



Oregon Defensible Space – Model Code Agenda

3991 Fairview Industrial Dr SE, Salem, OR 97302

Mt. Hood Conference Room

Hybrid hosted online

November 19, 2025

1:00 pm to 2:30 pm

Meeting Date and Location

The meeting location is at the Oregon State Fire Marshal (OSFM) facility located at 3991 Fairview Industrial Dr SE, Salem, OR 97302. We will be meeting in the Mt Hood Conference Room, located on the first floor. Limited customer parking is available in front of the building, with additional parking on the east side of the building. All visitors are required to check in at the front desk. A visitor badge is required for all visitors not in uniform with ID. All visitors are, in turn, escorted to the conference room. We recommend arriving a few minutes early!

Welcome & Introductions	Chad Hawkins, Assistant Chief Deputy Alison Green, Program Coordinator, Process Facilitator
Agency Update and Committee Intent	Mariana Ruiz-Temple, State Fire Marshal
Legislative Background and Review (Senate Bill 83)	Chad Hawkins, Assistant Chief Deputy
Model Code Development Process	Chad Hawkins, Assistant Chief Deputy
Charter Review	
Meeting Frequency and Schedule	
Questions/Public Comment	
Closing	Chad Hawkins, Assistant Chief Deputy

For additional information, contact Alison Green at Alison.Green@osfm.oregon.gov

For meeting materials and scheduling information, contact Shari Barrett osfm.ofc@osfm.oregon.gov or (503) 934-8256

If you are interested in joining this meeting online, you may join us via Microsoft Teams

[Join the meeting now](#): Meeting ID: 297 827 168 840 1 Passcode: H5yH364L

-OR-

Dial in by phone

[+1 503-446-4951,,575714955#](#)

Phone conference ID: 575 714 955#

2026 OREGON DEFENSIBLE SPACE MODEL CODE (Model - ODSC)

DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

OREGON DEFENSIBLE SPACE MODEL CODE DEVELOPMENT

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OREGON DEFENSIBLE SPACE CODE DEVELOPMENT MEMBERS

CONTRIBUTING ORGANIZATIONS

1000 Friends
Association of Oregon Counties
Insurance Industry
Department of Land Use & Conservation
Governors' Fire Service Policy Council Chair
Governor's Office
Oregon Property Owners Assoc
Governors' Wildfire Programs Advisory Council
Keep Oregon Green
American Planners Association, Oregon Chapter
League of Oregon Cities
League of Oregon Cities
Oregon Building Code Division
Oregon Building Officials Association
Oregon Department of Environmental Quality
Oregon Department of Forestry
Oregon Emergency Management
Oregon Emergency Management Association
Oregon Farm Bureau
Oregon Fire Chief's Association
Oregon Fire Code Advisory Board
Oregon Fire Marshals Association
Oregon Forest Industries Council
Oregon Home Builders
Oregon Small Woodlands Association
Oregon State University
Oregon Volunteer Firefighters Association
Special Districts Association
Sustainable Northwest
Sustainable Northwest
The Nature Conservancy
The Nature Conservancy
USFS/BLM
Western Environmental Law Center
Environment Seat -WPAC
Douglas County Rural Fire Protection Association
Coos Forest Protection Association
Walker Range
DCBS Insurance Commissioner
IBHS
Cattleman's Association
ICC
Consumer-Owned Utility- Consumers Power

OREGON DEFENSIBLE SPACE CHARTER

Name of Team: Model Oregon Defensible Space Code (ODSC) Development Committee

Date: 11/2025

Sponsor	Kick Off Date	Committee Administrator/Facilitator	Proposed Team Sunset Date
Oregon State Fire Marshal	November 2025	Assistant Chief Deputy State Fire Marshal Chad Hawkins	January 2026
Background	Senate Bill 83 requires the Department of the Oregon State Fire Marshal (OSFM) to create and make available to local governments a model code for defensible space, in consultation with the Oregon Fire Code Advisory Board (OFCAB). The model code shall include standards that are consistent with, and do not exceed, the standards in the International Wildland-Urban Interface Code (2024 ed.), that pertain to defensible space, including the standards in sections 603 and 604 of the code.		
Mission Statement	To develop the Model Oregon Defensible Space Code (ODSC) through an open and collaborative process whereas stakeholders, committee members, and persons from the public may provide input, recommendations, and guidance to establish model minimum defensible space requirements for wildfire risk reduction.		
Goals & Objectives	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Develop a model code that aligns with the International Wildland-Urban Interface Code and best practices for Oregon for local governments to adopt if desired. 2. Consult with and make recommendations to the Oregon Fire Code Advisory Board (OFCAB) in establishing the model ODSC. 		
Committee Members	Committee members include but not limited to; the Oregon Fire Service, Associations and Groups that have a vested interest in defensible space, Members of the public are encouraged to attend. OFCAB members are encouraged to attend as Ex-Officios.		
Feedback Plan	Agendas, minutes, and meeting information will be posted to the public meeting webpage https://www.oregon.gov/osfm/about-us/Pages/public-meetings.aspx		
Scope	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. IWUIC Chapter 6, section 603 and 604 2. IWUIC sections needed to support scope and definition of sections 603 and 604; or any relevant sections relating to defensible space. 3. Oregon best management practices related to vegetation management around structures. 		
Procedures/ Meeting Frequency	Hold at least three (3) meetings to discuss, review, and finalize the model code language November 19th, 2025 December 22nd, 2025 January 7, 2026		
Recommendation Making Process	The committee should strive to meet general consensus but majority rule shall prevail to provide final recommendation to OFCAB.		
Recommendation Ratifying Body	The State Fire Marshal through recommendation provided by the OFCAB.		
Boundary Conditions to Decisions Made	This committee can make recommendations, suggestions, and provide information to the OFCAB; however, the final decision on adoption of the code will be made by the State Fire Marshal.		
How Decisions Are Communicated	Approved recommendations will be communicated to the OFCAB by the OFCAB committee administrator through a variety of means including but not limited to: e-mail, office memorandum, website, conference calls and committee meetings.		
Sunset Clause	3 months from the first meeting, unless extended in writing by the OFCAB and the State Fire Marshal.		

OREGON DEFENSIBLE SPACE CODE DEVELOPMENT HISTORY AND TIMELINE

JUL 2021	SB 762 signed into law, requiring OSFM to adopt a Statewide Defensible Space Code
FEB 2022	First Defensible Space Code stakeholder kickoff meeting
MAR 2022	OSFM Listening Tours
APR 2022	Defensible Space Code Development Committee (Focus Section 603)
APR 2022	Defensible Space Code Development Committee (Focus Section 604)
MAY 2022	Defensible Space Code Development Committee (Finalize Draft Language)
AUG 2022	Townhall tours in 17 Oregon cities begins
AUG 2022	First version of the Oregon Wildfire Risk Map paused – Code adoption paused
MAY 2023	OSFM's educational assessment program begins offering free one-on-one property visits.
JUL 2023	Senate Bill 80 signed into law, changing the risk classifications to 5 to 3 hazard classifications.
MAR 2024	OSFM launches year long pilot offering incentive payments for qualifying assessments.
JUL 2024	Second townhalls or community meetings begin in Oregon cities.
JAN 2025	Second version of hazard map is released.
APR 2025	Incentive program finishes, awarding \$250,000 to qualifying property assessments.
JUL 2025	Senate Bill 83 signed into law changing the defensible space code requirements.
NOV 2025	Model code language development begins

Background:

SB 762 (2021) Defensible Space Provisions SB 762, passed in 2021, established a comprehensive framework for defensible space to reduce wildfire risk in Oregon, particularly in the wildland-urban interface (WUI). Key provisions include:

Mandatory Defensible Space Code

- The Oregon State Fire Marshal (OSFM) was required to establish a statewide minimum defensible space code for properties in high or extreme wildfire risk areas within the WUI, as identified on the statewide wildfire hazard map (ORS 477.490).
- The code was required to include the standards relating to defensible space only in Sections 603 and 604 of the International Wildland-Urban Interface Code (IWUIC),
- OSFM may consider best practices specific to Oregon to establish the requirements.
- **NOTE:** The five (5) risk categories from the original legislation were changed to three (3) hazard classifications in the 2023 legislative session in SB 80. Defensible space provisions and the mandatory code would apply to lands that were classified as high and mapped within the WUI.

SB 83 (2025) Defensible Space Provisions (Proposed Amendment) The provided amendment to SB 83 significantly alters the defensible space framework established by SB 762, shifting from a mandatory statewide code to a voluntary model code. Key provisions include:

Repeals:

- Repeals ORS 476.390 (defining defensible space), ORS 476.394 (local government enforcement of defensible space), and ORS 477.490 (statewide wildfire hazard map), among others (SECTION 1).
- Repeals sections 12a, 12b, and 12d which relates to BCD's home hardening code.
- Section 29 of chapter 592, Oregon Laws 2021 (SB 762), which relates to mapping and protected areas within Oregon.

Removes the requirement for OSFM to establish a mandatory statewide defensible space code (deletes ORS 476.392(1)(4)).

Local governments are not required to adopt the model code, and OSFM cannot require local governments to adopt the model code (ORS 476.392(4)).

OREGON DEFENSIBLE SPACE - MODEL



[Jurisdiction Name] Defensible Space Code

About this appendix:

Appendix DS adopts the Oregon Department of the State Fire Marshal's Model Defensible Space Code, establishing minimum standards for vegetation management, fuel modification, and defensible space maintenance. The authority having jurisdiction may amend Appendix X to address local conditions, consistent with Oregon Senate Bill 83 (2025). Where Appendix X is not adopted, vegetation clearance in wildland-urban interface areas shall comply with the International Wildland-Urban Interface Code.

Section 101 Definitions

101.1 Scope. Unless otherwise expressly stated, the following words and terms shall, for the purposes of this code, have the meanings shown in this section.

101.2 Referenced Standards Terms not defined here [shall have the meanings ascribed in the Oregon Fire Code, IWUIC (2024 edition), or ORS Chapter 476, as applicable] [shall have their ordinarily accepted meanings, such as the context implies].

102 Definitions.

Code official. The local government entity, such as the planning department, or city, county, or rural fire protection district, whose function includes regulating building use and occupancy or administering fire safety laws, ordinances, and regulations, including the provisions of this code.

Defensible Space. An area, either natural or man-made, where material capable of allowing a fire to spread unchecked has been treated, cleared or modified to slow the rate and intensity of an advancing wildfire and to create an area for fire suppression operations to occur.

Fire-Resistive Vegetation. Plants with the characteristics compiled in Appendix F of this code can be used to reduce the likelihood of fire spread.

Fire-Resistive Vegetation, Non. Flammable plants, including *vegetative fuels*, that ignite readily, can add to the intensity of a wildfire and may increase its spread. Generally, these fuels have fine dry material such as twigs, leaves, and needles, or have high oil and resin content.

Fuel Modification. A method of modifying fuel load by reducing the amount of *nonfire-resistant vegetation* or altering the vegetation type to reduce the fuel load.

Ladder Fuel. Branches, leaves, needles, and other combustible vegetation may spread a wildfire from lower-growing to higher-growing vegetation.

Fuel Break. A natural or constructed barrier designed to slow or stop the progress of a wildfire, including cleared areas, roads, or non-combustible landscaping.

Other human development. Essential facilities, special occupancy structures, or hazardous facilities as defined in ORS 455.447 that support community functions, public communication, energy, or transportation.

Owner. The responsible party owning, leasing, controlling, operating, or maintaining buildings or structures on the property subject to this code and is responsible for modifying or removing *nonfire-resistant vegetation*.

This code. The [jurisdiction name] Defensible Space Code, legally adopted through a local process, shall be known hereafter as “this code”.

Vegetative fuels. Plants that constitute a wildfire hazard.

Wildfire Hazard. A numerical value or local determination considering relevant conditions, describing the likelihood and intensity of a wildfire, based on specific factors or conditions of weather, climate, topography, and vegetation.

Wildland. Forestland, as defined in ORS 477.001, or an unimproved area that contains enough unmanaged vegetation, at any time of the year, to constitute a fire hazard, in the judgment of the forester, regardless of how the area is zoned or taxed.

Wildland fuels. Natural vegetation occurs in areas where development is essentially non-existent, including grasslands, brushlands, rangelands, woodlands, timberlands, or wilderness. Wildland fuels are a type of *vegetative fuel*.

Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI) Area. A geographical area identified by the adopting local jurisdiction, or local plans, where structures and other human development meets or intermingles with wildland or vegetative fuels.

Section 201

Defensible Space Requirements

201.1 General Requirements. The owner shall establish and maintain a defensible space around all buildings, decks, and other human development in locally designated WUI areas in accordance with this section to reduce wildfire fuel loads and create a buffer zone for potential firefighter use.

201.1.1 5-foot noncombustible space. All buildings, decks, and *other human development* shall include a space of at least 5 feet that is free of all *combustible vegetation*, including grass, weeds, bark dust, *ladder fuel*, and shrubs. Non-combustible materials (e.g., gravel, concrete) or *fire-resistant vegetation* shall be used. No firewood, lumber, or other combustible materials shall be stored in this zone.

201.2 Defensible space distances. Combustible fuels around buildings, decks, and *other human development* shall be modified to create a defensible space perimeter based on hazard levels determined by the *local government*. The levels are:

Moderate hazard: 5-30 feet

High hazard: 31-50 feet

Extreme hazard: 51-100 feet

201.3 Fuel Modification. The following modifications shall be established and maintained with the perimeters established in Section 301.2

201.3.1 Trees. Trees are allowed within the defensible space, provided that the horizontal distance between the crowns of adjacent trees and the crowns of trees and structures, overhead electrical facilities, or unmodified fuel is not less than 10 feet (3048 mm).

201.3.2 Groundcover. Deadwood and litter shall be regularly removed from trees. Where ornamental vegetative fuels or cultivated ground cover, such as green grass, ivy, succulents, or similar plants, are used as ground cover, they are allowed to be within the designated defensible space, provided they do not form a means of transmitting fire from the native growth to any structure.

201.4 Best Management Practices. The *code official* is authorized to enforce local best management practices locally relevant to their jurisdiction. Each section must be specifically adopted by reference by the *code official*, based on area conditions, as part of *this code*.

Section 301

Maintenance of Defensible Space

301.1 General Maintenance. The owner shall maintain the requirements in Section 301 and Sections 301.1.1 through 301.1.4 to provide a clear area for fire suppression operations.

301.1.1 Trees. Tree crowns extending to within 10 feet (3048 mm) of any structure shall be pruned to maintain a minimum horizontal clearance of 10 feet (3048 mm). Tree crowns within the *defensible space* shall be pruned to remove limbs located less than 6 feet (1829 mm) above the ground surface adjacent to the trees.

301.1.2 Chimney clearance. Portions of tree crowns that extend to within 10 feet (3048 mm) of a chimney outlet shall be pruned to maintain a minimum horizontal clearance of 10 feet (3048 mm).

301.1.3 Deadwood removal. Deadwood and vegetative litter (*ladder fuel*) shall be regularly removed from trees.

302.1 Inspection and Compliance. The *code official* may conduct periodic inspections to verify compliance with Sections 201 and 301.

303.1 Maintenance Plan. Property owners meeting the local criteria for WUI, as identified by the authority having jurisdiction, should have a plan to maintain the zone in accordance with *this code*.