

Primary fuel break

The first step in both the Default and the Optional standards is to establish a 30-foot primary fuel break around structures.

Fuel break distances are measured along the slope. No fuel break needs to extend beyond the property line.

A correctly developed fuel break should slow the rate of spread and the intensity of an advancing wildfire, and create an area in which fire suppression operations may safely occur.

The primary fuel break begins at the outside edge of a structure's furthest extension. This may be the edge of the roof eave, or the outside edge of a deck attached to the structure. The shape of the fuel break mirrors the footprint shape of the structure and anything that is attached to it.

The fuel break may use natural firebreaks, such as a rock outcropping or a water body, or it can be completely man-made.

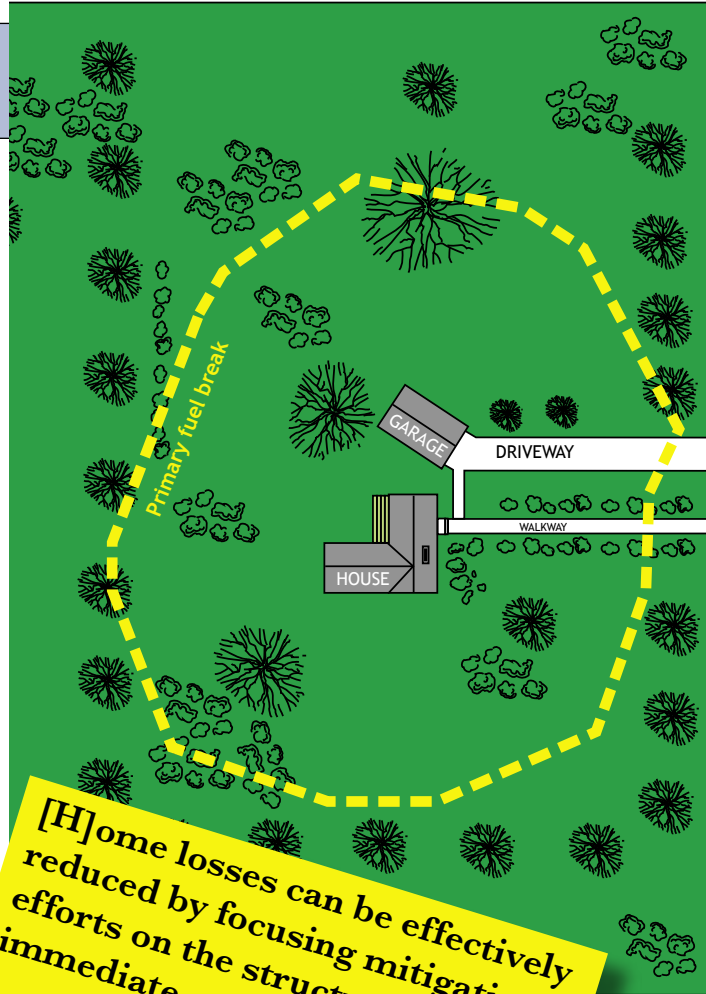
In the primary fuel break zone:

- Ground cover should be substantially non-flammable. Examples of this include asphalt, bare soil, clover, concrete, green grass, ivy, mulches, rock, succulent ground cover or wildflowers.
- Dry grass should be cut to a height of less than four inches.
- Cut grass, leaves, needles, twigs and similar small vegetative debris should be broken up so that a continuous fuel bed is not created.
- Shrubs and trees should be maintained in a green condition, be substantially free of dead plant material, and have any potential "ladder fuels" removed.
- Trees and shrubs should also be arranged so that fire cannot spread or jump from plant to plant. Some thinning may be necessary to accomplish this. *



[H]ome losses can be effectively reduced by focusing mitigation efforts on the structure and its immediate surroundings.

— Jack Cohen, USEFS



STREET — Fuel break ends at roadsides and property lines

AVOID INVASION!

Keep noxious weeds off your property. Learn to identify them and remove them whenever you find them. Treat bare soil areas with weed-free seed to deprive noxious weeds of growing space. For more information, contact your County Extension Service office.



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