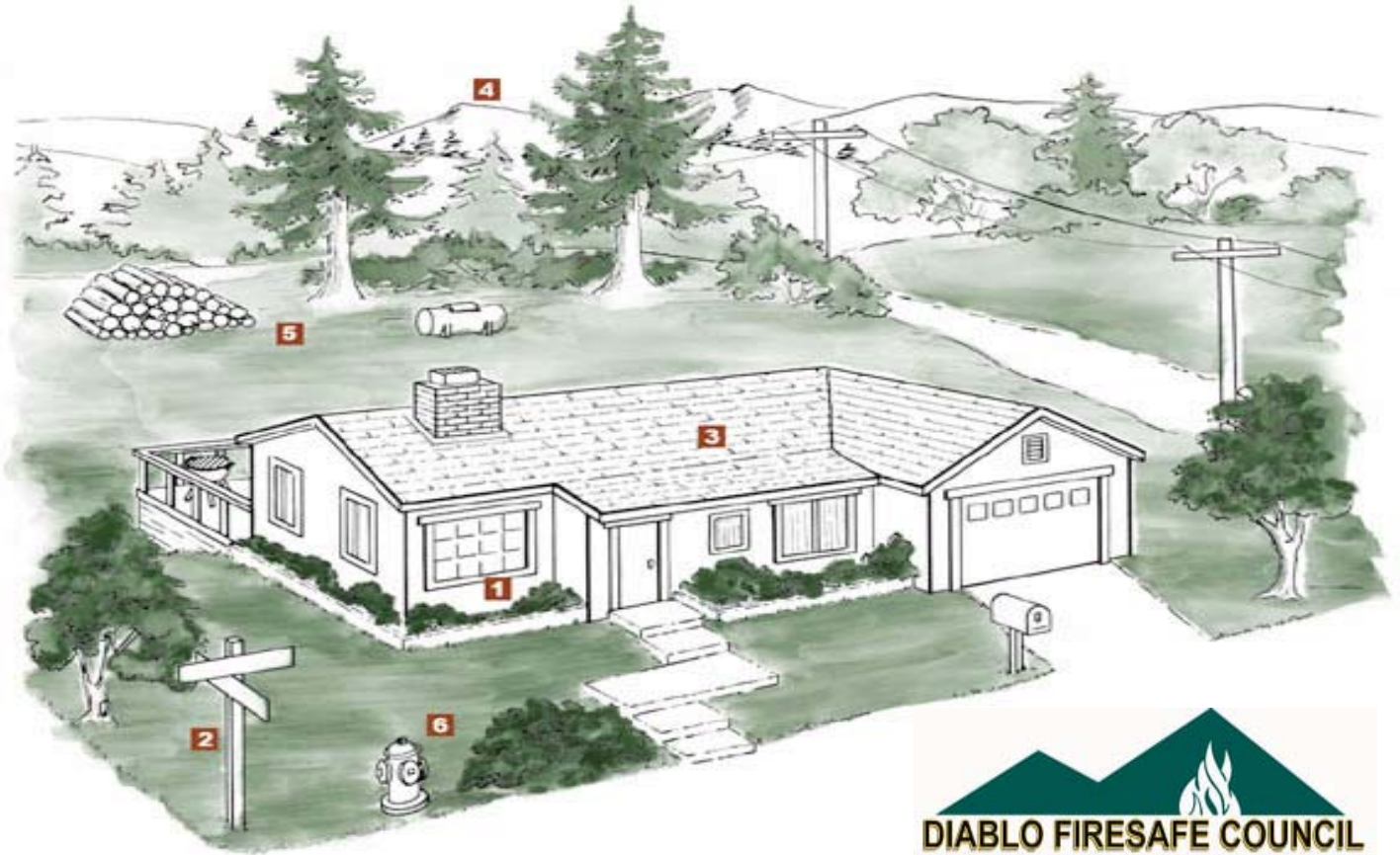


# Homeowner's Checklist

## How to make your home fire safe



## OUTSIDE

### Design/Construction

- Build your home away from ridge tops, canyons and areas between high points on a ridge
- Use fire resistant materials.
- Enclose the underside of eaves, balconies and above ground decks with fire resistant materials.
- Try to limit the size and number of windows in your home that face large areas of vegetation.
- Install only dual-paned or triple-paned windows.
- Make sure that electric service lines, fuse boxes and circuit breaker panels are installed and maintained as prescribed by code.
- Contact qualified individuals to perform electrical maintenance and repairs.

### Access

- Identify at least two exit routes from your neighborhood
- Construct roads that allow two-way traffic
- Design road width, grade and curves to allow access for large emergency vehicles
- Construct driveways to allow large emergency equipment to reach your house
- Design bridges to carry heavy emergency vehicles, including bulldozers carried on large trucks
- Make sure dead-end roads, and long driveways have turn-around areas wide enough for emergency vehicles.

## Access Cont.

- Construct turnouts along one-way roads.
- Clear flammable vegetation at least 10 feet from roads and five feet from driveways.
- Cut back overhanging tree branches above roads.
- Make sure that your street is named or numbered, and a sign is visibly posted at each street intersection.
- Make sure that your street name and house number are not duplicated elsewhere in the county.
- Post your house address at the beginning of your driveway, or on your house if it is easily visible from the road.

## Roof

- Remove branches within 10 feet of your chimney and dead branches overhanging your roof.
- Remove dead leaves and needles from your roof and gutters.
- Install a fire resistant roof. Contact your local fire department for current roofing requirements.
- Cover your chimney outlet and stovepipe with a nonflammable screen of 1/2 inch or smaller mesh.

## Landscape

- Create a “defensible space” by removing all flammable vegetation at least 30 feet from all structures.
- Never prune near power lines. Call your local utility company first.
- Landscape with fire resistant plants.
- On slopes or in high fire hazard areas remove flammable vegetation out to 100 feet or more.
- Space native trees and shrubs at least 10 feet apart.
- For trees taller than 18 feet, remove lower branches within six feet of the ground.
- Maintain all plants by regularly watering, and by removing dead branches, leaves and needles.
- Before planting trees close to any power line contact your local utility company to confirm the maximum tree height allowable for that location.

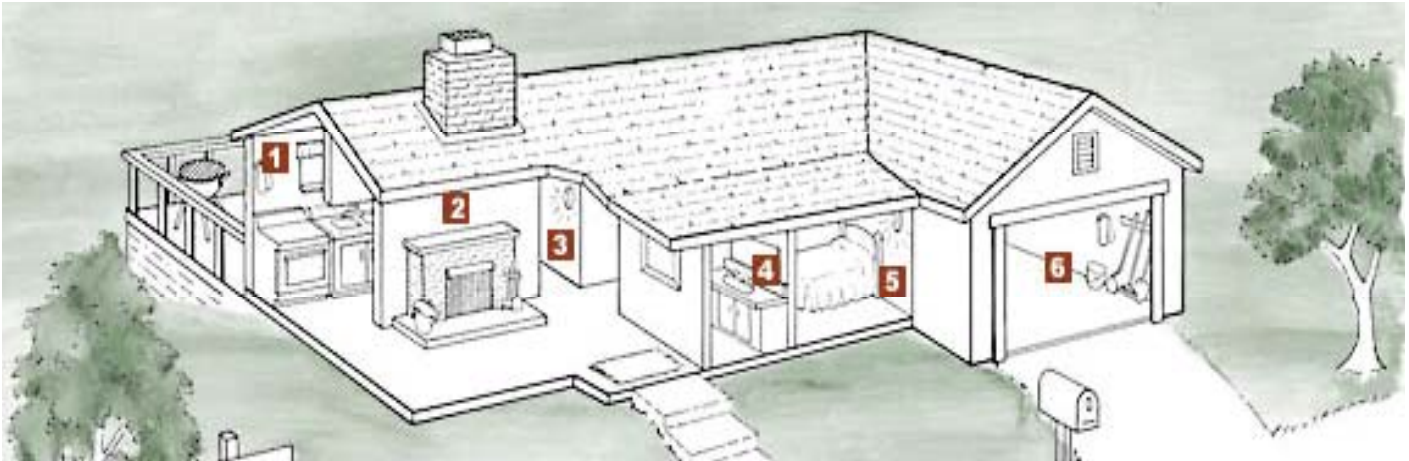
## Yard

- Stack woodpiles at least 30 feet from all structures and remove vegetation within 10 feet of woodpiles.
- Locate LPG tanks (butane and propane) at least 30 feet from any structure and maintain 10 feet of clearance.
- Remove all stacks of construction materials, pine needles, leaves and other debris from your yard.
- Contact your local fire department to see if open burning is allowed in your area; if so, obtain a burning permit.
- Where burn barrels are allowed, clear flammable materials at least 10 feet around the barrel; cover the open top with a non-flammable screen with mesh no larger than 1/4 inch.

## Emergency Water Supply

Maintain an emergency water supply that meets fire department standards through one of the following:

- A community water/hydrant system.
- A cooperative emergency storage tank with neighbors.
- A minimum storage supply of 2,500 gallons on your property.
- Clearly mark all emergency water sources.
- Create easy firefighter access to your closest emergency water source.
- If your water comes from a well, consider an emergency generator to operate the pump during a power failure.



## INSIDE

### Kitchen

- Keep a working fire extinguisher in the kitchen.
- Maintain electric and gas stoves in good operating condition.
- Keep baking soda on hand to extinguish stove-top grease fires.
- Turn the handles of pots and pans containing hot liquids away from the front of the stove.
- Install curtains and towel holders away from burners on the stove.
- Store matches and lighters out of the reach of children.
- Make sure that electrical outlets are designed to handle appliance loads.

### Living Room

- Install a screen in front of fireplace or wood stove.
- Store the ashes from your fireplace (and barbecue) in a metal container and dispose of only when cold.
- Clean fireplace chimneys and flues at least once a year.

### Hallway

- Install smoke detectors between living and sleeping areas.
- Test smoke detectors monthly and replace batteries twice a year, when clocks are changed in the spring and fall.
- Install child safety plugs (caps) on all electrical outlets.
- Replace electrical cords that do not work properly, have loose connections, or are frayed.

## Bedroom

- If you sleep with the door closed, install a smoke detector in the bedroom
- Turn off electric blankets and other electrical appliances when not in use
- Do not smoke in bed
- If you have security bars on your windows or doors, be sure they have an approved quick-release mechanism so you and your family can get out in the event of a fire

## Bathroom

- Disconnect appliances such as curling irons and hair dryers when done; store in a safe location until cool
- Keep items such as towels away from wall and floor heaters

## Garage

- Mount a working fire extinguisher in the garage
- Have tools such as a shovel, hoe, rake and bucket available for use in a wildfire emergency
- Install a solid door with self-closing hinges between living areas and the garage
- Dispose of oily rags in approved metal containers
- Store all combustibles away from ignition sources such as water heaters
- Disconnect electrical tools and appliances when not in use
- Allow hot tools such as glue guns and soldering irons to cool before storing
- Properly store flammable liquids in approved containers and away from ignition sources such as pilot lights

## Disaster Preparedness

- Maintain at least a three-day supply of drinking water, and food that does not require refrigeration and generally does not need cooking
- Maintain a portable radio, flashlight, emergency cooking equipment, portable lanterns and batteries
- Maintain first aid supplies to treat the injured until help arrives
- Keep a list of valuables to take with you in an emergency; if possible, store these valuables together
- For safety, securely attach all water heaters and furniture such as cabinets and bookshelves to walls
- Have a contingency plan to enable family members to contact each other. Establish a family/friend phone tree
- Designate an emergency meeting place outside your home
- Practice emergency exit drills in the house (EDITH)
- Outdoor cooking appliances such as barbecues should never be taken indoors for use as heaters

