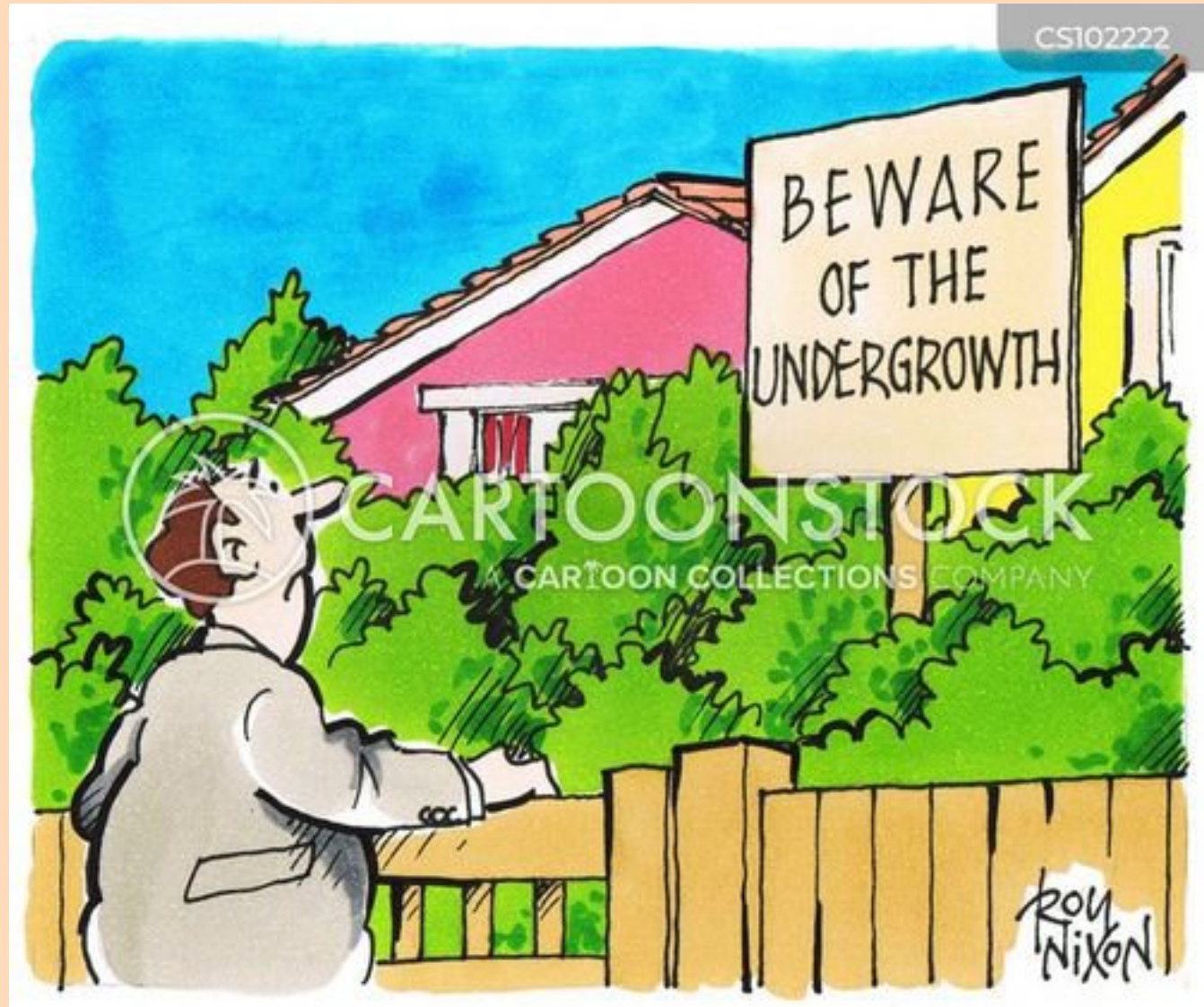


Defensible Space & Home Hardening

Karen Caldwell
Tuolumne Fire Safe Council
Firewise Program
Coordinator

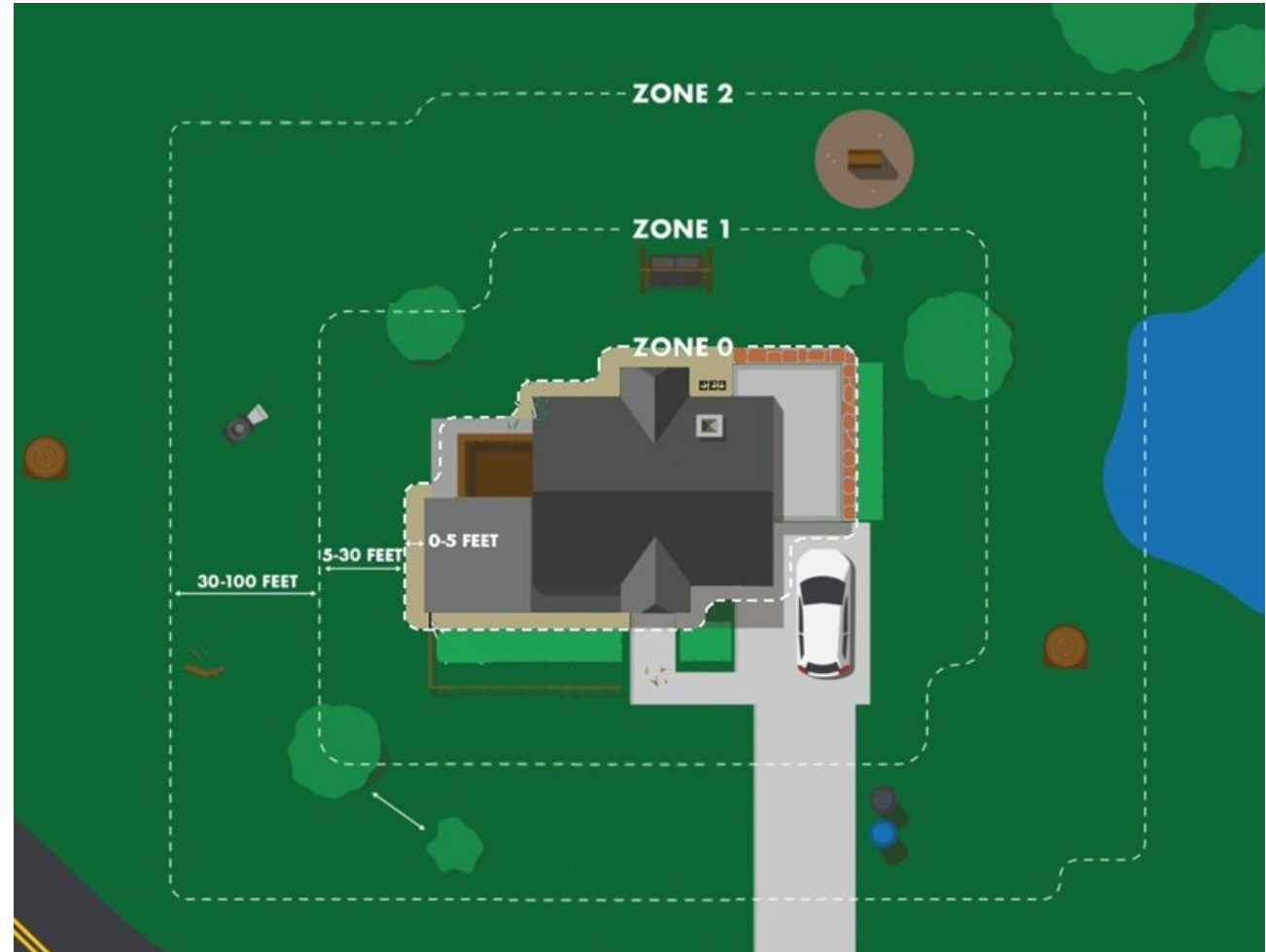


DEFENSIBLE SPACE

Defensible space is the buffer between your structure and the surrounding area.

Adequate defensible space acts as a **barrier to slow or halt the progress of fire** that would otherwise engulf your property.

It also helps ensure the **safety** of firefighters defending your home. Defensible space is the first line of defense for your home against wildfire.



Creating Defensible Space



0 - 5 feet

5 - 30 feet

30 - 100 feet



ZONE 1: The first five feet from your home is the most important.



ZONE 2: Regularly clear dead or dry vegetation and create space between trees.

ZONE 3: Continue reducing potential fuel within 100 feet or the property line.

 **Film: Fire Chief Debunks Defensible Space Myth (13min)**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a4JpOdS9ffI>

 **Film: What is Defensible Space? Get to know your Zero Zone**

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bPILXb_MHuo_ (7 minutes)

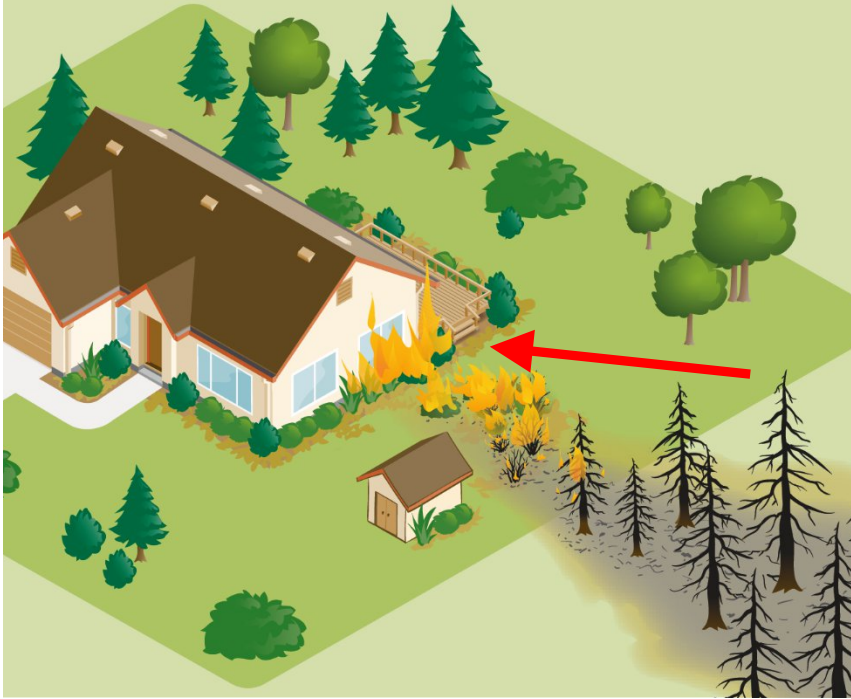
HOME HARDENING



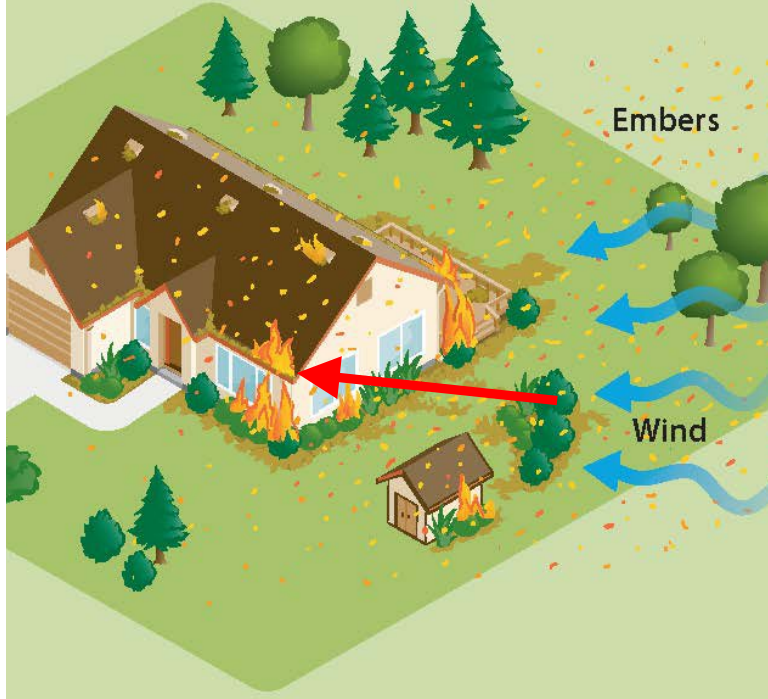
- Home hardening is the term used to describe **vegetation management compliance and building materials used to resist the intrusion of flames or embers** projected by a wildland fire.
- It can be applied to new construction or for retrofitting an older home.
- Home Hardening considers the relationship between your home and its exposure to nearby combustible features such as vegetation, vehicles, accessory buildings, or even miscellaneous structures like a fence.

Three types of fire exposures

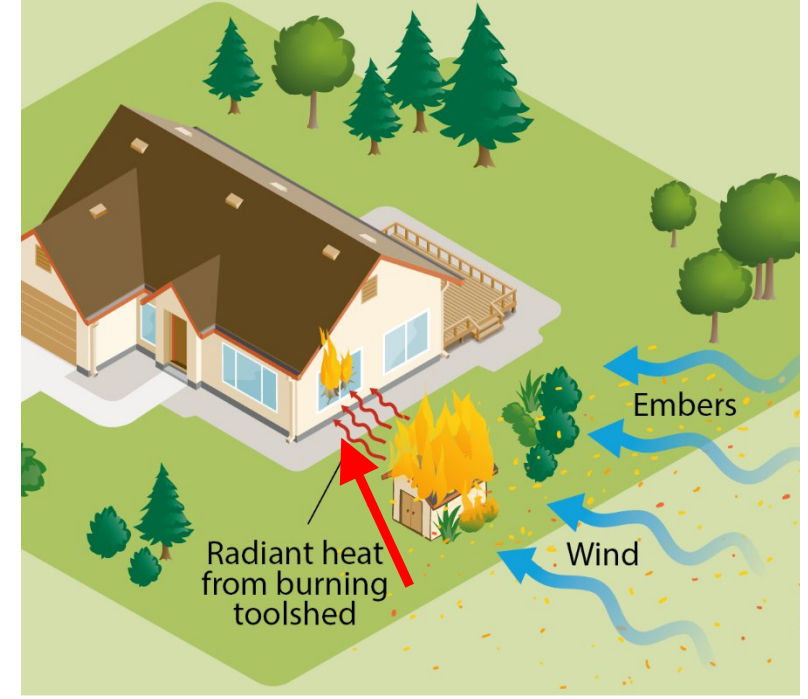
Direct flame contact



Embers



Radiant heat



- Educational messages have mostly focused on reducing direct flame contact through defensible space.
- Preparing for embers and radiant heat exposures requires different approaches.

HOME HARDENING

Click on each element to learn how to make your home wildfire-ready



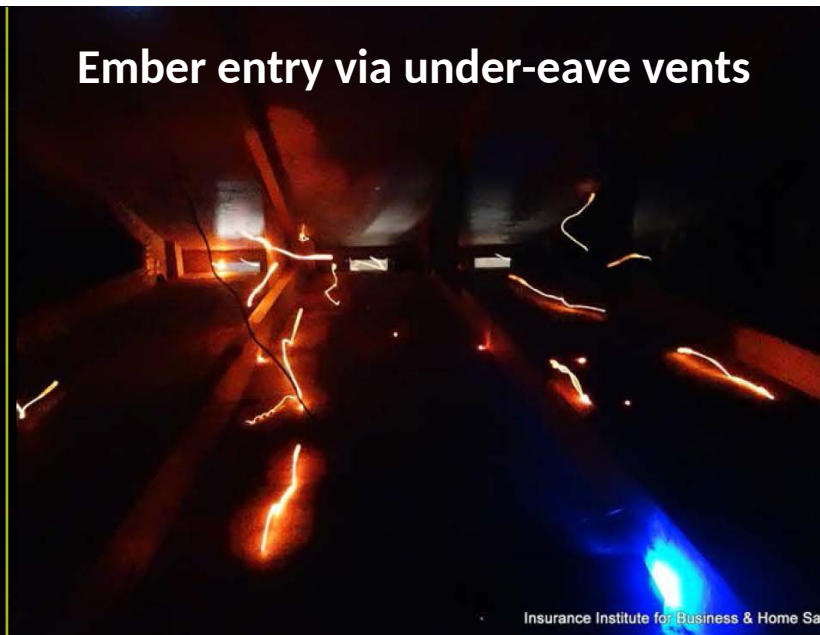
Home Hardening Fire Pathways

- ▶ Grass Fire > Fence > Shed > Structure

Wildfire mitigation strategies are designed to break fire ignition pathways!

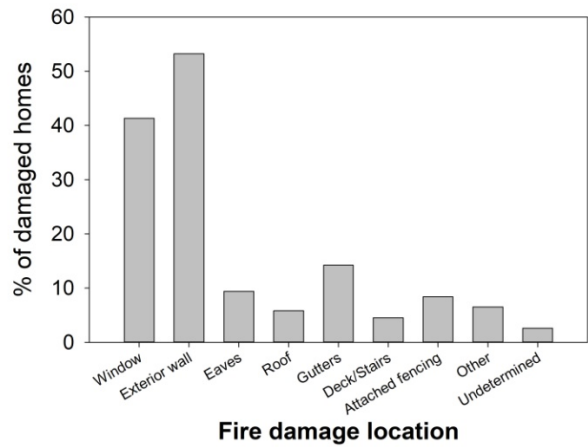
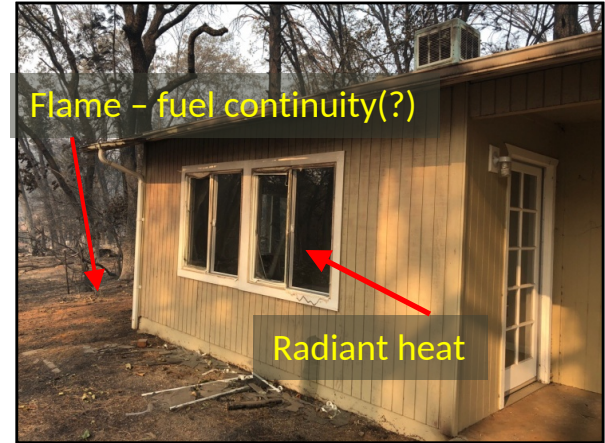
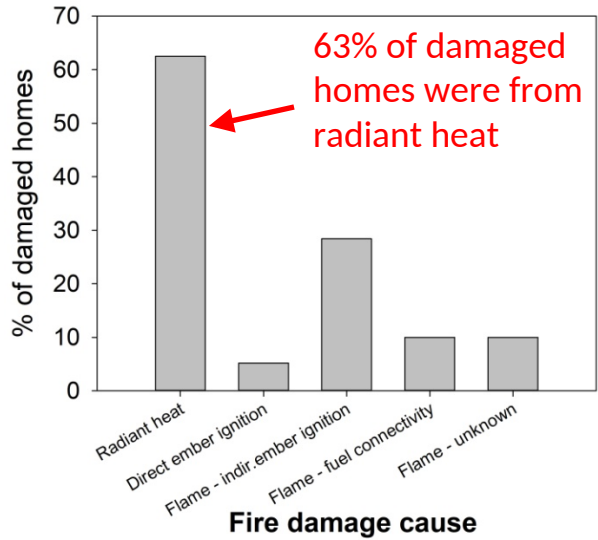


Vulnerable locations



Embers photographed from inside an attic at the IBHS lab.

CAL FIRE Damage Inspection (DINS) – damaged homes



Photos: CAL FIRE

Location (and cause) of fire damage



Photos: CAL FIRE

BEFORE



AFTER

BEFORE



© MOUNTAIN FOREST

AFTER

BEFORE



AFTER



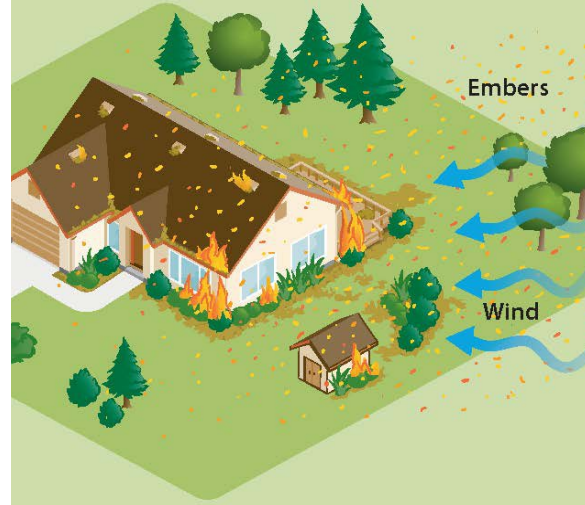
Protecting your home from wildfire: take home points

Direct flame contact



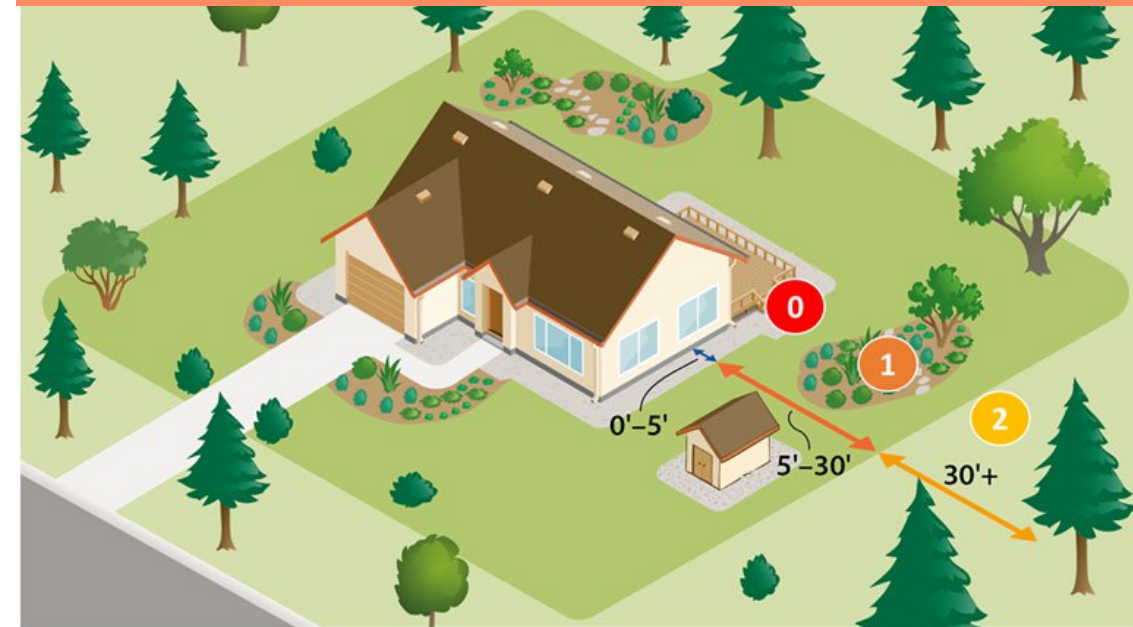
- Surface fuel management in surrounding wildlands
- Good defensible space
- No bark mulch or wood fence 'wicks' to house

Embers



- Remove near home fuels
 - Bark mulch
 - Leaf litter
 - Stored objects
- Clean gutters
- Ember-proof vents

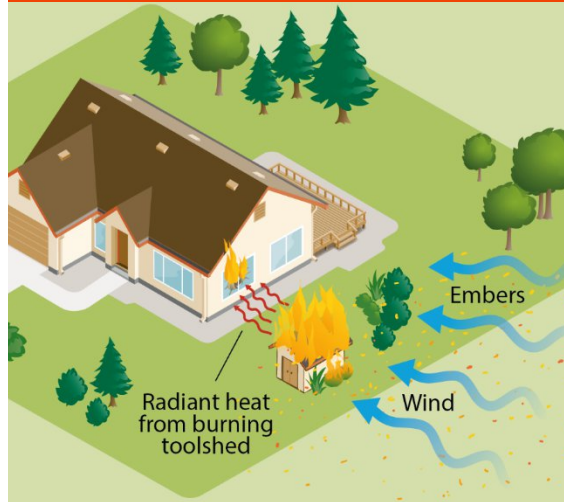
5 ft non-combustible zone



“Zone 0” will apply to homes in high fire hazard zones

Protecting your home from wildfire: take home points

Radiant heat




- Apply same fire safe principals to sheds and other outbuildings
- Practice fuel reduction at the neighborhood scale
- For surfaces in close proximity to neighbors:
 - Tempered glass in both window panes
 - Window shutters
 - Non-combustible siding

Take our CAL FIRE Wildfire Home Hardening Self Assessment



Home Hardening Self-Assessment

Take the Home Hardening Self-Assessment to see how prepared your property is for wildfire. In less than 10 minutes, this self-assessment will evaluate your home's vulnerability to wildfire. A detailed report will be provided with tailored recommendations customized for your home. See what actions you can take today and what steps can be done in the future to make your home more resilient to wildfire.

[HOME HARDENING SELF-ASSESSMENT](#) 

<https://www.fire.ca.gov/home-hardening>