Make the most of your efforts by starting at the house.

Thin and prune trees, one section at a time.

Seperate islands of vegetation.

## Objective:

A lean, clean and green landscape will slow fire's spread.

## Prioritize Firewise landscaping within the first 30 feet from your home.

- Maintain lawn at 3 inches and keep well watered.
- Separate vegetation with grass, rock gardens and gravel walkways.
- Cut or prune needle-bearing trees (spruce, hemlock, pine, etc.) adjacent to the home to maintain 15 feet of clearance between tree branches and the roof line.
- Thin needle-bearing trees to 15 feet between extending branches.
- Prune tree branches up 6-8 feet from the ground.
- Remove shrubs and mow grass under trees.
- Remove dead vegetation.
- Use Firewise plants, prune often and keep well watered.
- Separate groups of shrubs by 10 feet.
- Remove all wood and bark mulch from this area.
- Water trees frequently. Watering at the drip line is most effective: the outer circumference of the tree branches.
- Store firewood and tires ≥30 feet from the home, and at least 10 feet from a wood fence.

Beyond 30 feet from your home, a healthy forest comprised of both birch and spruce can be maintained through regular pruning of branches, trimming shrubs and mowing grass beneath trees.

**Prune trees in fall months.**

- Prune spruce trees in fall to limit bark beetle activity.
- All pruning should be done in late fall or cold months to maintain good tree health.
- No pruning in the spring when trees are budding.

**Easy action items:**
Prune a tree
Water plants

**In one hour:**
Rake around the wood pile
Rake under trees
Rake under the deck and exterior stairs

**Weekend project:**
Pile tree limbs and brush >30 feet from the house for fall burning or composting.

## Treat vegetation between 30 to 100 feet from your home (increase the distance if slope exceeds 30%).

- Thin needle-bearing trees to 15 feet between extending branches.
- Thin black spruce in clusters (<10 feet in diameter) with 15 feet between clusters.
- Prune tree branches up 6-8 feet from the ground.
- Remove shrubs and mow grass under trees.
- Remove dead vegetation.

Defensible space is an area that will help protect your home and provide a safety zone for those who are battling the flames.

Islands of vegetation provide pleasing greenery that also slows fire's spread through your yard.

## WOOD STORAGE TIPS

Store wood piles at least 30 feet from any structure and clear 10 feet around pile.

Many homes have survived as a fire moved past, only to burn later from a woodpile that ignited after the firefighters moved on to protect other homes.

Do not stack firewood under trees or on downhill side of home.

## General Landscaping

- In heavily wooded areas on your property, thin and prune trees to decrease the fire hazard and improve growing conditions. Remove dead, weak, or diseased trees, leaving a healthy mixture of older and younger trees.
- Reduce fire risk by emphasizing hardwood trees, either mixed with conifers or as pure stands near your home.
- Gravel or stone walkways serve as fire breaks around your home.
- Work together with your neighbors to treat common areas between houses: thin and prune trees, mow grass.
- Trim shrubs and mow grass in easements surrounding electrical power lines.
- Avoid planting trees near overhead power lines where they may grow into and contact the lines under windy conditions, causing a fire. Contact your local utility with questions.
- Consult a tree care professional with your questions. Visit http://www.forestry.alaska.gov/community/.

## More Tips

- Properly dispose of all cut vegetation by an approved method. Open burning may require a permit. Contact your nearest fire agency or village public safety officer for local requirements.
- Locate a brush pile at least 30 feet from the house for fall burning.
- Care for piles of wood chips by turning regularly to avoid combustion.
- Locate burn barrels and open fires at least 30 feet from any structure and clear the ground around the site for a minimum of 10 feet. A burn barrel must be in good condition and should be covered with a woven metal screen. Always stay with your fire!
- Keep garden hoses and fire tools readily available: axe, shovel, rake or Pulaski.
- Keep storage areas clean. Discard oily rags and newspapers. Sheds, car ports and under decks are vulnerable storage areas that often serve as fire starters or fuel.
- Check spark arresters on all motorized equipment (any vehicle or machinery with a gas engine). Store 30 feet away from structures or put inside garage.
- Locate and label liquefied petroleum gas (LPG), propane tanks and any fuel storage containers at least 30 feet from a structure and clear 10 feet around tank. Use stone or iron instead of wood for cribs under tanks. If you store gasoline, label it.
- Junk piles are fire hazards. Move discarded items outside of the home's 30 foot perimeter.

### Firewise plants are fire resistant, not fire proof.

- High water content and supple, moist leaves.
- Little or no accumulation of dead vegetation, either on the ground or on the plant.
- Sap that is water-like such as that found in birch trees.

### Yard debris disposal options

- Chip branches, use as mulch around trees outside of the home's 30 foot perimeter.
- Compost grass and fine woody debris (visit the online publications database at UAF Cooperative Extension Service http://www.uaf.edu/ces/.
- Haul to landfill.