



OREGON

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Wildfire Awareness Week is May 2-8

Wildfire Awareness Week is May 2-8, 2010 and State Fire Marshal Randy Simpson is reminding residents that because humans are the number one cause of Oregon wildfires, we all have a responsibility to take steps to reduce the wildfire threat to our communities.

“Most frequently, human-caused wildfires in Oregon are due to escaped debris burning,” says State Fire Marshal Randy Simpson. “If all Oregonians would choose an alternate method to dispose of their yard debris we could significantly reduce the threat and damage from wildfires.”

The Office of State Fire Marshal encourages homeowners to use alternate disposal methods for yard debris such as composting, turning it into woodchips or mulch, taking the debris to a yard waste recycler, or leaving it for curbside pick up if available in your community.

Homeowners living in or near wildfire prone areas are also encouraged to take steps to protect themselves through prevention and structural risk reduction. Simpson encourages home and building owners to take steps to prepare their property in case wildfires arrive.

“By using non-combustible building materials and fire resistant plants in landscaping, homeowners can increase the chances of their home surviving a wildfire,” says Simpson. “By taking action now, homeowners can prepare themselves before fire season begins.”

Steps to increase fire resistance in and around your home include:

- Enclose eaves, fascias, soffits and sub floor vents using 1/8 inch or smaller non-corrosive metal mesh.

- Remove debris, firewood and other stored items from under decking and enclose decking with 1/8 inch screen mesh to keep out burning embers.
- Keep your roof and gutters free of needles, leaves and other debris.
- Install metal, tile, concrete, or Class A rated fire resistant asphalt roofing.
- Cover exterior walls with fire resistant materials like stucco, stone, or brick. Vinyl siding can melt and is not recommended.
- Use double-paned or tempered glass for all exterior windows.
- Consider installing a residential fire sprinkler system.

Every year, the Office of State Fire Marshal supports other Oregon agencies such as the Oregon Department of Forestry, Keep Oregon Green, the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality, and others in their efforts to educate citizens on wildfire prevention measures.

For more information on Wildfire Awareness Week and additional resources visit:

http://www.oregon.gov/OSP/SFM/CommEd_WAW.shtml.

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