

# Homeowner's Guide To FUEL MODIFICATION

## Reducing Combustible Vegetation Around Your Home

Many parts of the unincorporated areas of San Diego County share expansive, rural settings of native vegetation. These rural areas have natural fire cycles that place residents at risk.

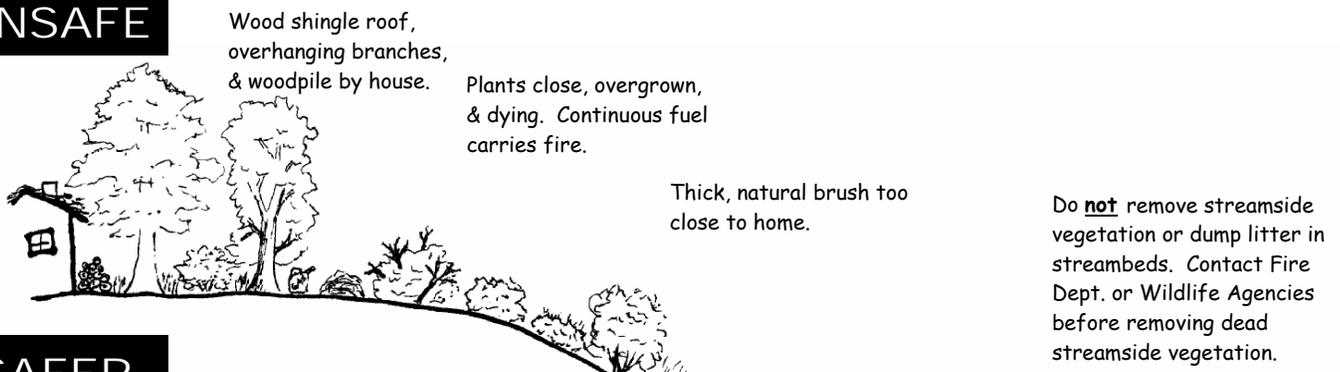
Creating a **Defensible Space** around your home will help protect your home and provide a safety zone for fire fighters. **Fuel Modification** is a key component of creating a **Defensible Space** around your home. Proper **Fuel Modification** breaks up the continuous path of fuel that could carry wildfire to your home.

### 3 R's of Defensible Space:

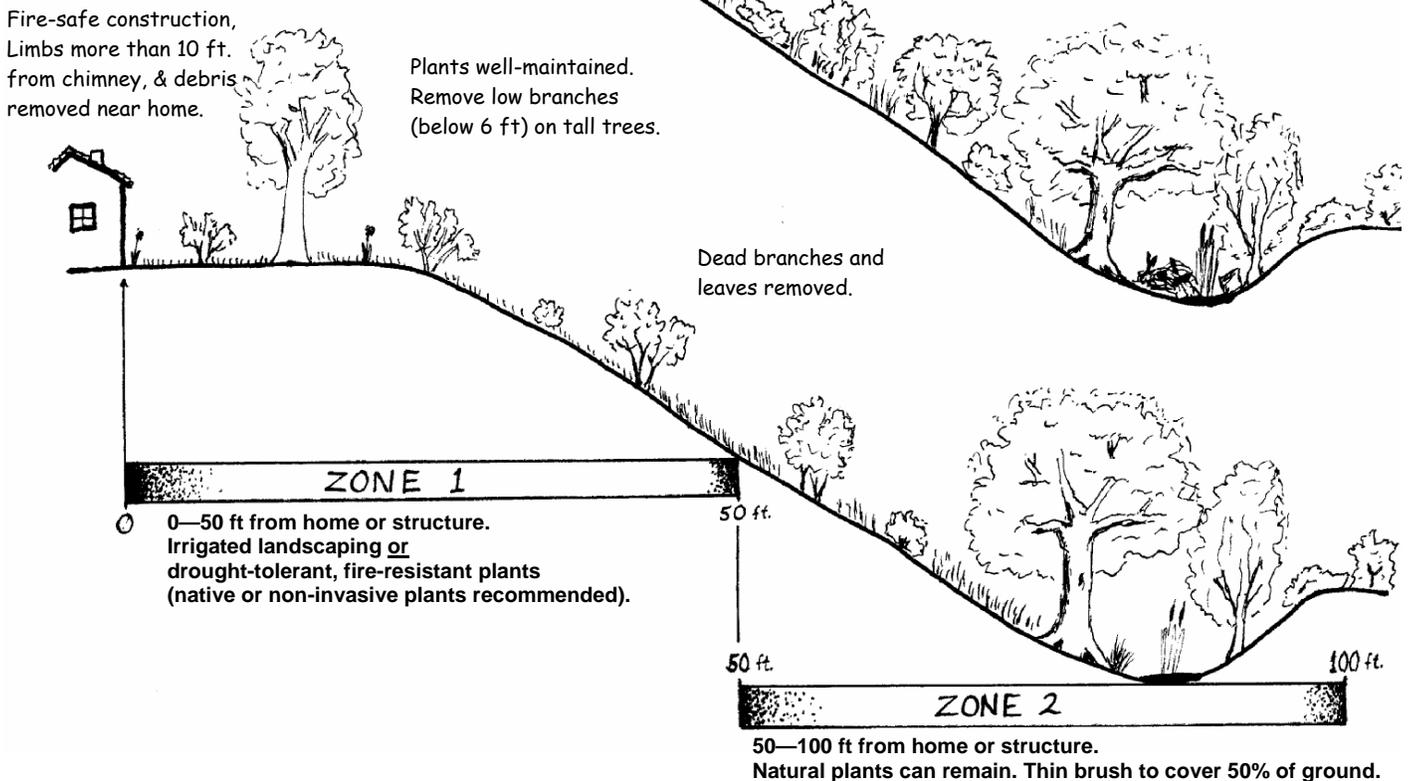
- REMOVE** dead and dying grass, shrubs, and trees.
- REDUCE** the density of vegetation — prune, mow, and thin.
- REPLACE** hazardous vegetation with less flammable plants or irrigated landscape.

Do **NOT** disc or scrape soil with machinery— this is not a grading permit.

### UNSAFE



### SAFER



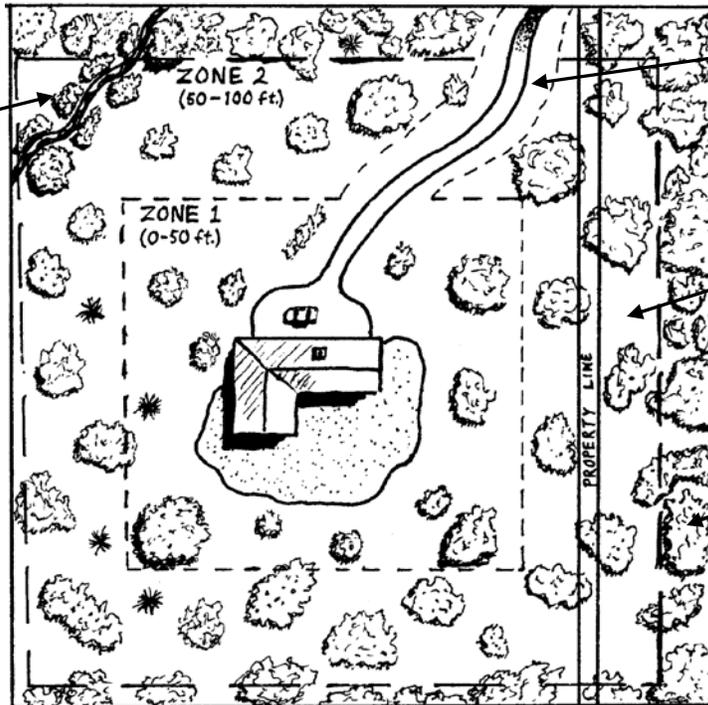
**BOTTOM LINE:** Fuel Modification increases the chance that structures will survive a wildfire.

## Proper Fuel Modification Practices

Thin combustible vegetation by mowing, pruning, or cutting.  
Chipping brush into mulch is okay — contact Fire Safe Council for more information.  
**The desired condition is a fire-safe, *maintained landscape*, not bare ground.**

Do **not** remove streamside vegetation or dump litter in streambeds. Contact Fire Department or Wildlife Agencies before removing dead streamside vegetation.

If you have an open space easement on your property, consult its conditions or the County of San Diego before modifying vegetation.



Thin 10 ft. from roads & driveways.

Before thinning vegetation outside your property lines, contact the adjacent landowner (private and public) or the Fire Department.

Natural vegetation remains.

**GOAL: Create a Defensible Space around structures.**

**For questions about your property, please contact your LOCAL FIRE DEPARTMENT.  
For additional information, contact any of the following agencies:**

**Fire Safe Council of San Diego County**  
Website: [www.firesafesdcounty.org](http://www.firesafesdcounty.org)  
Phone: 619-562-0096

**Cleveland National Forest**  
Website: [www.fs.fed.us/r5/cleveland/](http://www.fs.fed.us/r5/cleveland/)  
Phone: 858-673-6180 (Main Office)  
760-788-0250 (Palomar District)  
619-445-6235 (Descanso District)

**U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service**  
Website: [www.fws.gov](http://www.fws.gov)  
Phone: 760-431-9440 (Ecological Services)  
619-468-9245 (Fire Management)

**California Department of Fish & Game**  
Website: [www.dfg.ca.gov](http://www.dfg.ca.gov)  
Phone: 858-467-4201

**Bureau of Land Management, Fire Mitigation**  
Website: [www.blm.gov](http://www.blm.gov)  
Phone: 858-676-0894

**CAL FIRE** (California Dept. of Forestry & Fire Protection)  
Website: [www.fire.ca.gov](http://www.fire.ca.gov)  
Phone: 619-590-3100

**County of San Diego, Dept. of Planning & Land Use**  
Website: [www.sdcounty.ca.gov](http://www.sdcounty.ca.gov)  
Phone: 858-694-2960 or 800-411-0017

### **Wildlife Agencies' Legal Notice to Landowners about Endangered Species**

Landowners who have been notified by the California Department of Fish & Game or U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service that rare, threatened, or endangered species occur on their property in areas requiring fuel modification must notify both agencies in writing at least 10 days prior to removing vegetation. The agencies will have up to 10 days following such notification to (1) determine whether the proposed clearing complies with State and/or Federal endangered species requirements and (2) to suggest voluntary, alternative abatement measures if feasible and warranted. Failure of the agencies to respond within 10 days will allow the landowner to proceed with abatement activities without further delay. Failure by landowners to provide adequate notification as described above may render landowners liable under State and Federal law.