



Anchorage Fire Department • Wildfire Mitigation Office

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FIREWISE BUILDING MATERIALS

Make Your Home Resistant to Fire to survive a wildland fire without firefighter support.

Building a Home

- Locate a new house at least 30 feet from the property boundary to provide defensible space.
- Avoid building on ridge tops and in ravines as these features become natural chimneys. Fire often moves rapidly upslope, preheating the fuels above and increasing its intensity. A 100 foot set-back from the top edge of the slope will provide protection against direct flame impingement of fire burning up the slope.

Construction Materials and Maintenance

- Non-combustible materials include metal roofing and composite siding.
- Small or dual paned windows can reduce the potential for breakage from windblown debris and reduce the amount of heat transmitted from the fire to the inside of your home.
- Sliding glass doors and large picture windows should be made of tempered safety glass.
- Windows should be screened to prevent entry of embers.
- Plastic skylights may melt from the intense heat of a wildland fire and allow windblown embers to enter.
- Wooden fences act like fuel bridges, leading the fire to your house. Separate a wooden fence from the building with a space or partition built from fire-resistant materials such as stone or metal. Install flashing at these junctions for a quick fix.
- A wooden trellis may ignite; consider metal or iron.
- Inspect your home annually for cracks or crevices in siding, decking and roofing that could trap embers.

Class Ratings on Home Building Products

- Home building products are rated in three classes per their ability to resist fire. Standards are set by the American Society of Test and Measurements (ASTM).
- For any roofing product to earn this rating the product must pass three separate tests 1) intermittent flame, 2) flame spread, and 3) ignition from burning brands. During the testing, the roofing material must remain in place, not exposing the roof deck.
 - ✓ Class A – Can withstand severe exposure from fire originating from a source from outside the building.
 - ✓ Class B – Is able to withstand moderate exposure to fire originating from a source outside the building.
 - ✓ Class C – Is able to withstand light exposure to fire originating from a source outside the building.