

February 2020

# RESILIENT PORTOLA VALLEY

Monthly Tips from the Emergency Preparedness Committee



## Preparing Your Home for Wildfires

Making your home resistant to wildfires involves two key steps: 1) Creating defensible space, and 2) Hardening your home.

Step one: Start planning now for defensible space projects to reduce the vegetation fuel load around your home. Connect with neighbors to share referrals for tree trimming and brush clearing services and to improve overall results.

Step Two: Our March tip will provide “Home Hardening” recommendations.

Why is defensible space important?

Watch: [Wildfire Ember Highlights](#) to see a typical home holds up in a wildfire ember storm.

## How to create defensible space

- *For 30 feet around your buildings and decks:*
  - Remove the build-up of leaves, needles, and other flammable debris from roofs, gutters, and decks. Be sure to clean out beneath decks too.
  - Remove mulch close to the house.
  - Remove all combustible plants and shrubs near windows.
  - Remove tree branches that hang over your roof or extend within 10 feet of the outlet of a chimney or stovepipe.
  - Trim up lower branches to a height of 10 feet.
- *For an additional 70 feet for a total of 100 feet:*
  - Mow annual grasses (May-June) when temperatures are low and winds are calm, preferably before 10 am.
  - Create horizontal spacing between shrubs and trees (“islands” of vegetation).
  - Create vertical spacing between grass, shrubs, and trees.
  - For more info, refer to [Woodside Fire on Defensible Space](#).

**Quick Tip:** Trees to remove specifically for fire safety include eucalyptus, pines, and acacia.

## Stay informed and stay involved

[Download the Town PV Connect app](#). Report downed trees, storm damage, and vegetation of concern to keep our roads and trails clear of fire materials and to enable safe passage for emergency vehicles.

Miss last month’s tip? Read it at [Resilient Portola Valley](#).