



CITY OF NEWPORT BEACH

Fire Department

Fire Prevention Division

GUIDELINES AND STANDARDS

Guideline G.01 – Hazard Reduction Zones

G.01.1 PURPOSE

The purpose of this guide is to provide information necessary to ensure the modification, and maintenance of the vegetation in areas adjacent to structures in order to create a defensible space between the structure and the vegetation. Persons owning, leasing, controlling, operating, or maintaining buildings or structures requiring defensible space are responsible for modifying or removing non-fire resistive vegetation.

G.01.2 SCOPE

All structures including any attachments to that structure located within designated Hazard Reduction Zones shall comply with the requirements outlined in this document. Requirements for new construction are found in Guideline G.02, “Fuel Modification Zones.”

The requirements found in this guideline only apply to those sides of the structure that face the wildland area (see Attachment 1).

G.01.3 DEFINITIONS

Defensible Space: The area adjacent to a structure or dwelling, either natural or man-made, where wildfire prevention or protection practices are implemented to provide defense from an approaching wildfire or to minimize the spread of a structure fire to wildlands or surrounding areas.

Hazard Reduction Zone: A geographical area designated by the Fire Chief where structures directly abut wildland space and containing structures built prior to July 1, 1999 and not designated as a Fuel Modification Zone.

Home Ignition Zone: A geographical area within 100 feet of the home or structure where the factors that principally determine home ignition potential during extreme wildfire behavior (high intensity fires and burning embers) are present.

G.01.4 PROCEDURE

MAINTENANCE OF DEFENSIBLE SPACE

1. Immediate Home Ignition Zone (0-5 feet from structure)

Organic Mulch and Wood Chips

- Organic mulch and wood chip application is prohibited within two feet (2') of the structure.
 - Must use non-combustible materials such as gravel and decomposed granite within two feet (2') of the structure.
 - Organic mulch and wood chip application is allowed to be used from three to five feet (3-5').
 - The maximum depth of mulch and wood chips in this zone shall be four inches (4").
- Use a mosaic (non-uniform) pattern with a maximum application area of 20 feet x 20 feet and a minimum of five feet (5') separation.

Ground Cover

- Ground cover and grasses shall be maintained less than six inches (6") in height.

Bushes and Shrubs

- Bushes and shrubs in this zone shall not exceed eighteen inches (18").
- Bushes and shrubs not under a tree canopy can remain, if horizontal and vertical clearances are properly maintained.
- Bushes and shrubs shall not be a continuous bed of vegetation.
 - Bushes and shrubs in this zone shall not exceed eighteen inches (18") in height.
 - Bushes and shrubs shall have clear horizontal and vertical separation between each other and other vegetation.
 - Existing bushes and shrubs shall be individually spaced or clustered in groups of three (3) specimens or less.
 - Bushes and shrubs, either individually spaced or in a group or cluster, shall not exceed ten feet (10') in diameter.
 - Bushes and shrubs shall have horizontal separation of three times the height.

Trees

- No trees canopy shall be located within five feet (5') of the home or structure.
- No trees canopy shall be located within ten feet (10') of a chimney.
- The Newport Beach Fire Department strongly recommends no vegetation within five feet (5') of the structure.

2. Intermediate Home Ignition Zone (5-30 feet from structure)

Organic Mulch and Wood Chips

- Organic mulch and wood chip application shall be limited to non-continuous use of organic mulch and or wood chips not to exceed four inches (4") in depth.
 - Use a mosaic (non-uniform) pattern with a maximum application area of 20 feet x 20 feet and a minimum of five feet (5') separation.

Ground Cover

- Ground cover and grasses shall be maintained less than eighteen inches (18") in height.

Bushes and Shrubs

- Bushes and shrubs in this zone shall not exceed eighteen inches (18").
- Bushes and shrubs not under a tree canopy can remain, if vertical and horizontal clearances are properly maintained.
- Bushes and shrubs shall not be a continuous bed of vegetation.
 - Bushes and shrubs in this zone shall not exceed eighteen inches (18") in height.
 - Bushes and shrubs shall have clear horizontal and vertical separation between each other and other vegetation.
 - Existing bushes and shrubs shall be individually spaced or clustered in groups of three (3) specimens or less.
 - Bushes and shrubs, either individually spaced or in a group or cluster, shall not exceed ten feet (10') in diameter.
 - Bushes and shrubs shall have horizontal separation of three times the height.
 - Top of bush or shrub shall have six feet (6') of clear separation from the lowest part of the tree canopy above.
- Bushes and shrubs up to eighteen inches (18") are allowed under an existing tree canopy in this zone. Minimum clear space under a tree canopy is five feet (5').

- Bushes and shrubs that do not provide minimum vertical or horizontal separation shall be removed.

Trees

- Trees shall be horizontally spaced three times the size of the mature canopy.
- Trees shall be maintained (pruned, laced out and limbed up) to provide vertical and horizontal separation between other fuels.

3. Extended Home Ignition Zone (30-100 feet from structure)

Organic Mulch and Wood Chips

- Organic mulch and wood chip application is allowed.
- No limitations on application areas.

Bushes and Shrubs

- Bushes and shrubs not under a tree canopy can remain, if properly maintained.
- Bushes and shrubs in excess of two feet (2') shall not be under a tree canopy.
- Bushes and shrubs shall not be a continuous bed of vegetation.
 - Bushes and shrubs in this zone shall not exceed two feet (2') in height.
 - Bushes and shrubs shall have clear horizontal and vertical separation between each other and other vegetation.
 - Existing bushes and shrubs shall be individually spaced or clustered in groups of three (3) specimens or less.
 - Bushes and shrubs, either individually spaced or in a group or cluster, shall not exceed ten feet (10') in diameter.
 - Bushes and shrubs shall have horizontal separation of three times the height.
 - Top of bush or shrub shall have six feet (6') of clear separation from the lowest part of the tree canopy above.
- Bushes and shrubs up to two feet (2') are allowed under an existing tree canopy. Minimum clear space under a tree canopy is six feet (6')
- Bushes and shrubs that do not provide minimum vertical separation shall be removed.

Trees

- Trees shall be horizontally spaced three times the size of the mature canopy
- Trees shall be maintained (pruned, laced out and limbed up) to provide vertical and horizontal separation between other fuels.

4. Structure Side Yards:

- For the purpose of firefighter access and egress, provide three feet of clear access along both sides of the structure.

5. Firewood: Firewood and combustible material for consumption on the premises shall not be stored in unenclosed spaces beneath buildings or structures, on decks or under eaves, canopies of other projections or overhangs. Storage of firewood and combustible material stored in the defensible space must be located a minimum of 15 feet away from structures and separated from the drip lines of trees and shrubs by a minimum of 15 feet.

6. Roofs: All roofs of structures in designated wildland fire hazard areas shall comply with the following guidelines:

- Leaves, needles, twigs, and other combustible matter shall be removed from roofs and rain gutters.
- Any portion of any tree, bush, or shrub that is located within ten feet of the outlet of a chimney shall be removed.
- All chimneys attached to any appliance or fireplace that burns solid fuel shall be equipped with an approved spark arrester constructed in accordance with the California Building code. The spark arrester screen shall be made from a material that is both heat and corrosion resistant, and the openings shall not permit the passage of spheres having a diameter larger than one half inch.

*** Nothing contained in this guideline shall be deemed to preclude the fire code official from requiring more than the minimum specific requirements set forth above when the fire code official determines that conditions exist, which additional fire protection measures are necessary.

Attachment 1

