



Business Protection: Reducing the Wildfire Risk

Businesses located in wildfire-prone areas should follow these recommendations.



1. Building Setback

Buildings and structures should be set back a minimum of 30 ft from any property line adjacent to a national forest, state park, open space preserve, or other protected wildland.

2. Vegetation

To reduce ignition sources, a vegetation maintenance plan should be created. Plants used around the building should have low combustibility characteristics such as high moisture content, low oil or resin content, deep roots with thick heavy leaves, and minimal production of dead vegetation.

Visit [DisasterSafety.org](https://www.disastersafety.org) for additional guidance on protecting your commercial property.

3. Fire Hydrants

Fire hydrants should be located no more than 250 feet from the primary building and connected to a reliable public or private water source.

4. Exterior Wall Cladding

Exterior wall cladding should be made of noncombustible siding materials such as concrete or brick. The start of siding should be a minimum of 6 inches above the ground.

5. Windows

Windows should be dual-paned with tempered glass. Operational windows should have screens covering sections that can open. Always close windows when wildfire threatens.

6. Vents

½-inch noncombustible mesh screening should be installed over all vents.

7. Roof Covers

Roof covers should have a Class A fire rating based on testing to ASTM E108 or UL 790.

8. Gutters and Downspouts

Gutters and downspouts should be made of noncombustible materials such as aluminum. The gutter should incorporate an integral metal flashing at the roof edge, or a separate flashing should be used at the roof edge. Debris should be regularly removed from roof and gutters, since it can be ignited by wind-blown embers.

9. Signage

All signage should be made from noncombustible materials.

10. Combustible Storage

Outdoor storage of large quantities of combustible and flammable liquids should be located in detached noncombustible buildings more than 50 ft away from other buildings.

11. Defensible Space

Defensible space around the building should be planned and maintained.

What is Defensible Space?

Defensible space is the area between a building and an approaching wildfire, where vegetation and other combustible materials have been managed to reduce the wildfire threat and improve the likelihood of a building surviving without assistance from firefighters, as described in "Fire Adapted Communities: The Next Step in Wildfire Preparedness," University of Nevada Cooperative Extension, Publication SP-10-10. This space is organized into three zones.

Zone 1 (0–5 ft from the building)

Also referred to as the "noncombustible zone," this critical area adjacent to your small business should only contain noncombustible materials such as gravel, brick, or concrete. Dead plant materials should be removed from plants.

Zone 2 (5–30 ft or to the property line)

Trees and shrubs in this zone should be in well-spaced groupings and well maintained. Tall grasses, over-hanging tree branches, and ladder fuels (plants that allow fire to climb up trees) should be eliminated. While a parking lot can provide a good source of defensible space on your property, any vegetation in the parking lot should be well maintained.

Zone 3 (30–100 ft or to the property line)

Tree and brush spacing should force fire in tree crowns (or fire in shrub and brush) to drop to the ground. Dead trees and shrubs should be removed.



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