



2026 WILDFIRE PREPAREDNESS UPDATE

Assembly Bill 3074 (AB-3074), commonly referred to as "Zone Zero" or the Ember Resistant Zone, was signed into law on September 29, 2020. In February 2025, shortly after the Palisades and Eaton Fires, Governor Newsom signed Executive Order (N-18-25) to expedite the development and implementation of the regulations, establishing a deadline of December 31, 2025. The State Board of Forestry and Fire Protection has been directed to develop the specific requirements. At this time, those requirements are still being developed and are expected to be finalized in the first half of 2026.

Although the details of the Board of Forestry requirements are still being finalized, current projections indicate that **existing** homes will be subject to a 3-year phase-in period, with mandatory compliance expected in 2029. The legislation is anticipated to significantly limit combustible materials within 5-feet of all **existing** residential structures located in all State Responsibility Area (SRA) Fire Hazard Severity Zones and the Local Responsibility Area (LRA) Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone. Once the Board of Forestry and Fire Protection finalizes and releases the implementation requirements, the Ventura County Fire Department will provide updated information to our community members.

NOTE: We encourage homeowners within all SRA Fire Hazard Severity Zones and the LRA Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone to take proactive steps by making incremental improvements to their properties. Begin by removing wood chips, mulch, and bark, and by thinning vegetation such as hedges and shrubs within 5-feet of all structures.

FIRE HAZARD SEVERITY ZONES (FHSZ): California has 3 classifications that indicate the likelihood of wildfires in specific areas, categorized as **Moderate, High, or Very High**. These zones are determined by factors such as fire history, vegetation, weather conditions, and topography to help inform property owners and stakeholders about wildfire risks and necessary safety measures.

NOTE: If your property is located in any SRA Fire Hazard Severity Zones or the LRA Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone, defensible space requirements apply and you will likely be impacted by the Zone Zero legislation.

Look up your address using the QR Code: 

To see if your property is located within a **FIRE HAZARD SEVERITY ZONE** scan here:



DEFENSIBLE SPACE: This is the buffer zone you create between your property and the surrounding wildland area. This space is key to slowing or stopping wildfire spread and protecting your home from embers, flames, or heat. It also gives firefighters a safer area to defend your property. The 100-ft defensible space area is broken into the following zones:

- **Zone 0** – This zone extends 0-5 feet from your building, patio or deck. This area is the most vulnerable and should be more aggressively maintained for fire resistance. When embers land in this area, they can ignite combustibles which can ignite your home.
- **Zone 1** – This zone extends 5-30 feet from your home, remove any dead vegetation or litter and maintain spacing between shrubs and trees.
- **Zone 2** – This zone extends 30-100 feet from your home. Continue reducing potential fuel within 100-feet or to the property line. Vegetation can be grouped in this zone when separations are maintained from one grouping to the next. This will slow down the spread and intensity of fire as it approaches your structure.


For more information on **DEFENSIBLE SPACE** scan here:



HOME HARDENING: The term refers to taking proactive measures to reduce a home's vulnerability to wildfire by either direct flame, radiant heat, or flying embers. Proper defensible space in combination with home hardening significantly increases your homes' chances of survival.

- **Roofs** – Class A: Composite, metal, clay or tile, resist fire and embers. Close off gaps under roof tiles and shingles to block wind-blown embers. Regularly clear leaves, pine needles, and debris.
- **Vents** – Install 1/16" to 1/8" noncombustible, corrosion resistant metal mesh over vents to block embers.
- **Windows** – Dual pane, metal frame, with at least one tempered glass layer to withstand radiant heat.
- **Fencing** – We recommend replacing any combustible fencing with a non-combustible type within 5-feet of structures. (Vinyl fencing is *not* non-combustible)

For more information on **HOME HARDENING** scan here:



FIRE SAFE COUNCIL: Ventura Regional Fire Safe Council is a grassroots, community-led organization that mobilizes residents to protect their homes, communities, and environments from catastrophic wildfire, through collaborative planning, programs, mitigation and education. They offer many free programs to assist residents with their wildfire needs including: Home Wildfire Assessments, Firewise USA support, community chipper events, and resources to find home hardening contractors and landscape professionals.



We encourage the public to take advantage of their **Home Wildfire Assessment** program, which provides a free, convenient way for residents to begin improving their property's wildfire safety from the privacy of their own homes. Each assessment includes a personalized report with recommendations for home hardening and defensible space measures.



INSURANCE DISCOUNTS: What can be done to reduce my insurance premiums?

- **Fire Risk Reduction Recognition** – VCFD is one of 50 agencies across the state that qualified for the designation, recognizing best practices in wildfire risk planning. Contact your insurance company to see if this designation will qualify you for a discount in rates.
- **Firewise USA Community** – Most insurance companies offer discounts if your property is located in a designated Firewise USA Community. Firewise is a free national program run by NFPA that provides a collaborative framework for communities to get organized, identify wildfire risks, and create a plan within their communities to mitigate those risks. Contact the Ventura Regional Fire Safe Council to learn how your community can get started.

For more information on **RISK REDUCTION and FIREWISE** scan here:



REAL ESTATE INSPECTIONS: A seller of real property located in a High or Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone shall provide the buyer with documentation stating the property is in compliance with defensible space requirements. Have your realtor contact the Ventura County Fire Dept and schedule an inspection while your property is in escrow.

For more information on **REAL ESTATE INSPECTIONS** scan here:



For additional information regarding wildfire preparedness, please visit the **VCFD Wildfire Preparedness Division**

