

Building & Landscaping For Survivable Space

One of these homes stands a much greater chance of surviving a wildfire!
How does yours compare?

Survivable space is your defense against wildfires. Your home within the urban wildland interface (where homes lie adjacent to or within undeveloped areas of grass, brush and trees) has the best chance of surviving a wildfire if survivable space is created and integrated into your surroundings. The landscaping within 30 to 100 feet around your home and the materials with which you build or remodel your home can make the difference in whether or not your home remains intact after a wildfire.

Survivable space doesn't have to be devoid of vegetation. On the contrary, it is space that uses vegetation--specifically selected, placed and maintained--to reduce the fire hazard rather than invite wildfire to your home. Aesthetics can be maintained even as your home's ability to survive a wildfire is increased.

Implementation of the following basic survivable space measures can significantly reduce the wildfire risk to your home and loved ones.



Hazards: narrow, winding driveway restricts access, no separation of house from brush and trees, ladder fuels (brush and limbs) to lead ground fire into tree crowns, overhanging branches.



Survivable Space: fire resistant building materials, clear, easy access, wide lawn, absence of ladder fuels, brush away from house.

Building & Remodeling Fire Safety

Helpful building and remodeling tips:

- Use fire resistant roofing materials such as tile, metal or asphalt. Avoid wooden shingles.
- Inspect for gaps in roofing that can expose roof decking or roof supports.
- Enclose or box-in eaves and install a metal screen behind roof vents so that sparks cannot enter the attic.
- For your home's outside walls, select heat and fire resistant siding such as metal, brick, block or stone, cement board or fire retardant treated lumber.
- Install windows made of tempered glass.
- Use drapes and shutters that are fire resistant to help reduce the likelihood of fire spread.
- Install metal screens under decks to keep sparks and embers from being blown into corners and other spots where they could lodge and ignite a fire.
- Remove boards, vegetation and other flammable materials from under decks so they won't trap sparks and burning embers that could spread a fire to the deck and house.

Will your home



SURVIVE?



Theirs did not.



Thanks to survivable space, theirs did survive.

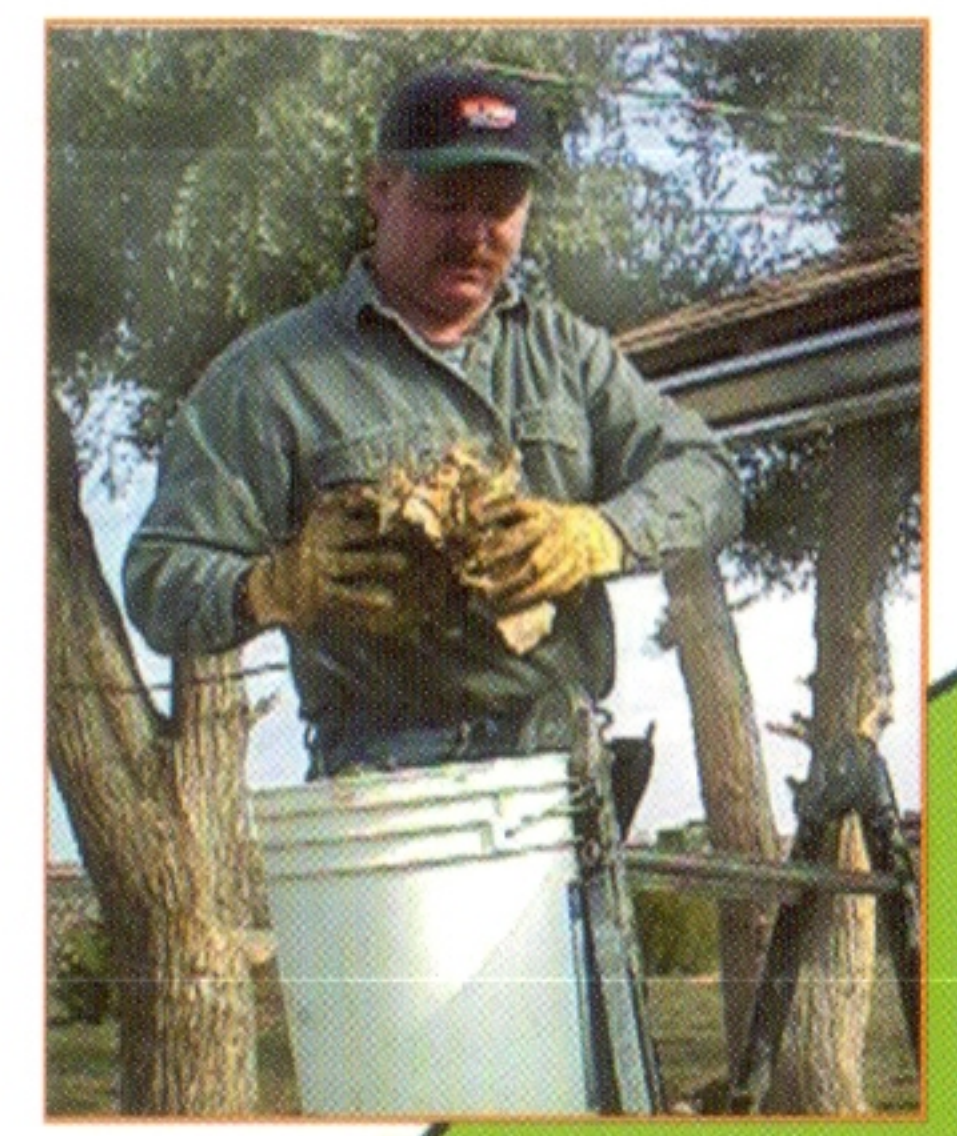
Landscaping Fire Safety

Helpful landscaping tips:

- Select plants that are:
 - drought tolerant
 - high in moisture content
 - easily pruned and maintained
- Select trees such as oaks and maples that have open branching, which can help retard fire spread.
- Plant small trees and shrubs away from larger trees to avoid creating a ladder of vegetation that could lead a ground fire up into the tree crowns.
- Plant the right tree in the right place. Avoid planting potentially large trees and shrubs under utility lines.
- Avoid planting vegetation with high oil and resin content, such as pines, cedars and junipers. These types of plants burn quickly and can greatly increase the rate of fire spread.
- Restrict the use of flowerbeds and shrubbery against your house. Nonflammable mulches such as rock or crushed brick are preferred.



Should a wildfire occur, will your home burn to the ground like the home on the left or have a greater chance to survive, like the home on the right, because of its survivable space?



Clean gutters frequently.



Connect a garden hose long enough to reach around the house.



Keep lawns mowed to a height of two inches or less.



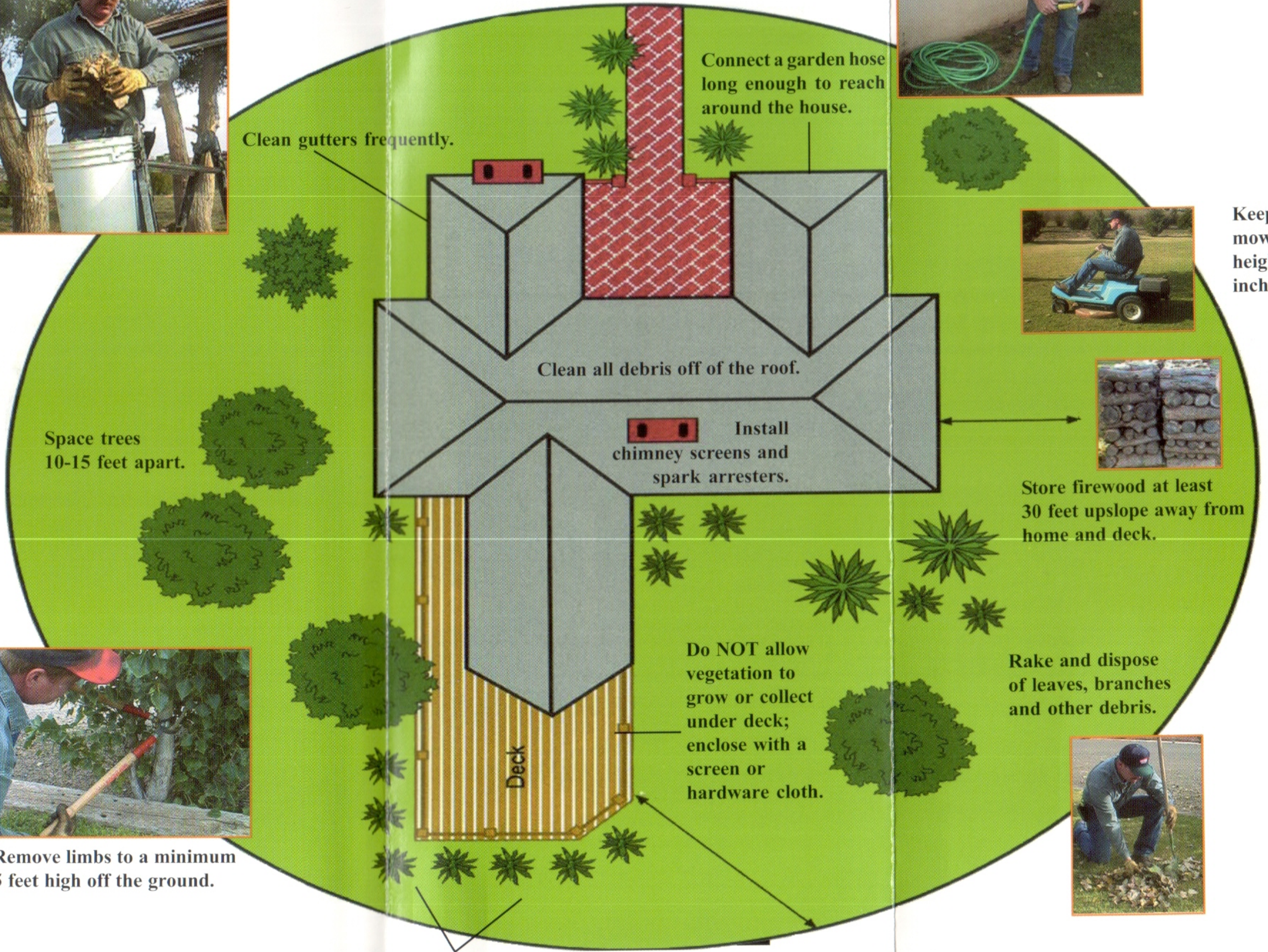
Store firewood at least 30 feet upslope away from home and deck.



Remove limbs to a minimum 5 feet high off the ground.



Rake and dispose of leaves, branches and other debris.



Keep shrubs pruned and leave space between them as a natural break.

Clean all debris off of the roof.

Install chimney screens and spark arresters.

Do NOT allow vegetation to grow or collect under deck; enclose with a screen or hardware cloth.

Space trees 10-15 feet apart.

Consider planting small shrubs with high moisture content.

Maintain at least 30 feet of survivable space between your home and surrounding wildland.