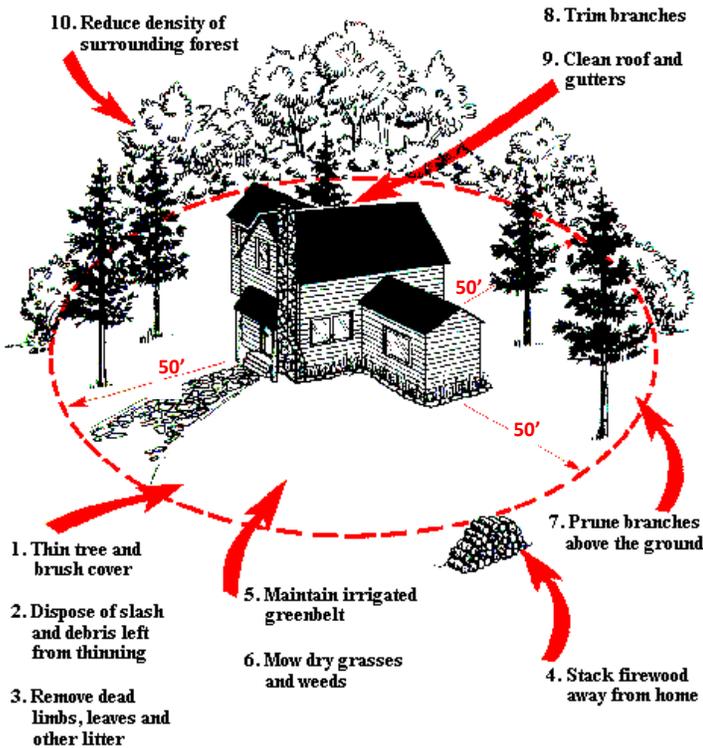


Protecting your home from wildfires in the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area



An example of a well planned fire buffer
Image source: www.firewisekp.com (altered slightly by Commission staff)

General rule of thumb: contact your local planning department for specific information pertaining to your property before you take action.

Common Questions:

Do the Scenic Area rules allow homeowners to take actions to protect their homes from wildfire risks?

The Gorge Commission, and county planning departments encourage landowners to take actions to reduce risks to homes and properties from wildfires. Most of these actions do not require any Scenic Area approval (see back for details).

Do the rules allow me to remove trees or shrubs on my property in the Scenic Area?

For the great majority of homes in the Scenic Area, removing vegetation near the home to increase fire safety is allowed without review. The only exceptions are:

- vegetation required to be retained by previous permit conditions;
- lands zoned Open Space; and
- homes located in Special Management Areas. For these last two situations, there are additional guidelines and review may be required (see back for details).

What about dead trees and shrubs – can I remove them to reduce the fire risk?

Again, in the great majority of cases, removing dead vegetation that increases fire risk is allowed outright. Replacement of dead trees may be required if those trees were required to be retained as a permit condition (see back for details).

Please

turn this page over to view more specific information

Your safety is important to us.

Please contact your county planning office or the Gorge Commission with questions.

Columbia River Gorge Commission: (509) 493-3323 | Clark County Community Development: (360) 397-2375
Hood River County Planning Department: (541) 387-6840 | Klickitat County Planning Department: (800) 765-7239
Multnomah County Land Use and Transportation Program: (503) 988-3043 | Skamania County Community Development:
(509) 427-3900 | Wasco County Planning and Development: (541) 506-2560 | **Always dial 911 for emergencies**

If you are a landowner in the National Scenic Area,

there are several things to keep in mind while reducing the threat of wildfires near your home

1. Are there any past land use decisions issued for my property that may have Scenic Area requirements?



YES

Please contact your local planning department to discuss possible limitations or requirements specific to your property.

NO

Move on to question 2 below.

Not Sure

Please contact your local planning department to find out.

2. What else do I need to know when creating my fuels reduction plan?

- Before removing any trees or shrubs on lands zoned Open Space:
 - Please contact your planning department if your Open Space poses a safety threat.
 - Thinning projects can be done through a new application.
- Before removing any trees or shrubs in the Special Management Area, check with your county planning department to see if you need a forest practice permit and/or a Scenic Area review.

Take action today!

The following protective measures do not require review with Scenic Area requirements:

- Hand water and irrigate a buffer area around your home
- Move firewood piles and other fuels away from structures
- Maintain healthy vegetation
- Use native vegetation in your landscaping
- Remove accumulated leaves, needles, and other dead vegetation beneath trees
- Trim tree branches to create a 15 foot separation between trees
- Trim low tree branches off the ground
- Trim tree branches to create separation from tree to building
- Keep your gutters clean

Additional resources:

www.firewise.org | Washington Dept. of Natural Resources Forest Practices Help Desk: 360-902-1420 (www.dnr.wa.gov)
Oregon Dept. of Forestry 503-945-7200 (<http://www.oregon.gov/ODF/homewildfiresafety.shtml>) | Oregon Dept. of Forestry The Dalles Unit: (542) 296-4626 | Underwood Conservation District (UCD): (509)493-1936 (provides technical and financial assistance to landowners in Skamania and Western Klickitat Counties) | Skamania County Firewise: (509) 427-3769 (contact UCD after 12/31/09) | Hood River Soil and Water Conservation District: (541) 386-4588