

DEFENSIBLE SPACE



It's that time of year again for our annual 2009 Defensible Space program! The Northstar Fire Department in cooperation with CalFire is reminding all homeowners to maintain their property in compliance with Public Resource Code (PRC) 4291 and California Code of Regulations (CCR) 1299 code guidelines. Below you will find a Defensible Space check list to assist you in identifying potential areas of concern regarding your property. Please click the link to the CDF General Guidelines to be utilized in the explanation of the check list below.

History: The purpose of the guidelines listed by the PRC 4291 and CCR 1299 is to provide property owners with examples of fuel modification measures that can be used to create a defensible space around structures. Recent changes expand the defensible space clearance requirement maintained around structures from 30 feet to a distance of 100 feet or to the property line. A defensible space perimeter provides firefighters a working environment without facing unacceptable risk to their lives, that allows them to protect structures from encroaching wildfires as well as minimizing the chance that a structure fire will escape to the surrounding wildland. These guidelines apply to any person who owns, leases, controls, operates, or maintains a building or structure in, upon, or adjoining any mountainous area, forest-covered lands, brush-covered lands, grass-covered lands, or any land that is covered with flammable material, and located within a State Responsibility Area.

The vegetation surrounding a structure, as well as the structure itself is considered fuel for a fire. Research and experience have shown that reduction of these fuels around a structure, through vegetation management, is the key to creating good defensible space and increasing the probability of it surviving a wildfire.

Homeowners are the key to preventing a house from being destroyed by wildfire. With your continued support we can make this an effective and

successful program. All properties in the Northstar District will be inspected for defensible space compliance and notices will be mailed to homeowners who are in violation. Failure to comply with state and local codes may result in a citation being issued. Reminder, homeowners are responsible for maintaining their properties on an annual basis complying with the following defensible space guidelines.

Defensible Space Guidelines	
1.	Create a lean, clean and green zone; 30 foot circumference around structures.
2.	Remove all dead trees, limbs and vegetation from properties. Reduced Fuel Zone (30' – 100') PRC 4291(b); 14CCR1299 (a) (2). Enclosed is a reference guide with examples of guidelines number one and two. _____Grass _____Brush _____Trees _____Shrubs
3.	Property address must be visible to the street. Numbers shall be a minimum of 5 inches in height, on a contrasting background
4.	Remove portion of any tree that extends within 10 feet of the outlet of chimney or stovepipe PRC 4291(C).
5.	Keep structure free and clear of vegetation and overhanging limbs.
6.	Maintain the roof of a structure free of leaves, needles, other dead vegetation – PRC 4291(e).
7.	On mature trees, trim all limbs a minimum of 8 feet up from the ground. This measurement is taken from the outer hanging branch location, not from the trunk of the tree.
8.	Provide and maintain at all times a screen over the outlet of every chimney or stovepipe that is attached to a fireplace, stove, or other device that burns any solid or liquid fuel. The screen shall be constructed of nonflammable material with openings of not more than ½ inch in size. PRC 4291(F).
9.	Remove the undergrowth from mature tree fields.
10.	Eliminate continuous brush fields.

To view the CDF General Guidelines for Creating Defensible Space [click here](#).

2009 Defensible Space Contractor List

If you have any questions about this program, please feel free to contact Captain Jim Conlin, Fire Prevention Officer, at (530) 562-1212 or e-mail him at jconlin@northstarfire31.com Thank you again for your support and have a fire safe season!