

# Washington State Patrol Media Release

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## **The Home Ignition Zone – Protecting your home from wildfire**

Wildfires have become increasingly common in the wildland/urban interface (WUI) as more people move to remote areas creating an environment where fire can move readily between structures and vegetation. Emergency response can be difficult in these isolated and undeveloped areas. There is no guarantee that firefighters will be able to save your home if a wildfire occurs so it is imperative that property owners in the WUI understand the risks and prepare appropriately.

The Home Ignition Zone (HIZ) includes the home and adjacent surroundings within 100 to 200 feet. The relationship between the home and all material surrounding the home, including neighboring homes, ultimately determines what treatments are required. The ignition potential of the HIZ largely influences the effectiveness of protection during a wildfire. Your goal is to prepare your home for wildfire by reducing the ignition potential before a fire occurs.

Follow these helpful guidelines for your landscape and home construction –

Lean:

- Mow the lawn regularly.
- Prune shrubs and cut back tree branches – the lowest branches should be at least 6’-10’ from the ground and should not overhang any part of your home.

Clean:

- Remove dead vegetation, such as leaves and pine needles from gutters, under your deck and within 10’ of your home.

- Take out ladder fuels – material on or near the ground that will carry fire to the crown of the tree.
- Firewood stacks should be at least 30’ from the home.

Green:

- Plant fire-resistant vegetation and water plants, grass and trees regularly to ensure that they are healthy and green, especially during fire season.

Construction:

- Use Class A, B or C rated roofing material (fire-resistant)
- Use fire-resistant building materials on exterior walls, overhangs and attachments
- Use double-paned or tempered glass in windows, skylights and doors
- Enclose eaves, fascias, soffits and vents

The recent wildfires in Florida and the events last year in Southern California should serve as examples to residents in the WUI about properly preparing for fire season. More than 160 homes in Florida and over 2,000 in Southern California were damaged or destroyed in the fires – all were in WUI areas. One Florida official stated that a home with defensible space and a clean roof had a less than one percent chance of igniting while an unprepared home had an almost twenty-five percent chance of igniting.



*Photo Courtesy of NIFC Interagency Fire Prevention*

*The Office of the State Fire Marshal is a Bureau of the Washington State Patrol, providing fire and life safety services to the citizens of Washington State including inspections of state licensed facilities, plan review of school construction projects, licensing of fire sprinkler contractors and pyrotechnic operators, training Washington State’s firefighters, and collecting emergency response data.*

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**PREVENT FIRES**  
**IT'S YOUR JOB!**