

PROTECTING YOUR HOME FROM FOREST FIRE



Over the last 10 years on average, over 1,2000 wildfires were started in the Ontario each year consuming over 200,000 hectares of forested land annually. Sometimes families have been evacuated from their communities and homes and cottages have been destroyed.

If you live in or near a forested region, you're living in an area often referred to as the wildland/urban "interface" and sooner or later you may have to contend with the threat of a wildfire. The best protection against loss, damage or injury due to wildfire is prevention. Follow these tips to reduce the risk, and the impact a wildfire can have on your home and your family.

Dividing your property into three separate "zones" allows you to control the potential spread of fire before it reaches your home.

ZONE 1: 10M FROM YOUR HOME

- The "most critical" area to consider for fire protection
- Shrubs, trees, grass and even woodpiles all add fuel to a wildfire.
- Remove dead shrubs, trees, deadfall or woodpiles from this area
- Keep grass mowed and watered

ZONE 2: 10-30M FROM YOUR HOME

- Reduce and manage potential fuel sources so that combustion cannot be supported
- Remove trees and debris that would support the spreading of a fire over the crowns of the trees (crowns of trees should not touch)
- Remove or reduce the number of evergreen trees around your home, evergreen trees are far more combustible than deciduous trees
- Remove "ladder fuels", mature trees and thick shrubbery that allow fire to travel from the ground to the crowns of trees
- If your home is on a hill, extend this zone further on downhill slopes and on windward exposures

ZONE 3: 30M AND BEYOND

- This area begins 30 meters from any structure and extends to the distance of 100 meters and beyond
- Intention is not to remove all combustible materials, but to thin the area so that any fires that do start will be low intensity and easy to extinguish
- Thin or reduce shrubs and trees that make up the under story
- Manage the canopy to reduce potential for crown fires

FIRE PREVENTION TIPS

OBEY ANY OPEN AIR BURNING BANS ISSUED BY YOUR COMMUNITY OR THE MINISTRY OF NATURAL RESOURCES!

OBEY YOUR COMMUNITIES' OPEN AIR BURNING BYLAW AT ALL TIMES!

Please remember that burning bylaws and burning bans are developed and implemented to protect your property and your community. Banning open air burning (campfires, burning barrels, or leaf/garbage burning) is only done after careful consideration of many factors, such as, the potential for fire start, potential for fire spread and ease of extinguishment is considered before a ban is ordered.

The number of **escaped fires resulting from backyard burning** can be reduced by adhering to safe burning practices. People doing backyard burning must have hand tools, water and enough people on hand to keep the fire in check. Fires must not be lit or allowed to continue to burn when the wind is strong enough to cause sparks to be carried to other combustible material or when a notice banning or restricting the use of open fire is in effect. **Controlled burns must be supervised at all times! Do not leave the burn area until you are sure the fire is completely extinguished!**

Grass fires are a major concern for fire fighters. Grass fires that get out of control can cause serious damage. People must remember to place a firebreak around the perimeter of the fire area. Fires can escape easily if a wind picks up. Fires that get away can quickly engulf fences, power poles and buildings and can also spread to neighbouring property or forested areas.

Careless use of campfires is one of the leading causes of forest fires. When building a campfire, select your campsite carefully. Prepare your campfire by removing all leaves, twigs and other flammable material from the area. Choose a proper fire pit or make a ring of rocks at least three metres from trees, shrubs, structures and debris. Don't leave a campfire unattended, and do keep a pail of water close by at all times. Be certain your campfire is completely extinguished before you go to bed or leave the area. Pour water on the fire and douse the site thoroughly. Stir the campfire until there are no embers and the ashes are cold to the touch.

Other prevention considerations:

Do not burn in windy conditions.

Do not discard smoking materials from vehicles, use interior ashtrays.

Lawn & farm equipment should have properly working spark arresters to prevent sparks from exiting through the exhaust pipes.

All Terrain Vehicles (ATVs) produce an enormous amount of heat and can ignite brush from their exhaust systems.



Wildfire prevention is about keeping fires from starting.
When using fire in or near woods, be extremely careful.

**PLEASE REMEMBER, IF A FIRE STARTS ON YOUR PROPERTY, OR
YOU DETECT A FIRE, PLEASE CALL 911 OR 1-888-863-FIRE (3473)
IMMEDIATELY!!!**