and property? Walk around your home and answer the questions below. Then consider implementing the recommended actions as you perform maintenance and renovations in each of the three Home Ignition Zones.

IMMEDIATE ZONE
0 m to 1.5 m

The Immediate Zone should be a non-combustible area that starts at the house and extends to a 1.5 metre perimeter around the home and any attachments. Treat outbuildings to the same standards as your home.

1. Does the structure have acceptable fire-rated roofing material?

- YES** A Class-A fire-rated roof assembly offers the best protection. Metal, asphalt, clay, and composite rubber tiles are all options. Untreated wood shakes create a dangerous combination of combustible material and crevices for embers or sparks to accumulate and enter. Refer to manufacturers' guidelines to maintain the fire resistance of your roof.
- NO** →

2. Are the roof and gutters non-combustible and clean of debris?

- YES** Every inside-corner of your roof is a place where debris and embers can collect. Regularly check and clean combustible debris, like needles and leaves, from the roof and gutters. Consider installing commercial screens or covers over gutters to reduce debris accumulation.
- NO** →

3. Are the eaves enclosed?

YES

Open eaves create a surface for embers and radiant heat. Consider enclosing eaves with properly fitted soffits and fascia to reduce the risk of embers and heat from reaching the wooden rafters of your home.

NO

4. Are the vents non-combustible and screened?

YES

Unscreened vents can allow embers to enter a building. With the exception of dryer vents, install non-combustible vents with 3 mm metal screening in order to limit embers from accessing your home. Ensure dryer vents are clean and operational.

NO

5. Is exterior siding non-combustible or ignition-resistant?

YES

Some types of construction material, like vinyl siding, can melt when exposed to high temperatures allowing the fire to reach the underlying wall components and penetrate the interior of the building. Stucco, metal, brick, concrete, and fibre cement siding offer superior fire resistance.

NO

6. Is exterior siding free of gaps, holes, or other areas where embers can accumulate?

YES

Examine your siding for locations where embers could accumulate or lodge. Be sure to fix any holes and gaps in exterior siding in order to prevent embers from igniting your home.

NO

7. Are windows multi-pane or tempered glass?

YES

Single pane glass windows are highly vulnerable to breakage from radiant heat exposures that can occur during wildland fires. Multi-pane windows are less vulnerable and tempered glass windows are least vulnerable.

NO

8. Are exterior doors non-combustible, or fire-rated?

YES

All doors into your home should be fire-rated, or non-combustible and have a good seal. This is also true for garage doors.

NO

9. Are exterior walls protected with a minimum 15 cm vertical non-combustible ground-to-siding clearance?

YES

Creating a non-combustible vertical ground-to-siding clearance can be achieved by lowering the level of the ground to expose the foundation walls. It can also be achieved by replacing the first 15 cm of combustible siding with non-combustible siding material or flashing. This will limit the risk of siding igniting as a result of ember accumulation at the base of the building.

NO

10. Is the deck/porch enclosed?

YES

Consider enclosing the underside of the deck or porch with non-combustible sheathing, as this will act as a shield against embers. Moving combustible materials stored underneath the deck to the Extended Zone, or storing inside a FireSmart-mitigated building, will limit potential for those materials to ignite.

NO

11. Is the deck/porch made with fire-rated materials?

YES

Non-combustible, or fire-rated deck or porch materials are ideal when it comes to reducing your wildland fire risk. A non-combustible surface should be under the deck and extend for 1.5 metres out from its perimeter.

NO

12. Are combustible materials and landscaping materials free from this zone?

YES

Reduce the chance of wind-blown embers igniting materials near your home. A non-combustible surface should extend around the structure and any attachments such as decks. Creating a non-combustible surface can be as easy as clearing flammable materials and vegetation. No grass or plants of any type should be present in this zone.

NO

INTERMEDIATE ZONE

1.5 m to 10 m

Elements in the Intermediate Zone are managed so they don't transmit fire to your home.

1. Is the lawn cut to a length of 10 cm or less?

YES

NO

Mowing and maintaining the lawn to a height of 10 cm or less will limit flame intensity and/or spread.

2. Is the yard free of combustible debris?

YES

NO

Regularly remove accumulations of combustible debris like needles, leaves, and branches. Ensure that all combustible materials, like woodpiles, building materials, patio furniture, recreation vehicles etc., are moved into the Extended Zone, or a FireSmart-mitigated building.

3. Are garden beds lined with crushed rock/decorative gravel?

YES

NO

Organic mulch like bark or pine needles are highly combustible. Crushed rock or decorative gravel significantly reduce the risk of damage from wildland fire.

4. Does landscaping include fire-resistant plants?

YES

NO

Create a landscape that will not easily transmit fire to your home. Selecting fire-resistant plants can increase the likelihood of your home surviving a wildland fire.

5. Are coniferous trees pruned to a height of 2 metres?

YES

NO

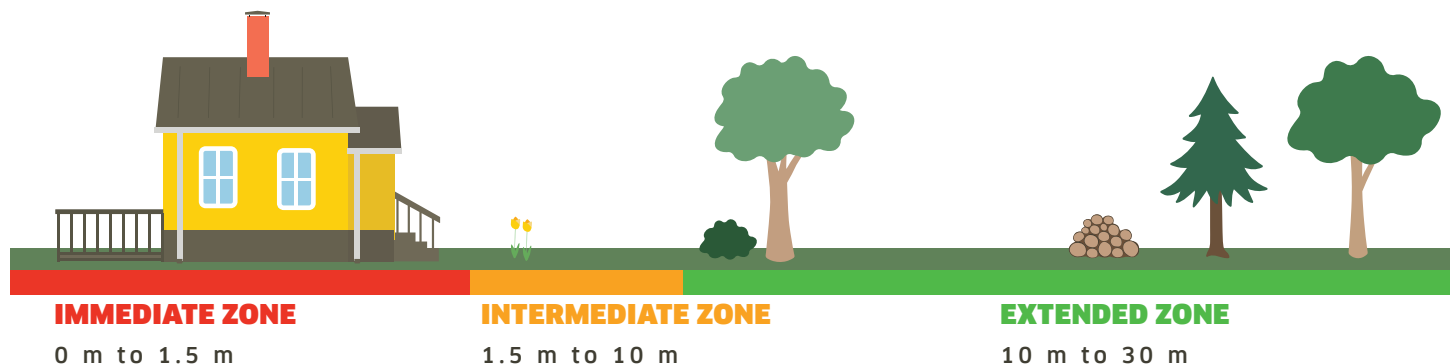
A surface fire can climb trees quickly. Removing all coniferous branches within 2 metres from the ground will help stop surface fires from moving into the treetops.

6. Are coniferous trees spaced at least 3 metres apart?

YES

NO

Spacing coniferous trees at least 3 metres apart from crown-to-crown will reduce the risk of tree-to-tree fire transmission.



EXTENDED ZONE

10 m to 30 m

The focus in the Extended Zone is not to eliminate fire, but to reduce its intensity.

1. Are all firewood piles and other combustible materials located within the Extended Zone?

- YES Firewood and combustibles are major fire hazards. Moving all combustible material into the Extended Zone, or into a FireSmart-mitigated building, is critical to reducing wildland fire risk.
- NO

2. Are coniferous trees pruned to a height of 2 metres?

- YES A surface fire can climb trees quickly. Removing all coniferous branches within 2 metres from the ground will help stop surface fires from moving into the treetops.
- NO

3. Are coniferous trees spaced at least 3 metres apart?

- YES Spacing coniferous trees at least 3 metres apart from crown-to-crown will reduce the risk of tree-to-tree fire transmission.
- NO

4. Have accumulations of fallen branches, dry grass, and needles on the ground been removed?

- YES Cleaning up accumulations of fallen branches, dry grass, and needles will reduce potential surface fuels.
- NO



WHAT'S NEXT?

The Home Ignition Zone Self-Assessment is a great step to help you on the path to wildland fire resiliency, but there are many factors that can influence your level of preparedness! So, what else can you do to be prepared?



Take FireSmart 101, our free online course, for a deeper dive into FireSmart and how homes ignite.



Create an evacuation plan. Find the Last-Minute Checklist on our website.



Contact your local FireSmart Coordinator or Representative for a professional assessment of your home or neighbourhood.



Reach out to info@firesmartbc.ca with any questions.



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