

# Community Wildfire Mitigation

Objective:  
**To Reduce the Destructive Impacts  
of Wildland Fire in Orange County**

# Fire History in Orange County

## Laguna Fire

October 27, 1993

14,336 acres

347 structures



## Santiago Fire

October 21, 2007

28,359 acres

56 structures



## Freeway Complex Fire

November 15, 2008

30,305 acres

381 structures



## Silverado Fire

October 26, 2020

12,465 acres

14 structures

## Bond Fire

December 3, 2020

6,680 acres

31 structures



# Recent Wildfire in the Area

## Aliso Fire

- June 2, 2018
- 175 Acres burned
- Over 500 Firefighters
- 6 Fixed Wing Aircraft



# Fire History in Orange County

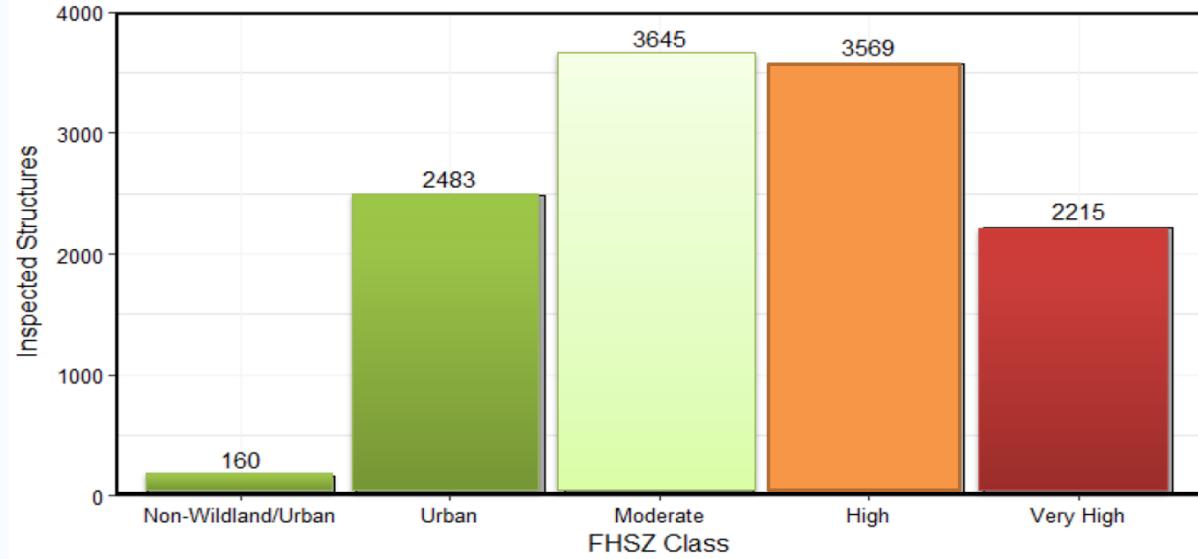


**EMERALD FIRE**  
**February 12, 2022**  
**154 Acres**



**~ Fire season is year-round**

# Damage by Fire Hazard Severity Zone



Total structures damaged by fire  
within Fire Hazard Severity Zones  
(1-9%, 10-25%, 26-50%, and Destroyed)  
recorded in 2017

# Laws & Regulations

## Local Responsibility Areas (LRA)

- Government Code 51175 - 51189

## Assembly Bill 38

As of July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021

- The seller of a property located in a High or Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone needs to disclose to the buyer if the property is compliant with Defensible Space requirements or enter into an agreement with the buyer

## Locally Adopted Codes & Ordinances

- California Fire Code Chapters 3 & 49
- C-05 Guideline for Fuel Modification
- Vegetation Management Maintenance *Guideline for Property Owners*
- *Defensible Space Guideline for Home-Owner Association Common Areas*

## Assembly Bill 3074

Effective January 2023

- New homes constructed in the Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones
- Immediate Zone, first five feet around a structure

# Vegetation Management

## Fuel Modification

- Planned landscape design that reduces the threat of wildfire, by creating a fire-resistant divider between homes that are adjacent to areas of natural plant life/ open space
- An approved plant installation and on-going vegetation maintenance



- Slows the spread of a wildfire
- Reduces direct flame and radiant heat from approaching fire
- Improves the chances of survival for structures and communities

# Vegetation Management

## Defensible Space

- Vegetation Management within 100' of a structure **or** to property line
  - Removal of dead and dying plant material
  - Horizontal and vertical separation of plant material
  - Reduction of ground cover below 2ft in height



# A Hardened Home is a Defensible Home

A defensible home is a home that will better survive a wildfire during prevailing wind conditions. Defensible homes are those homes that comply with Defensible Space or Fuel Modification requirements; and have been **hardened** per the California Building Code 7A standards.



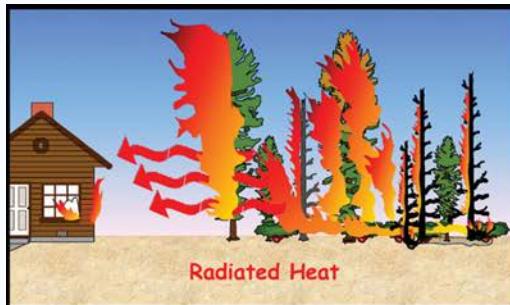
# Home Hardening



Construction features that help reduced risk from:

- Radiant heat
- Direct flame
- Ember intrusion

**Most homes lost are due to ember intrusion**



# Home Hardening

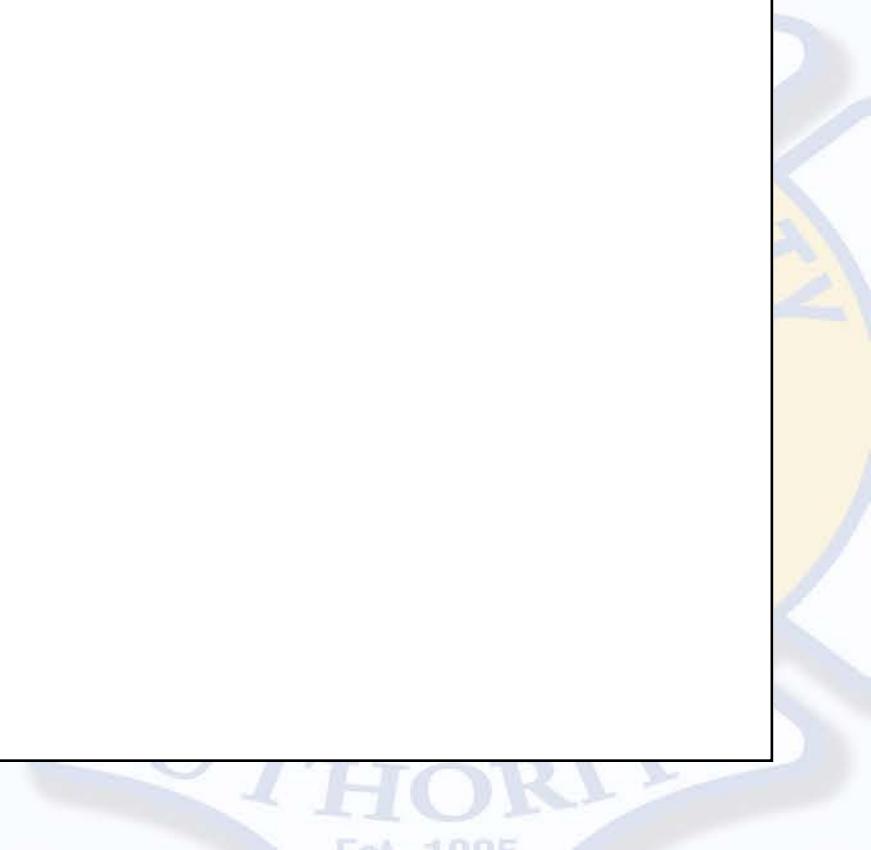
## California Building Code Chapter 7a Construction

Chapter 7A applies to building materials, systems and / or assemblies used in the exterior design and construction of new buildings located within a Wildland-Urban Interface Fire Area and **can be used to update existing structures within the Wildland-Urban Interface Fire Area.**





Orange County Fire Authority



# Home Hardening

## Construction Features of a Hardened Home

- Roofs
- Eaves
- Windows
- Decks and patio covers
- Gutters
- Vents
- Exterior
- Fences



# IMMEDIATE ZONE

The Immediate Zone is the First Five Feet Around the Structure

## Things to Avoid

- Do not use organic mulch (bark, wood chips)
- Keep vegetation away from the structure
- Avoid placing and storing combustible materials near the home, including patio furniture, wood, trash cans, etc.
- No combustible construction (wood, vinyl)

## Safer Alternatives

- Hardscape, gravel, pavers, concrete
- Low growing fire-resistant plants (less than two feet, succulents)
- Relocate combustible materials away from home, or cover
- Non-combustible construction, including fences, patio covers, decks, and balconies.



# Home Hardening Can Make a Difference

Unmaintained Vegetation



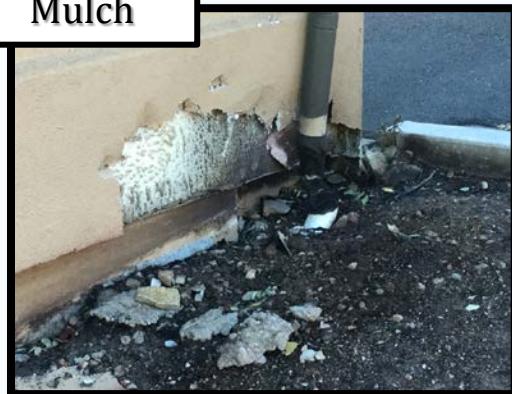
Combustibles near structure



Combustible Accessory Structure



Mulch



Windows Radiant Heat



# Home Assessment

Online Home Assessment Tool

[www.ocfa.org/RSG/HomeAssessment](http://www.ocfa.org/RSG/HomeAssessment)

[rsgoc@ocfa.org](mailto:rsgoc@ocfa.org)

714.573.6774



# Thank you.

For more information contact:  
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714.573.6774

