



Cal Fire Guide to Hardening Your Home

Flying embers can destroy homes up to a mile ahead of a wildfire. Prepare (harden) your home now before fire starts. Some things you can do to harden your home:

Roof: Your roof is the most vulnerable part of your home. Homes with wood or shingle roofs are at high risk of being destroyed during a wildfire. Build your roof or re-roof with materials such as composition, metal or tile. Block any spaces to prevent embers from entering and starting a fire.

- Remove dead leaves and needles from your roof and gutters
- Remove dead branches overhanging your roof and keep branches 10 feet from your chimney
- Cover your chimney outlet and stovepipe with a nonflammable screen of 1/2 inch or smaller mesh



Vents: Vents on homes create openings for flying embers.

- Cover all vent openings with 1/8-inch to 1/4-inch metal mesh. Do not use fiberglass or plastic mesh

because they can melt and burn.

- Protect vents in eaves or cornices with baffles to block embers. (Mesh is not enough.)

Eaves and Soffits: Eaves and soffits should be protected with ignition-resistant or non-combustible materials.

Windows: Heat from a wildfire can cause windows to break even before the home ignites. This allows burning embers to enter and start fires inside. Single-paned and large windows are particularly at risk.

- Install dual-paned windows with one pane of tempered glass.
- Consider limiting the size and number of windows that face large areas of vegetation.

Decks: Surfaces within 10 feet of the building should be built with ignition-resistant, non-combustible, or other approved materials.

- Remove all combustible items from underneath your deck.

Exterior Walls: Wood products such as boards, panels or shingles are common siding materials. However, they are combustible and not good choices for fire-prone areas.

- Build or remodel your walls with ignition-resistant building materials, such as stucco, fiber or cement siding, fire-retardant-treated wood or other approved materials.
- Be sure to extend materials from the foundation to the roof.

Rain Gutters: Screen or enclose rain gutters to prevent accumulation of plant debris. **Patio Cover:** Use the same ignition-resistant materials for patio covers as a roof.

Fences: Consider using ignition-resistant or noncombustible fence materials to protect your home during. Wood fencing should end 10 feet from structures.

Yard: In addition to providing defensible space, review the following.

- Stack woodpiles at least 30 feet from all structures and remove vegetation within 10 feet of woodpiles
- Above ground Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LP-gas) containers (500 or less water gallons) shall be located a minimum of 10 feet with respect to buildings, public ways, and lot lines of adjoining property that can be built upon. - CFC 3804.3



- Remove all stacks of construction materials, pine needles, leaves and other debris from your yard.

Garage: Have a fire extinguisher and tools such as a shovel, rake, bucket, and hoe available for fire emergencies. Also,

- Install weather stripping around and under the garage door to prevent embers from blowing in.
- Store all combustible and flammable liquids away from ignition sources.

Water Supply: Consider having multiple garden hoses that are long enough to reach all areas of your home and other structures on your property.

Source: <http://www.readyforwildfire.org/Hardening-Your-Home/>

NEXT MONTH: Evacuation Planning