



# FIRE SAFETY CHECKLIST TO PROTECT YOUR HOME



No matter where you live in Florida, rural or city, you are at risk of fires and should be aware of what steps that can be taken to be FIZESAFE to protect your family and possessions. Here are measures that can be taken, both inside and outside the home.

## **Roads:**

- Have a good road to your home; this is critical.
- The roads should be wide enough to provide fire truck access and a safe escape route for you.
- Provide adequate turnarounds.
- Fire-proof trees along the road by removing dead limbs and brush, remove dead or dying trees to reduce the chance of a fire-fallen tree blocking the road.
- A locked gate could prevent a fire truck from reaching your home.
- Your road should be used to advantage, creating an area of reduced fuel and establishes your “defensible space” around your home.

## **Water:**

- Keep water stored in swimming pools and nearby ponds or storage tanks.
- Plan an adequate access for a fire truck to reach a water resource.
- A small portable pump can make that water available to you for firefighting. Remember – if the electricity is off, the pump in your well will not help you.

## **Power Lines:**

- Inspect nearby overhead power lines periodically to make sure limbs are cleared back a safe distance.
- If right-of-way maintenance is required, contact your power company or local fire department.
- Encourage or require that power and telephone lines be buried.

## **Debris Burning:**

- Follow all local burning regulations.
- Debris burning is not allowed without a permit. For those of you who live in rural areas and debris burning is part of your fuel reduction plan, avoid summer burning or burning when winds are gusty.

## **Landscaping:**

- Plan landscaping with fire prevention in mind.
- Provide open space, plant fire-resistant species and keep plants away from the house.

**Fuel Breaks:**

- Clear a primary fuel break 30 feet around structures.
- It need not be bare soil. A green lawn, a well tended rock garden, ornamental shrubbery or well-spaced trees with branches pruned to a height of eight feet can do the job.
- Remove dense fuels that burn rapidly.
- Keep trees free of dead or dying wood that are near or overhanging any building.

**Secondary Fuel Breaks:**

- Grub out potentially flammable small trees and shrubs.
- Keep grass mowed – especially when dry.
- Maintain irrigated green belts around structures.
- Select ground-hugging plants near structures.
- Generally reduce fuel volume, break up fuel continuity and eliminate the fuel chain between structures and surrounding forest vegetation.

**Fireproof Your Building:**

- Protect your roof
- Clean gutters and roof of needles and leaves at least twice a year
- Keep flammable materials away from the base of buildings.
- Do not allow newspapers, rags, debris, leaves or grass to accumulate.
- Keep flammable liquids in unbreakable containers stores in a s safe location.
- Keep trees and shrubs from extending within 15 feet of the outlet of a stovepipe or chimney.
- Screen unenclosed porches or overhanging decks or floor areas with one-half inch mesh screen. Do the same for roof or attic openings.
- Consider protective shutters or heavy fire-resistant drapes over large picture window surfaces facing heat exposure hazards.

**Plan for Emergencies:**

- Know how to contact your local firefighting agency in case of fire. **Dial 911** for assistance. Post this number on your telephone or visible place.
- Have an escape plan. Decide what you would do and where you would go if a fire came your way. Plan at least two escape routes by car and another by foot.
- Be aware that certain family members may require special needs considerations for wildfire emergencies. An American with Disabilities Act (ADA) representative may provide this information.
- Consider cutting plywood covers (hurricane shutters) for glass doors, windows and vents to reduce radiant heat.
- Have a ladder long enough to reach roof areas.
- Have fire tools available: long-handled round-point shovel, rake, axe, handsaw or chainsaw, 2-1/2 gallon bucket.
- Maintain an adequate water source with exterior hookups. Have some outlets at least 50 feet away from structures. Homes should have a least one-inch diameter supply mains.
- Keep fire hose available. If water supply is adequate, use on-inch or 1-1/2 inch fire hose. Alternative is ¾ inch garden hose with good nozzles Have adequate length to reach all structures, preferably from at least two faucets at the same time.
- Conduct family fire drills
- An added consideration is your pet's protection.