



## **Public Service Announcement Homeowners Urged to Make Homes Safe From Wildfire**

Fire officials throughout North Carolina are urging homeowners to take the necessary precautions to make their homes safer from wildfire. Currently, many wildfires have been burning across the state and fire officials are concerned that high winds and dry conditions could lead to even more devastating fires.

Homeowners can reduce potential losses from wildfire to their property by taking extra steps to protect themselves. By creating “defensible space” around homes, homeowners not only minimize the risk to their own family and property, but they also reduce risks to their neighborhoods and make it safer for firefighters.

The following tips can help you create a defensible space around your home and property:

- Keep combustibles such as firewood, picnic tables, boats, etc. away from structures.
- Keep roofs and gutters free from leaves, pine needles and other flammable debris.
- Remove large, thick vegetation around structures for a minimum of 30 feet.
- Landscape with vegetation that is fire resistant and well watered (check with your local nursery).
- Plants such as Wax Myrtle and Red Cedar are extremely combustible and should be pruned, thinned or removed.
  
- Maintain a landscape that is free from dead and dying plants.
- Break the continuity of vegetation to reduce fire spread. Space groups of shrubs and individual trees 15 feet apart.
  
- Prune all trees 6-10 feet from the ground.
- Plant low-growing ground covers and ensure that treetops are not touching.
- Use fire resistant roofing and siding on structures.

For more information on home fire safety, visit the FireWise website [www.firewise.org](http://www.firewise.org) or contact the North Carolina Forest Service.

