

*Thirty feet of defensible space may save your house.*

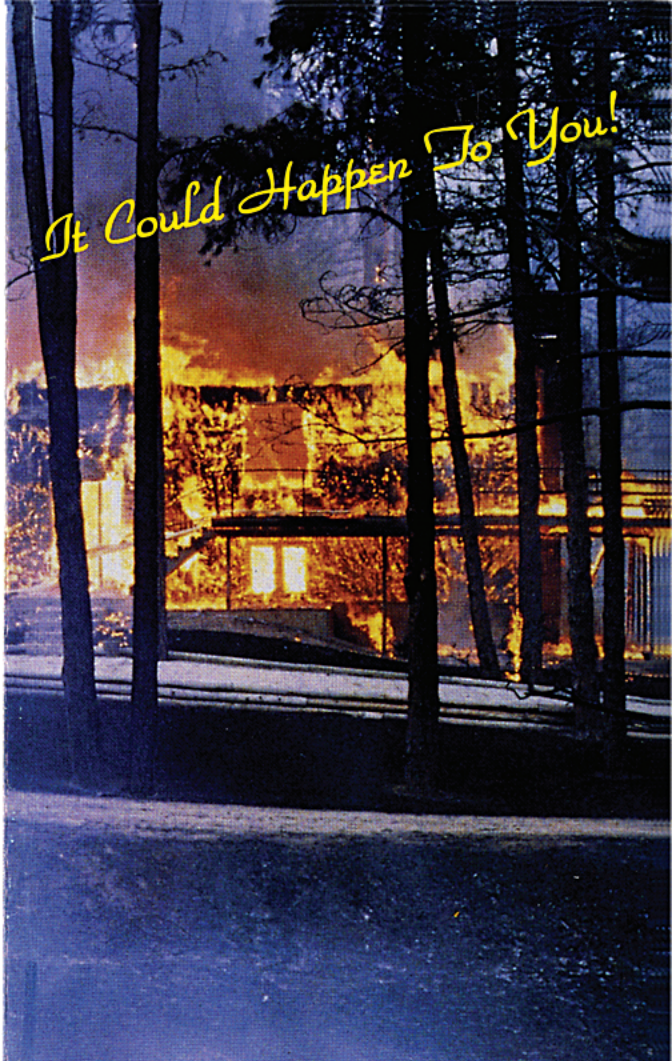
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| <p><b>1</b> Store gasoline and other flammable liquids in approved safety containers and away from occupied buildings.</p> <p><b>2</b> Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) tanks should be far enough away from buildings for valves to be shut off in case of fire. Keep area clear of flammable vegetation.</p> <p><b>3</b> Clean roof surfaces and gutters regularly to avoid accumulation of flammable materials.</p> <p><b>4</b> Maintain a screen constructed of non-flammable material over the flue opening of every chimney or stovepipe. Mesh openings of the screen should not exceed 1/2 inch.</p> <p><b>5</b> Remove portions of any tree extending within 10 feet of the flue opening of any stove or chimney.</p> <p><b>6</b> Remove branches from trees to a height of 10-15 feet.</p> | <p><b>7</b> Have fire tools handy such as: ladder long enough to reach the roof, shovel, rake, and bucket for water.</p> <p><b>8</b> All roads and driveways should be at least 16 feet in width.</p> <p><b>9</b> Name and address should be posted at driveway entrance.</p> <p><b>10</b> Clean leaves and flammable debris from around structures.</p> <p><b>11</b> Each home should have at least 2 different entrance and exit routes.</p> <p><b>12</b> Shrubs should be spaced at least 15 feet apart.</p> <p><b>13</b> Names of roads should be indicated at all intersections.</p> <p><b>14</b> Garden hose should be connected to outlet.</p> | <p><b>15</b> Dispose of stove or fireplace ashes and charcoal briquettes in a fire safe container.</p> <p><b>16</b> All combustibles such as firewood, picnic tables, boats, etc. should be kept away from structures.</p> |
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**For More Information Contact:**



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*It Could Happen To You!*

**How To Protect Your Home**

**Big Rivers Forest Fire Management Compact**  
 USDA, Forest Service,  
 Your State Forester







Every year many families lose their homes and possessions to the ravages of wildfire. These losses can be minimized if home owners take the time and trouble to become aware of safety measures to help protect their homes. By observing the precautions and procedures described in this folder, you can reduce the risk of losing your home to wildfire. Only you can decide if it's worth the effort.

### USE FIRE RESISTANT BUILDING MATERIALS

The roof and exterior structure of your dwelling should be constructed of non-combustible or fire resistant materials such as asphalt roofing shingles, tile, slate, sheet iron, aluminum, brick, or stone. Wood siding, cedar shakes, exterior wood paneling and other highly combustible materials should be treated with fire retardant chemicals.

### BURN SAFELY

Check local laws on burning debris. Some communities allow burning only during specified hours; others forbid it entirely. If debris burning is allowed, take the following precautions:

- ✓ Clear the ground of all flammable materials for at least 10 feet.
- ✓ Have adequate water and fire tools available in case the fire escapes.
- ✓ Don't burn on dry, windy days.
- ✓ Have an adult attend the fire until it is completely out.
- ✓ Notify your local fire department.

### CLEAN YOUR ROOF

Clean roof surfaces and gutters regularly to avoid accumulation of leaves, twigs, pine needles, and other flammable materials.

### KEEP YOUR CHIMNEY CLEAN

At least twice a year, inspect your chimney or have it inspected for an accumulation of soot or creosote. Clean your chimney at least once a year, or more often, if necessary. Keep the dampers in good working order.

### STORE FIREWOOD AWAY FROM YOUR HOME

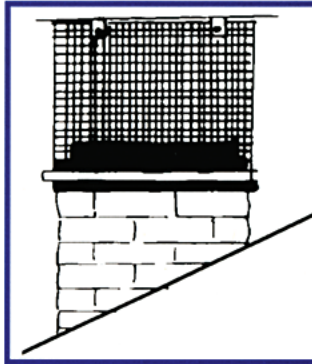
All combustibles such as firewood, picnic tables, boats, etc. should be stored away from structures and out from under decks.

### USE ONLY APPROVED WOOD BURNING UNITS

Install only approved wood burning fireplaces, stoves, and inserts. Be sure they are installed according to the manufacturers' recommendations and local regulations. When you dispose of your stove or fireplace ashes, place ashes in a fire safe container, then dispose of the cold ashes in a cleared area free of all flammable material.

### INSTALL A SPARK ARRESTER

Every home and cabin built in a wooded area should have a spark arrester on its chimney. It should be constructed of non-flammable, corrosive-resistant material. The openings in the mesh should be no larger than 1/2 inch in diameter. Inspect your spark arrester annually for broken mesh and secure installation.



### CONTROL VEGETATION

A fuel break at least 30-feet wide should be established and maintained around all structures, this does not mean bare ground. Wider fuel breaks are needed around buildings located on steep slopes or in areas of dense, highly

flammable fuels.

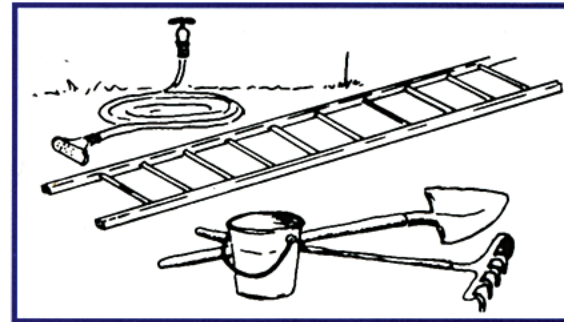
The fuel break area may contain single shade trees and ornamental shrubs that do not allow fire to spread rapidly from native vegetation to buildings. Shrubs and trees should be at least 15 feet apart. Remove branches from trees to a height of 10-15 feet to prevent ground fire from spreading to tops of trees. Trees and vegetation should be kept at least 10 feet away from a chimney or stove pipe. Foundation plantings should be of the fire resistant variety and be free of dead and dying vegetation.

### DEVELOP A WATER SUPPLY

An adequate and reliable water supply is essential to protect structures and natural areas from fires. Water can be supplied in rural areas by wells with high volume pumps. Know the location of near by creeks, river, lakes, and ponds so that firefighters can obtain additional water, if needed. Swimming pools may also be considered a source of additional water supply. A garden hose outlet should be installed on the exterior of each dwelling. One hundred feet of hose should be connected to the outlet to be available to protect all sides of the house and roof.

### HAVE FIRE TOOLS HANDY

Your home should have a supply of fire tools, including the following: a ladder long enough to reach the roof in case of a roof fire, 100-feet of garden hose, a shovel, a rake, and a bucket. These tools should be kept in an easily accessible



place, and all occupants of the house should know where they are.

### PLAN ADEQUATE ACCESS AND ESCAPE

Each home should have at least two different entrance and exit routes, a front door and a back door. All roads leading to

your property should be at least 16-feet wide to allow for easy entrance of fire trucks and the passage of vehicles evacuating the area. Roads should not be located in areas with grades in excess of 12%. Dead-end roads terminating in a cull-de-sac should have a minimum turn-around radius of 60 feet. Names of roads should be clearly indicated at all intersections. The occupants name and address should be prominently posted at the driveway entrance. Bridges should be constructed to support a minimum gross vehicle weight of 30,000 pounds to accommodate fire fighting equipment. Plan a safe escape route for you and your family before a wildfire occurs, and make sure everyone knows the plan. Emergency phone numbers should be posted near the telephone.

### IF A WILDFIRE OCCURS

- ✓ Call the fire department.
- ✓ Close windows and doors to the house and close all inside doors. Take down light drapes and shut every curtain.
- ✓ Place water in containers to fight the fire.
- ✓ Place ladder against front of the house.
- ✓ Turn off gas at the meter or propane tank.
- ✓ Turn on porch and other outside lights.
- ✓ Back car into garage and close garage door. Leave keys in the ignition.
- ✓ If you have a combustible roof, wet it down or turn on roof sprinklers.
- ✓ Evacuate family and pets to a safe location.

After you have done everything on your checklist and the fire is close, it is time to evacuate.

or

If law enforcement and fire authorities permit, and it is safe to do so, an able-bodied member of the household may remain to protect the house.

If the fire cannot be stopped and passes over your home, the safest place for protection is inside the house with all doors and windows closed.

Immediately after the fire passes, check for hot spots for at least six to ten hours.

In a major disaster, fire protection agencies may not have enough equipment and personnel to be at every home. Taking all proper precautions before a wildfire will be your best defense against it.