Bastrop County Office of Emergency Management
PUBLIC SAFETY, PUBLIC TRUST

TIPS & REMINDERS

FALL WEATHER GIVES PROPERTY OWNERS TIME FOR WILDLAND FIRE MITIGATION

Visit **Bastrop County Office of Emergency Management** FACEBOOK PAGE and WEBSITE at www.co.bastrop.tx.us/page/em.home
for more on mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery

With September 2026 in Central Texas going on record as one of the hottest ever, Bastrop County remains under a Burn Ban. This hot and dry month reminded Bastrop County residents who endured the Bastrop County Complex Fire 15 years ago on September 4, just how quickly a hot, dry day can turn into an inferno nightmare.

Even after those horrific days, Bastrop County residents navigated and grew to be resilient. We have learned much about wildland fires since those days. We recognize that it is up to each of us to be aware that wildland fires are an ongoing threat in our county and that we can prepare for and mitigate damage before such disaster happens.

As outdoor temperatures cool down making it bearable to work outside, now is a good time to walk your property and survey your home noting areas to clean up to mitigate a fire starting where embers from a wildland fire could collect.

The Texas A&M Forest Service describes embers in their publication "Be Embers Aware" as posing the greatest threat to a home during a wildland fire. The fire embers from the main fire get carried to other areas by fast-moving air currents. Pine needles, leaves, brush and outdoor clutter become threats.

Start this mitigation project with the area around your home. Take care of the following:

- Clean out gutters and areas where leaves and trash accumulate when the wind blows including wood piles and underneath decks.
- Create ember barriers to outdoor home vents, under decking and crawl spaces by installing one-eighth-inch metal screening.
- Tidy up outdoor living spaces. Remove items that could easily ignite including patio furniture cushions and pillows.

The next step in the fire mitigation process is to move farther away from your home to create defensible space. Fall is an ideal time to address your landscape to create defensible space. The Texas A&M Forest Service suggests considering the entire "home ignition zone," which extends up to 200 feet from the home. Don't become overwhelmed. Just take on this part of the project by zones.

Nearest Your Home (Zone 1, 30 feet from home)

- Keep areas mowed and neatly pruned.
- Incorporate hardscapes such as rock-lined flower beds, granite pathways, pavers, paved / concrete driveways.
- Include native, drought resistant plants such as Columbine, Phlox, Bluebonnets, Aster, Lantana, Beauty Berry, Turks Cap, and Butterfly Bush. Keep plants watered and low to the ground.
- On the outer edge of Zone 1, plant islands or small groupings of small to medium deciduous trees with wide, broad leaves.

The Texas A&M Forest Service publication Firewise Landscaping in Texas provides detailed information about fire-resistant plant combinations as well as creating defensible space.

Mid-Area to Home (Zone 2, 30 to 100 feet from home)

- Plant low-growing trees with 20 feet between individual trees and 30 feet between clusters.
- In this area, have fuel breaks like gravel pathways and driveways.
- Prune trees so that branches and leaves are at least 6 to 10 feet above the ground.
- For households using firewood, tidy firewood stacks should reside in this zone.

Farthest from Home (Zone 3, 100 to 200 feet from home)

- Thin out and trim underbrush. Invasive to Bastrop County youpon, cedar, grasses.
- On tall trees, trim so canopies do not touch.

Neighbors working together on fire mitigation projects lightens the load for individual property owners, helps keep homes on a particular street safer from wildland fires, and creates space and time for neighbors to get to know each other before an emergency or disaster strikes. NFPA - Firewise USA® provides details on how neighbors working together in their neighborhoods can become official Firewise USA neighborhoods.

For More Information

WILDFIRE Readiness Reminders



www.co.bastrop.tx.us/page/em.home

Defensible Space

✓ **START AT THE HOUSE**
- -Tidy up outside area, removing flammable materials from exterior walls
- -Clean gutters and roofs of pine needles and leaves
- -Install 1/8 metal mesh screening on exterior vents

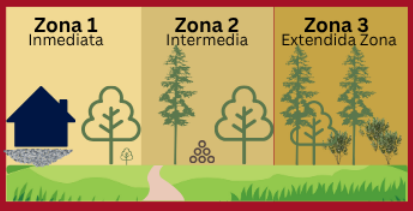
✓ **NEXT -- LANDSCAPING**
- -Keep outside areas mowed
- -Trim trees and shrubs
- -Clean vegetation away from propane tank

✓ **THIRD -- EXTENDED AREAS**
- -Clear underbrush
- -Trim trees and shrubs

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For More Information

Recordatorios de Preparacion para INCENDIOS FORESTALES



www.co.bastrop.tx.us/page/em.home

Espacio Defensible

✓ **COMIENZA EN LA CASA**
- -Ordenar el área exterior, eliminando materials inflamables de las paredes exteriores
- -Limpiar las canaletas y techos de agujas de pino y hojas
- -Instale una malla metalica de 1-8 en las rejillas de ventilació n exteriores

✓ **PROXIMO ES AJARDINAR**
- -Mantener las areas exteriores cortada
- -Podar arboles y arbustos
- -Limpiar la vegetacion lejos del tanque de propano

✓ **TERCERO -- AREAS EXTENDIDAS**
- -Limpiar la maleza
- -Podar arboles y arbustos

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