



May 2017

Dear Property Owner,

The large amount of rain that Southern California experienced this past winter and spring helped end the drought conditions we have experienced for many years. However, the rain also caused an abundant growth of grass and weeds on open land throughout the City of Escondido and the Rincon Del Diablo Water District. This vegetation, when dry, creates a fire hazard in our communities. As you know, once the weather is warm and dry a small wildland fire can quickly spread and become a major disaster, especially when it's windy!

In an effort to reduce the threat of wildfire, the Escondido Fire Department is conducting an outreach program to notify property owners of the wildfire danger due to weed growth. Your property is located within a dangerous high fire hazard zone area. In the past few years, as recently as 2014, we have witnessed how devastating a wildfire can be in San Diego County. The Escondido Fire Department is reminding property owners of local hazard abatement requirements that exist for the protection of lives and property. We are asking for your help in reducing the risk on your property which will reduce the danger to our community. Taking the appropriate preparations today could prevent or mitigate the effects of a wildfire and help save lives and protect property!

Visit the website below to read more about the San Diego County wildfires in 2014.  
(<https://tinyurl.com/l4kl9kw>)

**You are responsible for reducing the fire risk around your home by adhering to the following requirements:**

- ⇒ **DEFENSIBLE SPACE AROUND STRUCTURES:** Create and maintain **100 feet** of defensible space or a fuel modification zone around all structures by modifying all flammable vegetation as described on the reverse side. Properties **must** maintain **100 feet** of defensible space from all structures. This will give Firefighters a chance to save your home!
- ⇒ **ROADWAY & DRIVEWAY REQUIREMENTS:** Provide a vertical clearance of **13 feet, 6 inches** along all roadways, driveways, and easements. This also pertains to low shrubs and bushes, which encroach into the roadway. Also, provide **20 feet** of fuel modification described on the next page along **both sides** of all roadways and private drives.
- ⇒ **VEGETATION:** All properties, occupied or vacant are required to be free of dead/dying trees and dead brush. Dead or cured weeds/grasses should **not** exceed **6 inches** in height.
- ⇒ **ADDRESS REQUIREMENTS:** Post your **assigned** address so that it is visible from the street and from both directions of approach. This will help firefighters locate your property during an emergency.
- ⇒ **See the reverse side for a checklist to assist you in mitigating your fire exposure.**

**THIS IS NOT AN OFFICIAL NOTICE TO ABATE HAZARDS.** This is a courtesy letter to inform and educate property owners of the Fire Department's requirements as they relate to vegetation management. In the next few months, a weed abatement inspector will be inspecting the entire community to identify possible fire hazards in association with vegetation management/hazard removal.

For more information on reporting vegetation management abatement concerns, please call 760 839-6230 or visit our website at [www.fire.escondido.org](http://www.fire.escondido.org).

Rick Vogt, Escondido Fire Chief



# Property Review Checklist

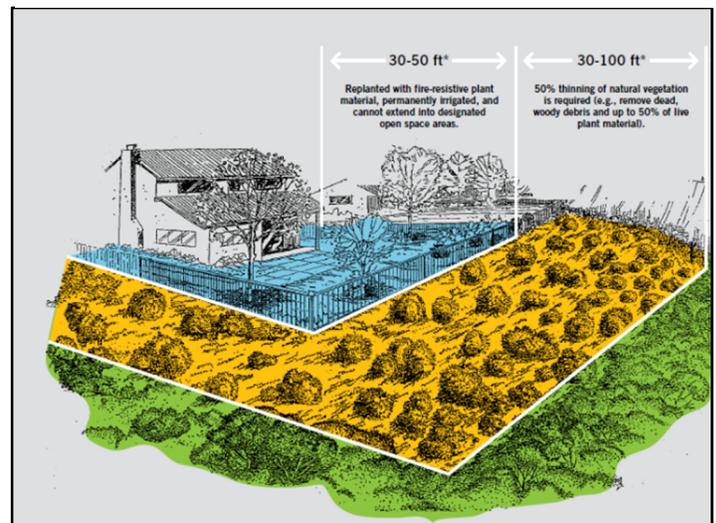


Use the following guidelines to survey your property and make improvements before the next wildfire strikes! The Escondido Fire Department Hazard Reduction and Vegetation Clearance Standard is available to view online at [www.fire.escondido.org](http://www.fire.escondido.org).

If you would prefer to receive future notices electronically please email us at [fireadmin@escondido.org](mailto:fireadmin@escondido.org) and we will add you to our email contact list.

- Create **100 feet** of **DEFENSIBLE SPACE ZONE** surrounding your structures. Remove dry grass, brush, and other flammable materials around your home. Replace with **well-maintained and watered**, drought-tolerant, fire-resistive plants within the first 50 feet of the structure. Suggested landscaping plants are available at [www.fire.escondido.org](http://www.fire.escondido.org). The next **50 feet** of vegetation should be **thinned** so that no more than 50% of this open space is covered by plants taller than **6 inches** in height.
- All DEAD, DYING, or DISEASED TREES and SHRUBS MUST BE REMOVED!** Unfortunately, some of the vegetation, such as the *Eucalyptus*, *California Pepper*, *Oleander*, *Pine*, *Oak*, and certain *Acacia* species once considered decorative are now considered a potential fire hazard. During the drought, there has been a dramatic increase in the amount of tree and shrub mortality due to insect infestation, disease, and lack of maintenance. The dead vegetation does not hold moisture and becomes explosively flammable after a few days of dry weather. **Remove all dead and diseased vegetation within 100 feet from your home to reduce the danger!**
- Keep your **RAIN GUTTERS** and **ROOF** clean of **all combustible debris**, such as leaves and pine needles.
- TREE BRANCHES** must be trimmed back at least **10 feet** from rooftops and fireplace chimneys.
- Remove **DEAD PALM FRONDS** on palm trees within **50 feet** from a structure or **20 feet** from a roadway or private drive.
- Dispose of yard clippings, plant waste, trash, debris and other combustible materials in an appropriate manner. **NO ILLEGAL DUMPING.** This also pertains to dumping in canyons and/or open space areas.
- PROPANE TANKS** need **10 feet** clearance from combustible materials and vegetation.
- Move **WOODPILES** and **TRASHCANS** away from your home. Firewood must be neatly stacked and have a minimum of **30 feet** of clearance from a structure. When possible, trash enclosures or trashcan storage should be **10 feet** away from a structure. Remember to keep lids on all trashcans.
- COMBUSTIBLE MULCH OR WOOD CHIPS** should not be closer than **12 inches** to your home to prevent fire from being transmitted to an exterior wall.

Diagram of Defensible Space



Within 50 feet of your home, clear vegetation that is not fire resistant and re-plant with fire-resistant landscaping. In the area of 50 to 100 feet from your home, all dead and dying vegetation should be removed.