

Fire-Rescue Department

Community Wildfire Preparedness

Parks and Recreation Board Committee #201

April 17, 2025

Fire Marshal Tony Tosca, Fire-Rescue Department

Assistant Fire Marshal Dan Hypes, Fire-Rescue Department





Fire-Rescue Standards Around Homes

Proactive Measures

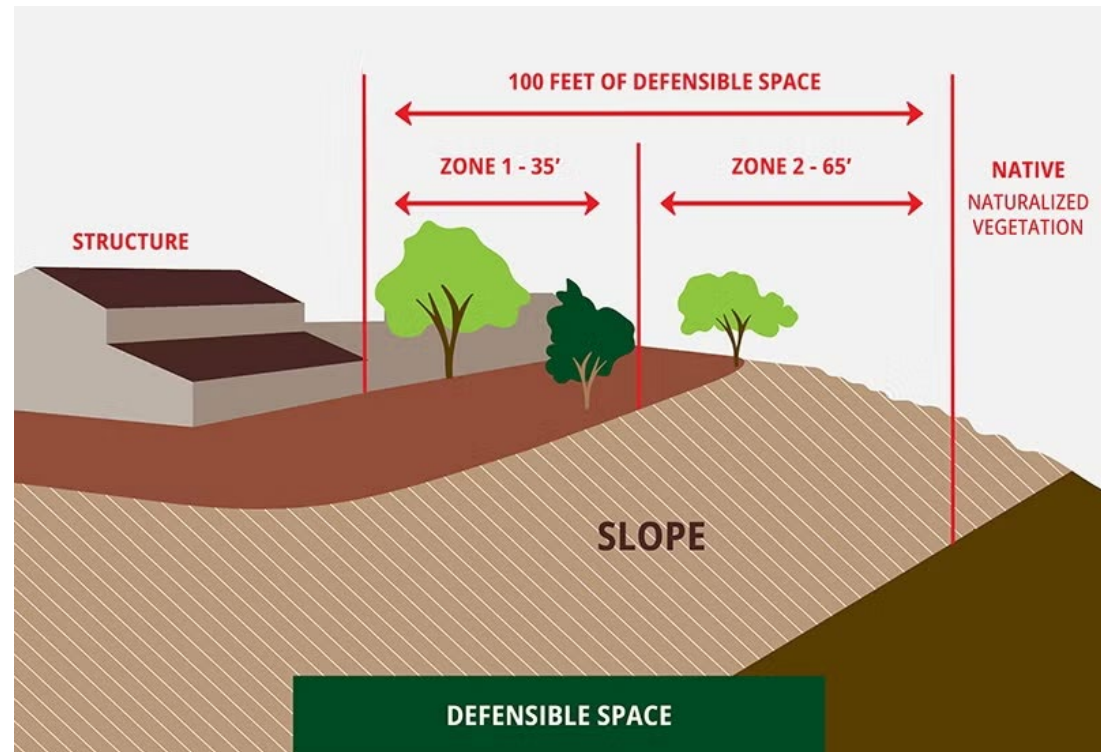
Brush Audits and Staffing Updates



Fire-Rescue Standards Around Homes

Defensible Space Reviews for New Development

- SDFD reviews new construction projects in VHFHSZ that cannot achieve the required 100' of defensible space.
- Alternative mitigation strategies can be proposed including fire rated construction or 6' block wall to protect property.



What is Assembly Bill 3074 (AB 3074)?

AB 3074 (Fire prevention: wildfire risk: defensible space: ember-resistant zones) introduced “Zone Zero” as a five-foot ember resistant zone. When officially adopted by the State Fire Marshal, this law will require a five-foot ember resistant zone around structures located in a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone (VHFHSZ) which includes a significant portion of the City of San Diego.

When does AB 3074 take effect?

AB 3074 became law on January 1, 2021; however, it has not yet been enforced. Enforcement will occur when the State Fire Marshal approves vegetation clearance requirements. This is anticipated in 2025. Full enforcement on existing structures will not be required until one year after the State Fire Marshal approves final requirements. Full enforcement on new construction will take effect immediately upon approval of final clearance requirements:

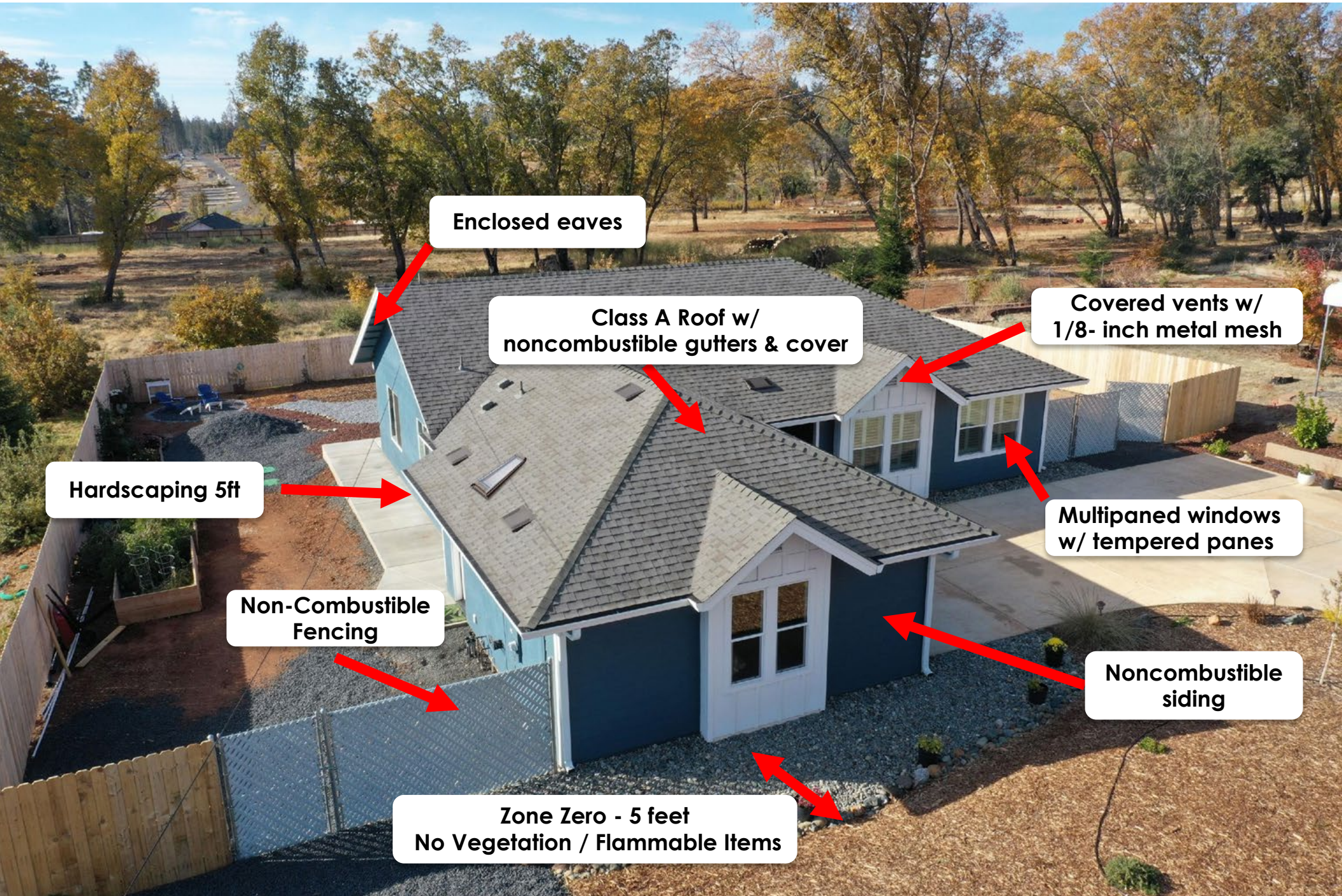
- Full enforcement on new construction anticipated to be in 2025
- Full enforcement on existing structures anticipated to be in 2026

Ready Create Defensible Space



Embers are burning pieces of airborne material that can be carried more than a mile by the wind. Research points to embers and small flames as the main ways homes ignite in wildland fires.





Enclosed eaves

**Class A Roof w/
noncombustible gutters & cover**

**Covered vents w/
1/8- inch metal mesh**

Hardscaping 5ft

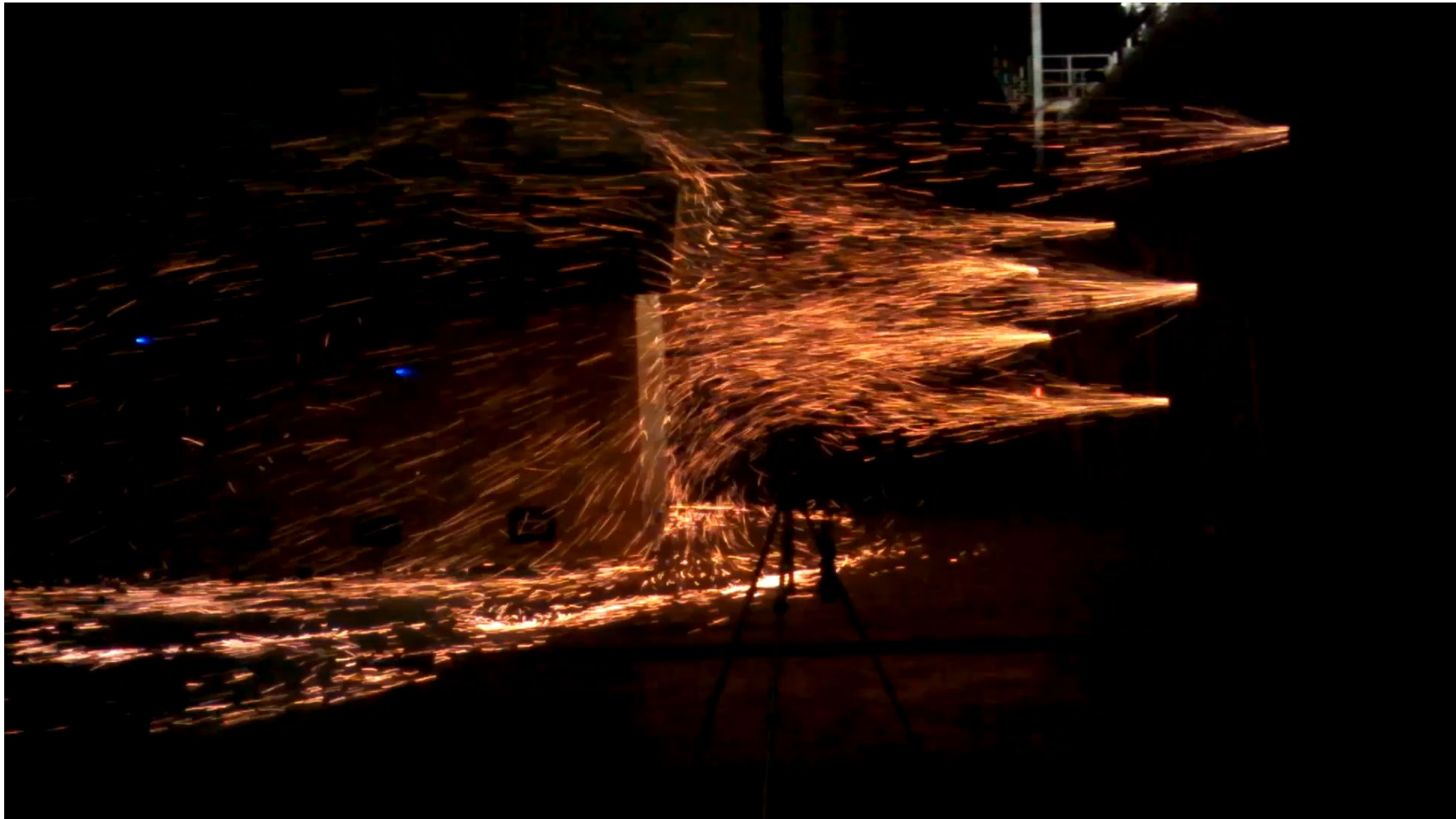
**Non-Combustible
Fencing**

**Multipaned windows
w/ tempered panes**

**Noncombustible
siding**

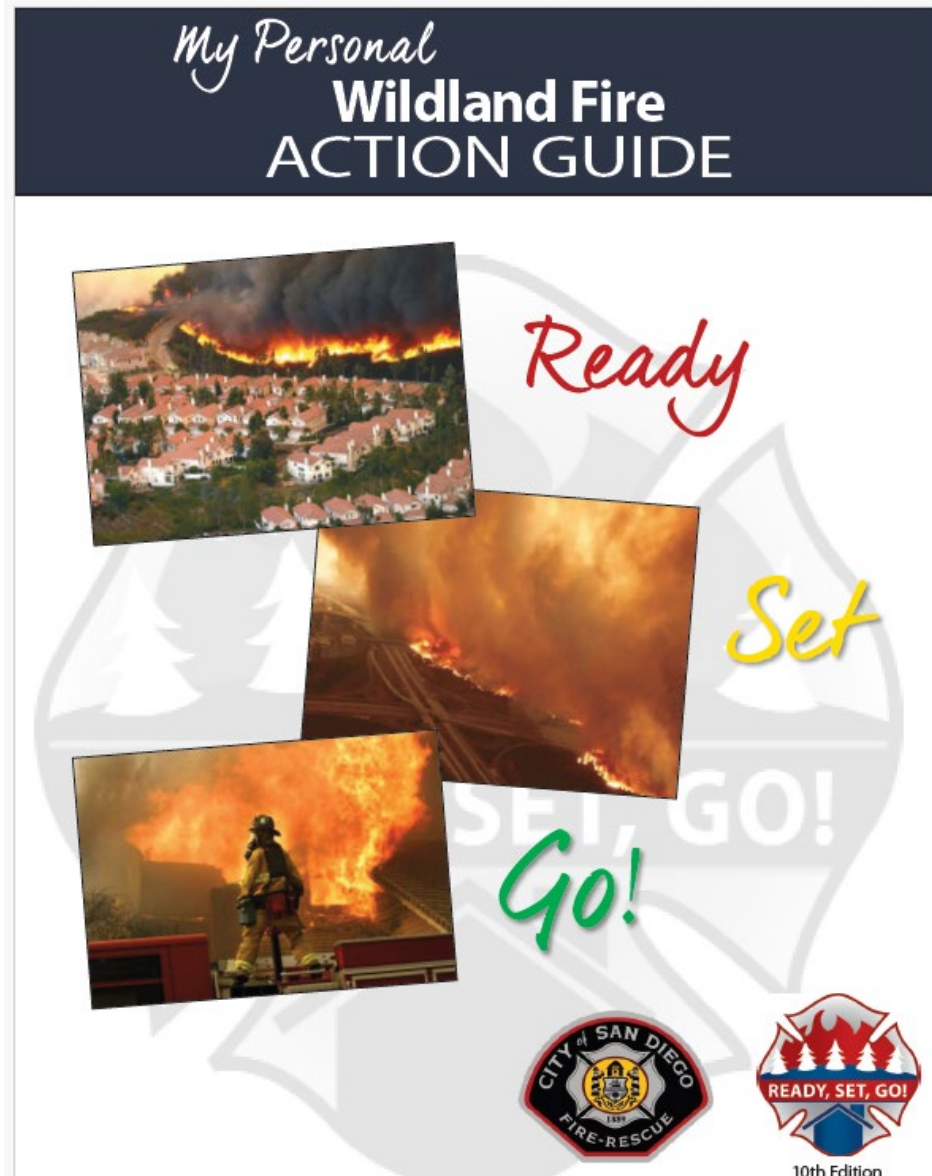
**Zone Zero - 5 feet
No Vegetation / Flammable Items**

What is Assembly Bill 3074 (AB 3074)?





Proactive Measures



Be Prepared Be Aware



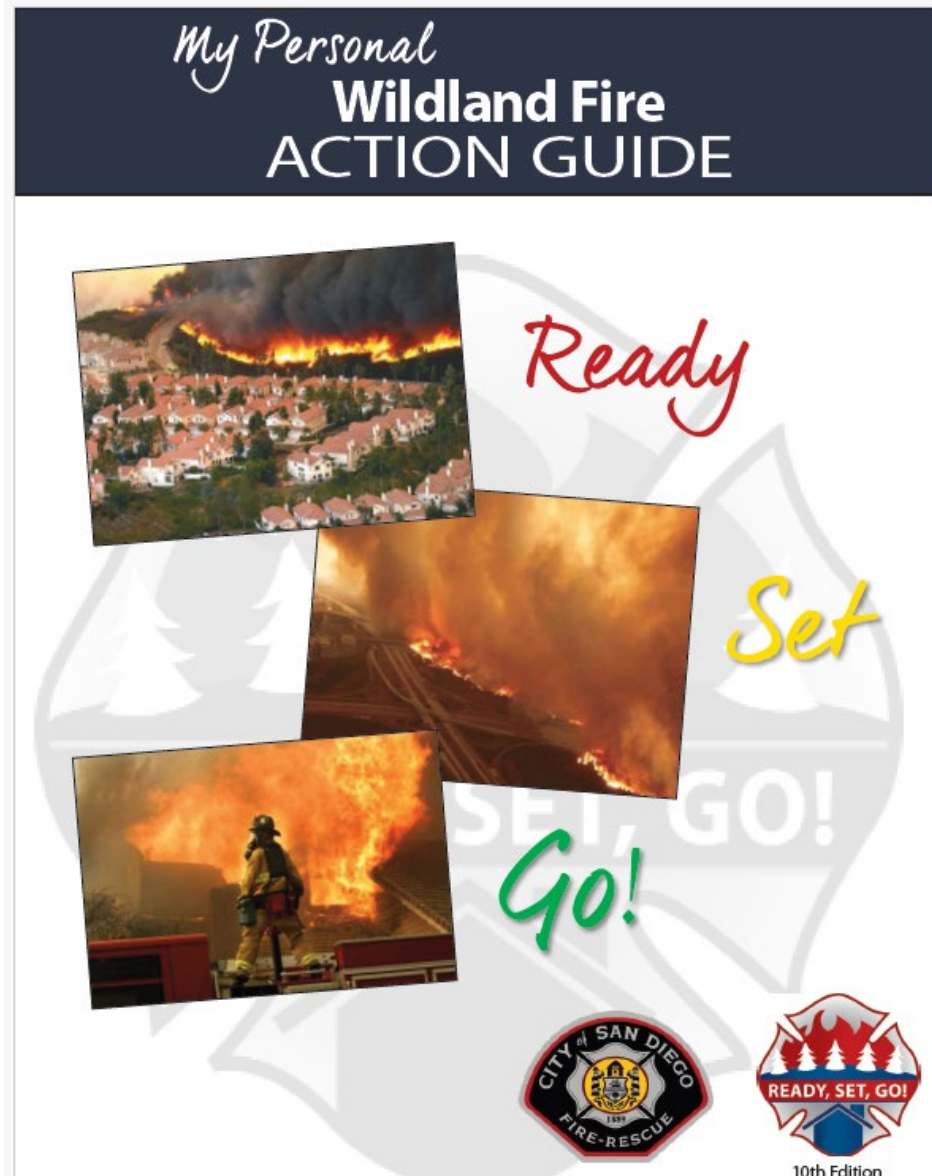
WATCH DUTY



ALERT
SAN DIEGO



<https://www.sandiego.gov/fire>



Ready, Set, Go!





Guidance for Homeowners

San Diego Fire-Rescue Services

NEW Home Risk Assessment

Low-Cost Retrofits and Home Hardening Products

Guidance for Communities

Fire Safe Council and Community Wildfire Protection Plans

Emergency Response and Evacuation Resources

Red Flag Warnings and Emergency and Evacuation Notifications

Evacuation Planning

Emergency Response Resources

Guidance for Homeowners

San Diego Fire-Rescue Services

The San Diego Fire-Rescue Wildland Management and Enforcement section comprises of four programs: The **Weed Abatement and Brush Complaint Program**, **Real Estate Defensible Space Inspection Program**, **Proactive Door to Door Brush Management Program**, and the **Annual Weed Abatement Vacant Lot Program**.

- [Wildland Management and Enforcement Division](#)
- [Brush Management Guide](#) PDF

NEW Home Risk Assessment

Beginning July 1, 2025, SDFD will offer a Home Risk Assessment, an educational Defensible Space Inspection that provides homeowners valuable insight about the defensible space and the 0 - 5ft ember resistance zone. The goal of this personalized service is to educate homeowners about the purpose of defensible space while making your home defensible and ember resistant against wildfires. With this approach, we aim to make more homes defensible and insurable.

California Assembly Bill 3074 (AB 3074)

Low-Cost Retrofits and Home Hardening Products

- [OSFM Wildland Urban Interface \(WUI\) Products Handbook](#) PDF
- [OSFM Approved Inspection Agencies for Products Listed for WUI Areas](#) PDF

Guidance for Communities

Fire Safe Council and Community Wildfire Protection Plans

- [How to establish a Fire Safe Council in San Diego County](#)
- [How to create a Community Wildfire Protection Plan \(CWPP\)](#)
- [How to create a Firewise Community](#)
- [How to create a Fire Adaptive Community \(FAC\)](#)

Emergency Response and Evacuation Resources

Red Flag Warnings and Emergency and Evacuation Notifications

- [The Genasys Protect App](#) (For active fire status updates and evacuation order notifications)
 - [Genasys Protect FAQ](#)
- [Watch Duty App](#) (Alerts you of nearby wildfire and firefighting efforts in real-time)
- [Alert San Diego App](#) (Lets you plan for the unexpected in advance and create an emergency plan)
 - [Alert San Diego Disaster Preparedness](#)

Evacuation Planning

- [San Diego County Operational Area/Emergency Operations Plan \(Annex Q\)](#) PDF

Emergency Response Resources

- [San Diego County Fire and Rescue Mutual Aid Operations \(Annex B\)](#) PDF
- [San Diego Office of Emergency Services](#)

Wildland Management and Enforcement Programs

1. Proactive **- Revised Proactive Program**

- Door to Door Defensible Space Inspections – Approx 46,000 canyon rim homes in VHFHSZ
- Vacant lot program – Fire Prevention Services
- Monitoring of the city's property requiring brush management

- New Contracts

2. Complaints

- Approximately 1,500 annually

3. Requested Services

- Real Estate Defensible Space Inspections
- Home Risk Assessment(Coming Soon)





Wildland Management and Enforcement Programs

The screenshot shows the San Diego Fire-Rescue Department website. The header includes the department name and a navigation menu with links to Home, About SDFD, News Center, Safety Education, Services & Programs, Community Risk Reduction, Careers, and Contact SDFD. The main content area is titled "Wildland Management and Enforcement" and contains three sections: "Weed Abatement and Brush Complaint Program", "Real Estate Defensible Space Inspection Program", and "Community Risk Reduction". The "Real Estate Defensible Space Inspection Program" section includes a "NEW!" announcement about online payment and a "Submit an Application" button. The "Community Risk Reduction" section includes a list of links and buttons for "Wildfire Preparedness", "Fire-Safe San Diego", "Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones", and "Municipal Code".

Wildland Management and Enforcement

The San Diego Fire-Rescue Wildland Management and Enforcement section comprises of four programs: The [Weed Abatement and Brush Complaint Program](#), [Real Estate Defensible Space Inspection Program](#), [Proactive Door to Door Brush Management Program](#), and the [Annual Weed Abatement Vacant Lot Program](#). It is important that residents understand it is their responsibility to maintain their defensible space within 100 feet of habitable structures. The San Diego Fire-Rescue Department does not have the resources to conduct weed abatement on behalf of privately owned parcels within the City of San Diego.

Weed Abatement and Brush Complaint Program

The program is comprised of addressing complaints to reduce hazards in the wildland urban interface. To learn how to submit a brush complaint, please visit our [Citizen Complaint Inspections page](#) for detailed information and instructions.

Real Estate Defensible Space Inspection Program

NEW! We now accept **online payment** for a Real Estate Defensible Space Inspection. To request an inspection, please see the "Submit an Application" section below. **Please note: Payment must be submitted with your application for the inspection to be scheduled. Inspections will not be conducted without payment.**

The Real Estate Defensible Space Inspection went into effect as of July 1, 2021, when Assembly Bill 38 became California Civil Code 1102.19(a) established that when you sell property that is located in a high or very high fire hazard severity zone you'll need documentation of a compliant defensible space inspection that complies with Section 4291 of the Public Resources Code or local vegetation management ordinances (SDMC 142.0412).

[Submit an Application](#)

[Frequently Asked Questions](#)

Community Risk Reduction

- [Community Risk Reduction Home](#)
- [Citizen Complaint Inspections](#)
- [Codes & Regulations](#)
- [False Alarm Program](#)
- [Fire Protection Systems](#)
- [Forms](#)
- [Grant Funded Projects](#)
- [Inspection Services](#)
- [Knox Box Program](#)
- [Permit Applications](#)
- [Policies](#)
- [Wildland Management and Enforcement](#)

[Wildfire Preparedness](#)

[Fire-Safe San Diego](#)

[Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones](#)

[Municipal Code](#)

Wildland Management and Enforcement



Guide to Brush Management: Property Owners

Learn about Brush Management and Defensible Space — Find out how proper brush management reduces wildfire risks in San Diego's high-fire zones. This guide explains defensible space, brush management zones, and important regulations for private properties.

Learn more about Brush Management

Additional Resources

- [Brush Management Guide](#) **PDF**
- [Brush Management Policy and Landscape Standards](#) **PDF**
- [Enforcement of Brush Management](#) **PDF**
- [Erosion Control](#)
- [Low-Cost Retrofit List From CAL Fire](#) **PDF**
- [Ready, Set, Go! Wildland Action Guide](#)
- [Terms & Definitions](#)
- [Use of Goats for Brush Management Guide](#) **PDF**



City Planning Department

City Planning Department Home | About Us | Initiatives & Ongoing Work | Community Planning | Public Hearings and Meetings | News & Updates

Guide to Brush Management: Property Owners

Importance of Brush Management

The city of San Diego has over 500 linear miles of wildland-urban interface, which is where homes meet dense vegetation in canyons and other open space areas. Years of drought, worsened by climate change, have increased the flammability of vegetation and the risk for dangerous wildfires to occur. These high-fire zones (see [SD Fire map](#)) are areas that are potentially at risk for wildfires. Maintaining defensible space around homes and other buildings through proper brush management helps to reduce potential wildfire impacts as there is less fuel for the wildfire to grow and more room for firefighters. Defensible space is the buffer zone between a building and the surrounding area. Brush management includes pruning and thinning of native and naturalized vegetation as well as revegetation with low-fuel plants.



Initiatives & Ongoing Work

- [Initiatives & Ongoing Work Home](#)
- ▼ How We're Planning for...
 - [Homes & Jobs](#)
 - [Equity](#)
 - [Environment](#)
 - [Public Spaces](#)
 - [What We're Working On](#)

[View the MHPA boundary](#)

[View MSCP Covered Species](#) **PDF**

[Find out what kind of biological resources are on my property](#)

[View Land Development Code](#) **PDF**

[View land use adjacency guidelines](#)

[View MSCP Rare Plant Monitoring Plan Revision](#)

Brush Complaint Process

- 1 Verify the Property Address
- 2 Complaints on City Owned Land
- 3 Complaints on Privately Owned Land
- 4 Other Weed Abatement and Brush Complaints

Brush Complaint Process

Open Space Parks Brush Management Program



Our Responsibility?

How you can help

Conducting brush management on City managed lands

Area Maps and Scheduling

Learn more about Brush Management

If you want to perform brush management on City open space, please submit the "Right of Entry Request Form." After submittal City personnel will schedule a site visit with the applicant to verify that the work described in the form is needed and to go over what can and can't be done on environmentally protected City open space. The applicant will be required to sign the permit. The permit will then be brought back to be signed by the City Attorney. **Only after the permit is signed by the City Attorney can brush management activities commence on City property.** The process takes between five to 10 business days.

[Right of Entry Request Form](#)

1 Verify the Property Address

Search for the property address of your complaint in the map below to determine if the property is

City Owned Land

iv department from the list below to submit the complaint

Privately Owned Land

Abatement and Brush Complaints

trees or tree maintenance on City of San Diego streets

SDG&E Brush Clearing, Powerlines and Pole Safety

[om/more-information/safety/tree-safety/powerline-pole-safety](https://www.sandiego.gov/more-information/safety/tree-safety/powerline-pole-safety)

ints in the CAL Fire's State Responsibility Area (SRA)

State Highways, Bridges and Right of Way

[Department of Transportation \(Caltrans\)](#)



Community Outreach

- **Education and Outreach Events at local community centers**
- **Participation in the Greater Fire Safe Council of San Diego County – CWPP development**
- **Free Home Risk Assessments for fire-safe councils**

Grant Funded Projects

San Diego River Conservancy's Directed Grant Program \$366,949

- Emissions Free/Battery Powered equipment
- EPA Fuel Treatment for 46 acres of evacuation corridors
- HIZ/DSI Assessments, Zone-0, Home Hardening



HIZ/DSI Inspections



- San Diego Fire-Rescue HIZ/DSI Inspections.
- If you are interested in requesting a HIZ/DSI, please contact San Diego Fire/ Community Risk Reduction Division.
<https://www.sandiego.gov/fire/fireprevention>

Grant Funded Projects – Home Risk Assessment



HIZ/DSI Inspections



- San Diego Fire-Rescue HIZ/DSI Inspections.
- If you are interested in requesting a HIZ/DSI, please contact San Diego Fire/ Community Risk Reduction Division.
<https://www.sandiego.gov/fire/fireprevention>

Defensible Space 100ft - Zone 0 - Home hardening guidance - IBHS

Grant Funded Projects – Home Risk Assessment

5. IMMEDIATE ZONE 0 – 5 FEET FROM STRUCTURE

Landscaped trees/vegetation	Trees/Vegetation needs attention	Flammable Combustibles
Propane tanks	Compliant	Vehicles

MITIGATION & MAINTENANCE

Landscaped trees/vegetation	Install 5 feet of hard groundcover material, base, steppingstones, or concrete. Remove mulch, within 5 feet of your home, and remove any lower limbs that can contact the structure.
Propane Tanks	Store propane tanks more than 5' from the structure. Keep propane away from home.
Flammable and Combustible Materials	Do not store anything combustible, such as cans, pet houses, or other combustibles. Routine maintenance to ensure 5' buffer zone.
Vehicles	Do not park or store any vehicles, boats, or trailers. Ideally, vehicles and trailers should be parked away from the home.
Other Observations:	Keep an eye out for where the leaves and branches are during fires. Keep these areas clear of the structure.

San Diego Fire-Rescue | Community Risk Reduction
525 B St. #300 San Diego, CA 92101

EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES

[Community Tools - Wildfire Risk to Communities](#)
[Defensible Space, Home Hardening, etc.](#)
[Home Hardening \(FEMA\); Outdoor Fire Safety](#)
[Defensible Space](#)
[Firewise Landscaping](#)
[Water Catchment: Rebates & Incentives](#)
[Native Plants/Pollinator Habitat](#)
[Low Cost Home Hardening Retrofit Guide](#)
[Home Hardening](#)
[Home Hardening \(UCANR\)](#)
[Fact Sheets: Firewise USA - Research Fact Sheet Series \(nfpfa.org\)](#)

PROGRAM REFERRALS

[Defensible Space Assistance Program](#)
[Community Curbside Chipping Program](#)
[San Diego County Home Hardening Program](#)
[Sunrise Powerlink Mitigation Grants Program](#)
[American Red Cross Resources](#)

LOW-COST RETROFITS & HOME HARDENING PRODUCTS

[OSFM Wildland Urban Interface \(WUI\) Products Handbook](#)
[OSFM Approved Inspection Agencies for Products Listed for WUI Areas](#)

Playsets/Accessory Structures	Not observed
Tree Litter/Debris	Compliant
Dead Plant and Tree Material	Compliant

RISK RECOMMENDATIONS

Grass is no more than 4" high. Keep ground fuels limited to 4"
 Maintain them routinely by removing dead leaves, trimming
 reduce fire risk., Break vegetation into islands to disrupted
 by trimming tree branches and clearing tall grasses or shrubs
 ing lower branches.
 Reduction by pruning trees to ensure at least 10 feet of space
 around trees
 as leaves and pine needles
 trees, and fallen branches to reduce fire risk and maintain a
 property
 fire-resistant plants. See links at the end of the report for more

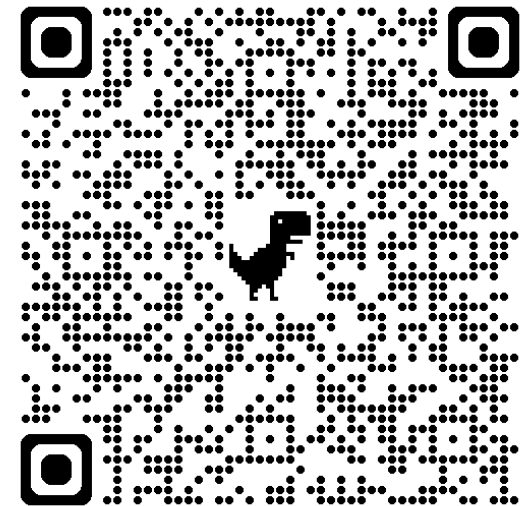
San Diego Fire-Rescue | Community Risk Reduction
525 B St. #300 San Diego, CA 92101

Grant Funded Projects- Encampments

San Diego firefighters try chemically safe spray to prevent brush fires

Officials estimate that around half of the 4,000 gallons has been sprayed on more than 40 fire-prone acres, including at least six places where homeless people have been known to camp

February 09, 2025 08:00 AM



Grant Funded Projects

<https://www.sandiego.gov/fire/fireprev/grants>

Regional Resilience Grant \$1,588,388

- Roadside Vegetation Management 32.24 acres
- Community Wood Chipping Events
- Public Education and Community Engagement





2025

CWDG Grant Application

Citywide - Community Wildfire Protection Plan



Brush Audits and Staffing Updates



October 2010

Conclusion:

Ensuring public safety and provided by the City. As department managers and declining resources. Co data management processes and ineffective operations. by providing state- mandated operating a proactive brush Diego and reducing hazard

Poor data management with performance and its cost the businesses that require businesses unfairly as some

According to the Bureau, brush inspections. Without processes the program can standardized guidance, precise accurate and reliable data

Honorable Members of the Audit Committee
November 13, 2024

FY2025 Planned Audits Not Yet Started

Planned Audits	Estimated Audit Hours
Unsafe Camping Ordinance	2,400
Fire-Rescue - Dispatch	1,600
SDPD - Internal Affairs	2,200
Parks and Recreation - Golf Division	1,400
City Planning - Historical Designation Process	1,600
Fire-Rescue - Brush Management on Private Property	1,000
Performance and Analytics / Citywide - Performance Monitoring	1,800
Annual Mission Bay Fund Audit FY2024	310
Annual Central Stores Agreed-Upon Procedures Review FY2025	10

OCA-11-006

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TBD 2025



JULY 2023 | OCA-24-01 | Report Highlights

Performance Audit of the City's Brush Management on City-Owned Land

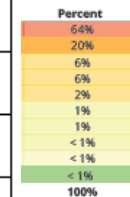
Found

The City lacks comprehensive brush oversight, causing inconsistent and ineffective brush management in departments with significant land in Very High Fire Hazard Severity

Fire-Rescue Department (Fire-Rescue) is responsible for enforcing State and local codes for fire prevention and does not proactively monitor city-owned lands to ensure consistent brush management

Brush management implementation is inconsistent across departments, leading to inconsistent brush efforts and compliance. Other cities have a proactive approach to brush management, including coordinating brush and fire prevention efforts on city-

City-Owned Lands Within Very High Fire Hazard Severity by at Least 10 Different City



Local Code exempts 100-foot defensible space for residential properties that provides sufficient brush clearance; however, we had no

and Rec Open Space Division, 404 acres and Rec Regional Parks Division, among

pace Division.

City-Owned Land, Very High Fire Hazard

severely zones, and information provided by Parks and Rec Open Space Division.

sandiego.gov/auditor



JULY 2023 | OCA-24-01 | Report Highlights

July 2023

Performance Audit Brush Management on City-Owned Land Staffing Analysis



- (1) Information Systems Analyst (ISA II)
(Wildfire Risk Analyst)**
- (1) Program Manager
(Assistant Fire Marshal)**
- (1) Wildfire Prevention Specialist Supervisor
(Fire Prevention Supervisor)**
- (2) Wildfire Prevention Specialist
(Fire Prevention Inspector II)**

(Primary Focus City-owned land)



Questions?



Thank you!