



DeBordieu Colony Community Association

PROPERTY OWNER'S GUIDE TO FIRE PREPAREDNESS



be PREPARED

be READY

be INFORMED

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FIRE

HOW MUCH DO YOU KNOW ABOUT THE DANGERS OF FIRE?

In the United States, three home fires are reported to fire departments every four minutes. On average, nine people die in a home fire each day. Fire can happen in any home at any time. Don't underestimate the speed and power of a fire. Even a small kitchen fire can turn deadly in a matter of minutes. Fires can spread rapidly through your home engulfing it in smoke and flames which can make an escape nearly impossible. Take the time to walk through your home and follow these simple steps to reduce your chances of having a fire. It could save your life or the life of your family.

HERE ARE SOME BASIC THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW:

- GET OUT AND STAY OUT! Fire won't wait so plan your escape! Make sure everyone knows how to get out and go to a special meeting place.
- Smoke alarms will decrease your chance of dying in a fire by 50%! Make sure you have working smoke alarms!
- Smoke alarms should be on every level of your home, as well as inside and outside each bedroom.
- Test your smoke alarms monthly and replace the batteries twice a year.
- Smoke alarms are good for 7 to 10 years – do you need to replace yours?
- Make sure all windows and doors will open so everyone can get out.
- Stay low and go! If there is smoke, make sure everyone knows to crawl low under smoke.
- Don't be a hoarder! Piles of stuff only act as fuel in a fire. Keep your home clutter free.
- Make sure space heaters are kept at least 3-feet away from anything combustible.
- Be aware of the hazards of lighted candles. Extinguish candles when you leave the room or go to sleep.
- Always stay in the kitchen when cooking.
- If a pan of grease catches fire on the stove do not use water! Turn off the heat and cover with a lid.
- Keep things like oven mitts, wooden utensils and paper towels away from the stove.
- Keep matches and lighters away from children.
- Practice makes perfect! Practice fire drills in your home on a regular basis.



HOW SAFE IS YOUR HOME? Find Out By Going Through This Safety Checklist!

- Are exits clear and unobstructed?
- Are extension cords in good condition (not frayed or cracked) and only used as temporary wiring?
- If multiple items need to be plugged in, is a surge protector being used?
- Are fire extinguishers visible and accessible?
- Is combustible rubbish removed from the building on a regular basis?
- Are oily rags and combustible chemicals stored in a container that limits oxygen or is filled with water?
- Are attic, closets and other storage areas kept neat and clean?
- Do you have working smoke alarms?
- Do you test your smoke alarm batteries monthly and change the batteries twice a year?
- Do you have your chimney and furnace/AC unit cleaned and serviced yearly?
- Are propane tanks stored outside the house?
- Are your address numbers clearly visible from the street?

WILDFIRES

DeBordieu Colony is located in a heavily forested area. In December 2012 DeBordieu Colony earned its status as a FireWise Community/USA. This status promotes wild fire awareness and strategies for improved fire safety for our community.

DO YOU KNOW WHAT DEFENSIBLE SPACE IS?

It is the space between your home and an oncoming wildfire where the vegetation has been modified to reduce the wildfire threat. Keeping this space properly maintained with shorter plants, increased moisture, free from dead branches and leaves, and well mowed provides firefighters with a greater opportunity to effectively and safely defend your home. Routine maintenance is key!

WHAT ITEMS SHOULD I KEEP OUT OF MY DEFENSIBLE SPACE?

Wood piles, lawn furniture, barbeque grills, tarp coverings, etc.

“FIRE SMART” PLANTS

There are no fire proof plants, but some are more fire resistant than others. These “fire smart” plants:



- Are less likely to ignite from a wildfire.
- Burn less intensely when they do ignite, and spread the fire slower.
- Are lower growing or smaller.
- Have stems and leaves that are not resinous, oily, or waxy.
- Have a high moisture content.
- Easy to maintain and prune.
- Have less accumulated debris and fewer dead branches.
- Have an open, loose branching habit.
- Are drought resistant, requiring less irrigation.

For a more complete list of plants of the south visit www.state.sc.us/forest/ref.htm

WHAT ELSE CAN I DO?

Consider installing protective shutters. Have a garden hose long enough to reach any area of the home or other structures on the property.

DEFENSIBLE SPACE

Do you have at least 30 ft of space surrounding your home that is **Lean, Clean and Green**?

The objective of Defensible Space is to reduce the wildfire threat to your home by changing the characteristics of the surrounding vegetation.

Lean – Prune shrubs and cut back tree branches, especially within 15 feet of your chimney.

Clean – Remove all dead plant material from around your home, this includes dead leaves, dry grass and even stacked firewood

Green – Plant fire-resistant vegetation that is healthy and green throughout the year.

Did You Know? Defensible space allows firefighters room to put out fires.

FIRE-RESISTANT ATTACHMENTS

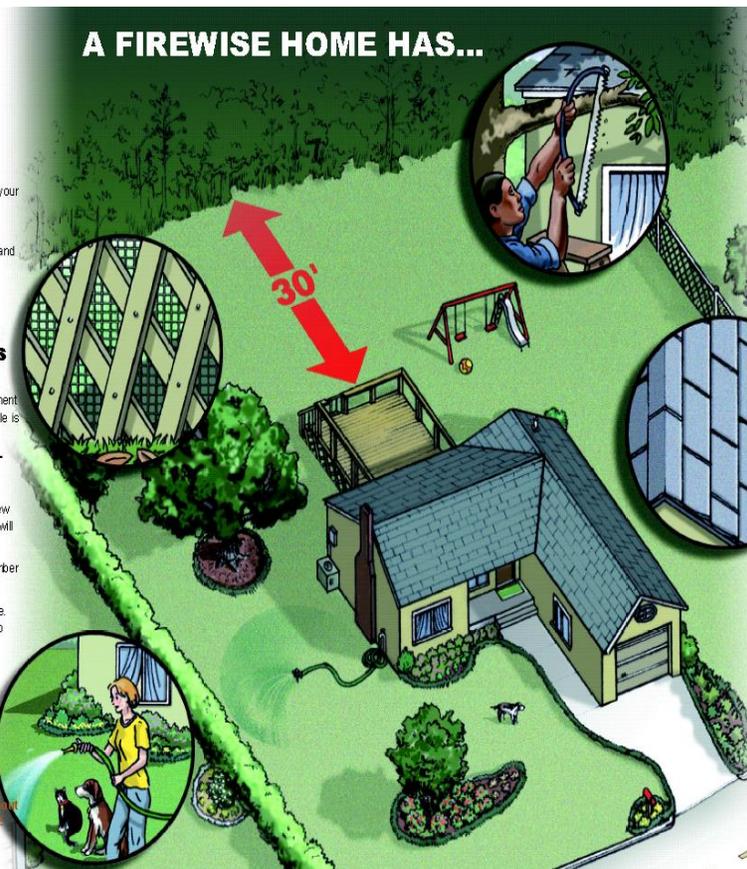
Attachments include any structure connected to your home, such as decks, porches or fences. If an attachment to a home is not fire-resistant, then the home as a whole is not firewise.

A DISASTER PLAN

The time to plan for a fire emergency is now. Take a few minutes to discuss with your family what actions you will need to take.

- Post your local firefighting agency's telephone number in a visible place.
- Decide where you will go and how you will get there. With fire, you may only have a moments notice. Two escape routes out of your home and out of your neighborhood are preferable.
- Have tools available: shovel, rake, axe, handsaw or chainsaw, and a 2 gallon bucket
- Maintain an adequate water source
- Have a plan for your pets
- Practice family fire drills

Did You Know? Evacuations for a wildfire can occur without notice. When wildfire conditions exist, BE ALERT.



LEAN, CLEAN AND GREEN LANDSCAPING

With firewise landscaping, you can create defensible space around your home that reduces your wildfire threat. Large, leafy, hardwood trees should be pruned so that the lowest branches are at least 6 to 10 ft high to prevent a fire on the ground from spreading up to the tree tops. Within the defensible space, remove flammable plants that contain resins, oils and waxes that burn readily. Ornamental junipers, yaupon holly, red cedar, and young pine. A list of less-flammable plants can be found within this brochure.

Did You Know? Although mulch helps retain soil moisture, when dry, it can become flammable. Mulch as well as all landscaping should be kept well watered to prevent them from becoming fire fuel.

FIRE-RESISTANT ROOF CONSTRUCTION

Firewise construction materials include Class-A asphalt shingles, metal, cement and concrete products. Additionally, the inclusion of a fire-resistant sub-roof adds protection.

Did You Know? Something as simple as making sure that your gutters, eaves and roof are clear of debris can reduce your fire threat.

FIRE-RESISTANT EXTERIOR CONSTRUCTION

Wall materials that resist heat and flames include brick, cement, plaster, stucco and concrete masonry. Double pane glass windows can make a home more resistant to wildfire heat and flames.

Did You Know? Although some vinyl will not burn, firefighters have found that some vinyl soffits can melt, allowing embers into the attic space.

EMERGENCY ACCESS

Identify your home and neighborhood with legible and clearly marked street names and numbers so emergency vehicles can rapidly find the location of the emergency. Include a driveway that is at least 12 feet wide with a vertical clearance of 15 feet – to provide access to emergency apparatus.

