

Hot tips to keep you wildfire ready

Last year, nearly 70,000 wildfires burned 9.3 million acres and destroyed more than 2,100 houses in the U.S. **Continuing drought** and predicted **higher-than-normal temperatures** this year set the stage for another potentially devastating wildfire season. With a little planning and effort, you **CAN** reduce the risk of wildfire damage to your property.



Christian Murdock, *CS Gazette*

What is the #1 action you can take NOW to beat the odds of wildfire damage and destruction to your home?

CREATE A DEFENSIBLE PERIMETER!

Think of anything near or attached to your home that could serve as a potential “wick.” By focusing on the area surrounding the house, you can eliminate natural “fuels” to slow down an encroaching fire, and disable any flying embers from igniting the structure. Embers carried by wind are a greater threat to your home than actual wildfire flames!

Implement these low- or no-cost steps to defend your property from wildfires:

- ▶ Clear leaves, pine needles and other debris from house gutters, eaves, porches and decks.
- ▶ Remove tree branches that overhang or touch the roof.
- ▶ Clear all pine needles, wood mulch or other organic material surrounding the structure and replace with hard surfaces, such as concrete walkways or noncombustible material such as rock.
- ▶ Keep lawns well hydrated.
- ▶ Remove dead plant material. Prune healthy plants to remove dead branches, stems and leaves.
- ▶ Keep firewood at least 30 FEET away from any structures – and uphill if possible.
- ▶ Remove diseased, dead or dying trees and shrubs.
- ▶ Thin out trees to create at least 10 feet of clear space between the widest point of each tree.
- ▶ Remove ladder fuels by pruning tree branches up to a height of 15 feet (or 1/3 of the tree’s height) from the ground and remove shrubs positioned under the tree line.
- ▶ Relocate propane tanks at least 30 FEET from your home.

Be sure to protect your home – and your heart – from the devastation of a wildfire!