



FIRE-SMART, WATER-WISE LANDSCAPES



California is experiencing extreme drought fueled by higher temperatures and record-dry conditions. In addition to impacts on water supplies, consecutive years of hotter and drier conditions have elevated the risk of wildfire across the state.

The good news is Californians can take steps to make their landscapes both fire smart and water wise this summer. CalFire and the California Department of Water Resources offer the following advice to help protect property while conserving water for our future.

With planning and routine maintenance, Californians can conserve water and create a beautiful landscape, while maintaining defensible space efforts. Use water only when necessary to care for trees and reserve precious water resources.

You can reduce wildfire risk by hardening structures with fire-resistant building materials and creating defensible space – especially during the extreme drought. Properly spaced and well-maintained landscaping are important components of defensible space. However, if landscaping within a defensible space cannot be reliably watered – due to conditions such as extreme drought – then dead and dying vegetation should be removed to reduce fire risk. Here are more tips:

- Utilize Fire Smart Landscaping
 - Proper landscaping for wildfire isn't necessarily the same thing as a well-maintained yard. This type of landscaping focuses on plant characteristics, properties and maintenance to resist the spread of fire to your home. Through proper planning and routine maintenance, you can conserve water and create a beautiful landscape.
 - Trim trees regularly to keep branches a minimum of 10 feet from other trees.
- Remove Dead and Dying Vegetation
 - Examples of vegetation that should be removed to enhance defensible space efforts are dying weeds, grass, plants, shrubs, trees, branches and vegetative debris (leaves, needles, cones, bark, etc.). Check your roofs, gutters, decks, porches, and stairways for vegetative debris and remove if necessary.
 - Remove vegetation and items that could catch fire from around and under decks, balconies and stairs.
- Hardscape Your Yard
 - Choose hardscapes like gravel, pavers, concrete and other noncombustible mulch materials, especially within the first five feet of your home.
 - No combustible bark or mulch.
- Maintain Your Landscape
 - Maintain your yard within the guidelines or restrictions of your local water agency and keep it free weeds in a way that reduces its vulnerability to wildfire.