

FUEL TREATMENTS



WHAT ARE FUEL TREATMENTS?: Fuels are any combustible biomass from tiny twigs and conifer needles to shrubs and downed trees. Fuel treatments involve the strategic reduction and removal of flammable materials on the landscape.

WHY ARE THEY IMPORTANT?: When fuels accumulate wildfires burn hotter, faster, and longer. Fuel treatments aim to remove enough vegetation so that if and when a fire occurs the burn is less severe, less intense, and can be more easily managed. Fuel treatments help reduce the probability of catastrophic fire, reduce the threat to public and firefighter safety, and reduce damage to property.

HOW ARE THEY PERFORMED?: Treatments can include fire and non-fire treatments such as pruning, thinning, chipping, and prescribed fire. A combination of treatments is often the most effective course of action.



HAND THINNING

Hand thinning is done by crews to remove brush and small diameter trees from stands that are too dense.



MECHANICAL TREATMENTS

These treatments utilize heavy equipment, such as bulldozers and wood chippers. These treatments increase forest openings and reduce overall density by removing trees of all size classes.



PILE BURNING

After hand thinning treatments, piles of slash are left behind. Burning these piles helps reduce hazardous fuels in locations where chipping or removal are not feasible. Pile burning is regulated by permitting agencies within the state.

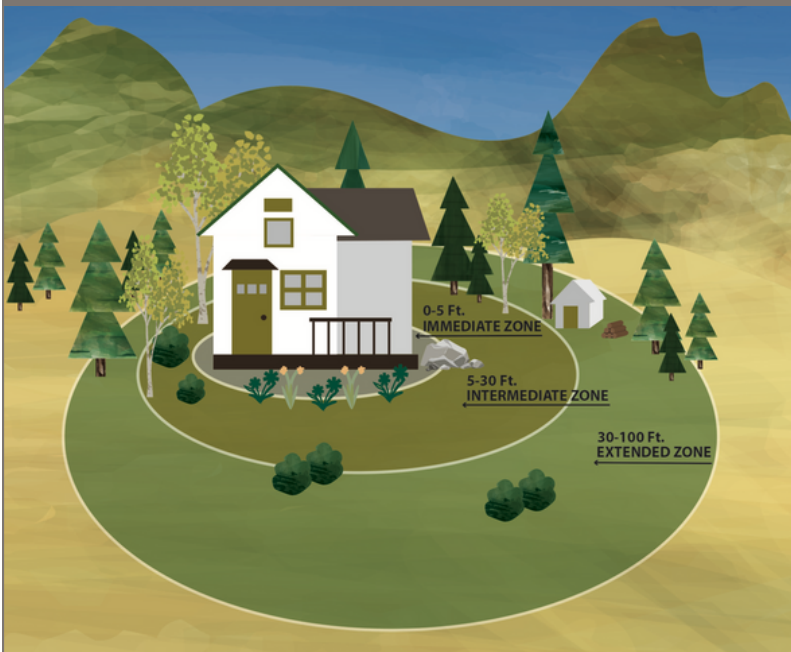
ADDITIONALLY, FUEL TREATMENTS BENEFIT LOCAL ECOSYSTEMS BY REDUCING FOREST DENSITY, IMPROVING WILDLIFE HABITAT, AND INCREASING UNDERSTORY BIODIVERSITY.



COMMUNITY RESOURCES:

DNR Forestry, Fire, and State Lands information on reducing wildfire risk can be found here: <https://ffsl.utah.gov/fire/catastrophic-wildfire-risk-reduction/>

DEFENSIBLE SPACE



WHAT IS DEFENSIBLE SPACE?

Defensible space is the buffer that you create between your home and the surrounding forest. Defensible space can help to slow, or even stop, the spread of fire. It can also protect your home from catching fire.

There are three zones that comprise the recommended 100 feet of defensible space. For each zone, there are recommended actions that can help prevent the spread of fire.

IMMEDIATE ZONE

Location: 0-5 feet from home

Goal: Create a non-combustible buffer

Remove dead branches, dried leaves, pine needles, firewood, and other flammable material in this area.

Remove any overhanging branches and vegetation from roof and gutters.

Replace mulch with gravel, stone, or other non-combustible materials.

INTERMEDIATE ZONE

Location: 5-30 feet from home

Goal: Reduce flammable materials close to your home

Prune tree limbs up 6-10 feet from the ground to prevent the spread of surface fire. For shorter trees, remove limbs on the lower third of the tree.

Space trees out so there are at least 10 feet between the crowns.

Plant deciduous trees rather than conifer trees.

Water plants, grasses, and trees to prevent them from drying out

Mow lawns and native grasses to a height of 4 inches.

EXTENDED ZONE

Location: 30-100 feet from home

Goal: Slow the movement of flames and reduce heat

Reduce heavy accumulations of slash (dead branches, twigs, etc.)

Thin trees by removing small conifers growing underneath mature trees.

Remove vegetation and other flammable materials adjacent to outbuildings.

Space trees so that there are at least 12 feet between the crowns for trees 30-60 feet from your home, and at least 6 feet for trees 60-100 feet from your home.

CREATING AND MAINTAINING DEFENSIBLE SPACE IS AN ONGOING TASK, BUT TAKING STEPS TO MANAGE VEGETATION ON YOUR PROPERTY CAN INCREASE THE CHANCE THAT YOUR HOME WILL SURVIVE A FIRE. ANY ACTION IS BETTER THAN NO ACTION.



COMMUNITY RESOURCES:

National Fire Protection Association: <https://www.nfpa.org/Public-Education/Fire-causes-and-risks/Wildfire/Firewise-USA>

HOME HARDENING



WHAT IS HOME HARDENING?

Home hardening is the process of reinforcing vulnerable areas and using fire-resistant building materials in order to safeguard your home.

While creating defensible space around your home can guard against contact with flames, hardening your home can help keep embers out. Embers are one of the biggest threats to your home during a fire: two out of every three homes destroyed by wildfire are ignited by wind-borne embers.



ROOF: Use Class A fire-rated materials when building or replacing your roof; replace or repair loose or missing shingles or roof tiles; remove any plant materials on or overhanging the roof.



VENTS & CHIMNEYS: Cover all vents with 1/8" metal mesh; ensure laundry vents have flapper closures; install a spark arrestor on your chimney; install baffles on eaves or cornices.



WINDOWS & SKYLIGHTS: Install double-pane windows, making sure that one pane is tempered glass; replace plastic skylights with double-pane glass; replace or repair damaged window screens and broken windows.



DECKS & PORCHES: Build decks with ignition-resistant, non-combustible materials; remove anything stored underneath decks or porches and install screen to prevent accumulation of debris; use metal flashing between the deck and house.



GUTTERS: Use metal, not plastic gutters; remove debris from gutters regularly; screen or otherwise enclose gutters to prevent accumulation.

EVALUATING AND MAINTAINING YOUR HOME ON AN ANNUAL BASIS IS AN IMPORTANT STEP IN PROTECTING YOUR HOME FROM WILDFIRE.

COMMUNITY RESOURCES:



Visit <https://www.readyforwildfire.org/prepare-for-wildfire/get-ready/hardening-your-home/> for more information

WILDFIRE PREVENTION 101: FIRE-RESISTANT LANDSCAPING



WHAT IS FIRE-RESISTANT LANDSCAPING?

Fire-resistant landscaping involves the careful planning, planting, and ongoing maintenance of a landscape. The goal of this is to reduce the risk of fire damage to structures and residents, while retaining elements of the native ecosystem.

During a fire, everything on your property can become fuel - choosing fire-resistant plants, ensuring proper spacing, and maintaining your property can all help prevent the spread of fire.



Avoid planting fire-prone plants, take care to avoid:

- Plants with high oil or resin content
- Plants with low moisture content
- Plants that accumulate dead materials



For conifers on your property:

- Eliminate ladder fuels underneath trees
- Prune branches to a height of 6-10 feet above the ground; on smaller trees prune to 1/3 the height of the tree.
- Maintain crown spacing of 10 feet, or more if on a slope.



Broadleaf, deciduous trees like aspen, maple, cottonwood, and oak are generally less flammable than conifers like pines, firs, and spruces.



For recommended plant species and other tips, check out the resource below:

LANDSCAPES CAN NEVER BE COMPLETELY FIRE-PROOF, BUT TAKING ACTION CAN HELP TO PROTECT YOUR PROPERTY IN CASE OF FIRE



COMMUNITY RESOURCES:

DNR Forestry, Fire, and State Lands Firewise Landscaping for Utah Guide can be found here: ffsl.utah.gov/wp-content/uploads/FirewiseLandscaping07.pdf

PILE BURNING



SLASH PILES

Left behind after mechanical or hand thinning treatments, slash piles are created in locations where chipping or removal is not feasible.

WHAT ARE ALL OF THOSE PILES?

- Pile burning is a type of fuel treatment. The purposed of fuel treatments is to reduce available fuels which in turn can reduce the intensity and severity of wildfire.
- Thinning and pile burning are a commonly used and cost effective combination of fuel treatments.

HOW DO YOU DECIDE WHEN TO BURN?

Criteria for pile burning includes:

- Local conditions that support smoke dispersal
- Snow/precipitation present in the burn area or pile
- Availability of adequate tools and staffing



PILE BURNING

Slash piles typically need to dry out before being burned. Burns occur when conditions are favorable and all burns are regulated.

ARE PILE BURNS REGULATED?

YES!

- All burns in Summit County are subject to state permit requirements.
- Burns are regulated by the Utah Division of Air Quality (DAQ) and are monitored for compliance with the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS).
- State Administrative Codes for “General Burning” (R307-202), “Smoke Management” (R307-204), and “Prescribed Burning” (R307-240) regulate burns.

WHAT ABOUT THE SMOKE?

A report from the American Lung Association concluded that burning in a controlled environment has significantly fewer air quality impacts than an uncontrolled wildfire event. While pile burning still emits smoke, the idea is that these smaller, preventative burns today can help prevent catastrophic fire tomorrow.



Parley's Canyon fire, Aug. 14, 2021
Trent Nelson, Salt Lake Tribune

ANNUAL HOME SAFETY CHECKLIST

Fire dangers can develop and accrue each year. Evaluate and maintain your home and surroundings on an annual basis, and use this checklist to get started.



Remove dead leaves, debris, and pine needles from roof and gutters.



Replace or repair any loose or missing shingles on your roof.



Check for the existence and stability of all under-eave, soffit vents, and screens.



Cover attic vents with wire mesh no larger than 1/8 inch.



Repair any damaged or loose window screens and any broken windows.



Check the existence and stability of screens or barriers under patios and decks.



Move any flammable material including mulch, firewood, pine needles, away from exterior walls.



Remove anything stored underneath decks or porches.



Remove or thin any vegetation within 100 feet of your home or other structures



Use County chipping service for disposal.

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