

## **Are You Firewise? Build a Defensible Space Around Your Home**

As a follow-up to the Bofer Canyon Fire on August 11, 2018, your CLPOA Board is providing guidance from the Kennewick Fire Department and Benton County Fire District #1 for protecting your home from the risk of wildfire. The warmer spring months are a good time to clean up around your home and be “firewise”.

The best protection is provided by creating a defensible space around your home. A defensible space is an area around a building in which vegetation, debris, and other types of combustible fuels have been treated, cleared, or reduced to slow the spread of fire to and from the building. Landscape vegetation as well as wildland vegetation such as grass, brush, and trees can burn with great intensity and produce embers that can become wind-driven hazards.

Guidance on “How to Prepare Your Home for Wildfires” and “How to Protect Your Home – 7 ways residents can reduce the risk that their homes and property will become fuel for a wildfire” was provided in the September 2018 CLPOA Newsletter. See:

[www.canyonlakespoa.org/newsletter/](http://www.canyonlakespoa.org/newsletter/). An excellent “how to” video can be seen at <https://www.nfpa.org/Public-Education/By-topic/Wildfire/Firewise-USA/Firewise-USA-Resources>.

### **10 Ways to Defend Your Home from Wildfires**

- Rake leaves, dead limbs, and twigs. Clean out gutters. Remove leaves and rubbish from under structures and decks. Clear all flammable vegetation.
- Thin a 15-foot space between tree crowns and remove limbs within 15 feet of the ground. Remove dead branches that extend over the roof.
- Prune tree branches and shrubs within 15 feet of a stove pipe or chimney outlet.
- Mow the grass regularly and dispose of the clippings.
- Clear a 10-foot area around propane tanks and the barbeque.
- Regularly dispose of newspapers, rubbish, and vegetation clippings.
- Store gasoline, oily rags, and other flammable material in approved safety cans. Place cans in a safe location away from the base of buildings.
- Stack firewood at least 50 feet away and uphill of your home. Clear combustible material within 20 feet.
- Use landscape features such as driveways and paved or gravel walkways or patios to create firebreaks throughout the yard.
- Review your homeowner’s insurance policy and prepare/update a list of your home’s contents.

If you have specific concerns about fire prevention or questions about how to protect your home, please call the Kennewick Fire Department at 783-6198 or 585-4563 or Benton County Fire District #1 at 737-0911.