

## Firewise Landscaping Checklist

When designing and installing a Firewise landscape, consider the following:

- Local area fire history.
- Site location and overall terrain.
- Prevailing winds and seasonal weather.
- Property contours and boundaries.
- Native vegetation.
- Plant characteristics and placement (water, resin, and salt content, fuel load ratios and size).
- Irrigation requirements.



To create a Firewise landscape, remember that the primary goal is fuel reduction. To do this, create a series of defensive landscape zones. Zone 1 is closest to the structure and Zones 2-4 move progressively farther away:

- **Zone 1:** This well-irrigated area encircles the structure for at least 30 feet in all sides, providing space for fire suppression equipment in the event of an emergency. Plantings should be limited to carefully spaced, fire-resistant species.
- **Zone 2:** Fire-resistant plant materials should be used here. Plant should be low growing, and the irrigation system should extend into this section.
- **Zone 3:** Place low growing plants and well-spaced trees in this area, remembering to keep the volume of vegetation (fuel) low.
- **Zone 4:** The farthest zone from the structure is often a natural area. Thin selectively here and remove highly flammable vegetation.

Also remember to:

- Leave a minimum of 30 feet around the house to accommodate fire equipment if necessary.
- Carefully space the trees you plant.
- Take out ladder fuels, vegetation that serves as a link between grass and treetops. Ladder fuels can carry fire to a structure or from a structure to vegetation.
- Give yourself added protection with fuel breaks such as driveways, gravel walkways and lawns.

When maintaining a landscape:

- Keep trees and shrubs pruned. Prune all trees from 6 to 10 feet above the ground.
- Remove leaf clutter and dead and overhanging branches.
- Mow your yard regularly.
- Dispose of cuttings and debris promptly, according to local regulations.
- Store firewood away from the house.
- Be sure the irrigation system is well maintained.
- Use care when refueling garden equipment and lawn equipment and maintain it regularly.
- Store and use flammable liquids properly and carefully.
- Become familiar with local regulations regarding vegetative clearance, disposal of debris, and fire safety requirements for equipment.
- Follow manufactures instructions when using fertilizers and pesticides.

For more information, visit [www.mfc.state.ms.us](http://www.mfc.state.ms.us) or [www.firewise.org](http://www.firewise.org), call Leslie Blackwell at (601) 656-1381 or email Leslie Blackwell at [lbackwell@mfc.state.ms.us](mailto:lbackwell@mfc.state.ms.us).

