

Wildfire preparedness is year-round

Written by Wendy Mason Wildfire Prevention & Communications Coordinator, EMNRD-Forestry Division
Wednesday, 20 April 2022 05:11



Prepare for flames, sparks before wildfire season

SANTA FE – With wildfire season just around the corner, now is the perfect time to prepare your home and yard for wildfire.

The 2022 Wildfire Preparedness is a year-round campaign that provides monthly wildfire preparedness tasks that follow the changing seasons. The April message from the Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department [Forestry Division](#), the [Fire Adapted New Mexico learning network](#) and our partners is: Prepare for Flames and Sparks Before Wildfire Season.

Historically, New Mexico's fire danger is highest in the spring when red flag conditions are common. It is important to be prepared before the onset of red flag conditions to reduce your property's wildfire risk. Taking steps now to harden your home and create defensible space is the best way to reduce the threat of wildfire to you, your family, and your community.

Start by focusing on areas outside your house and the exteriors of barns, sheds, and other structures where a ground fire could potentially reach your home. When wildfire threatens, low-hanging trees, excessive dead vegetation, and woodpiles next to your house exponentially increase the risk of home ignition.

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To prepare your home, concentrate on the following:

Trees

Cut down any dead trees close to your home

Remove overhanging limbs, especially dead ones

Shrubs

Thin shrubs throughout your yard and remove dead vegetation

If shrubs are touching the exterior of your home, replant them further away or make sure they stay green, watered, and thinned throughout the fire season

Exterior of Home

Build or remodel with fire-resistant materials

Consider using xeriscape landscaping and non-flammable materials within 5 feet of your home

Remove plants that climb up the wall and under the eaves

Decks/Balconies

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Enclose the foundation and undersides of decks and balconies with flame-resistant sheeting or metal screens

Use fire-resistant decking and outdoor furniture

Keep decks clear of combustible items like leaves and pine needles

Combustibles

Relocate woodpiles away from structures, including sheds and barns

Clear at least a 10-foot area around your propane tank. Keep your grill and propane cylinders at least 10 feet from any structure. Never store propane cylinders in the basement, garage, or shed. Think about acquiring an outdoor cabinet and clearly label it “flammable” for firefighters’ knowledge.

Other helpful resources include the [Ready, Set, Go! Program](#) ([video](#)), [Living with Fire: A Guide for the Homeowner, New Mexico](#), and [Firewise USA®](#).

The [New Mexico Forestry Division](#) is working with the [Carson](#), [Cibola](#), and [Santa Fe](#) National Forests, [Forest Stewards Guild](#),

[Fire Adapted NM](#),

[New Mexico Association of Conservation Districts](#)

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[National Park Service](#)

,
[Bureau of Indian Affairs](#)

, and

[Bureau of Land Management New Mexico State Office](#)

to continue our wildfire preparedness calendar in 2022, and share the message across multiple platforms. This includes social media, webinars, and community events. Bookmark the

[wildfire preparedness webpage](#)

to follow the campaign throughout the year.

By Wendy Mason
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