



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

OREGON DEFENSIBLE SPACE CODE

What is the Oregon Defensible Space Code?

The Oregon Defensible Space Code is modeled after the 2021 International Wildland-Urban Interface Code. When adopted, the code will apply to areas identified in the wildland-urban interface AND at high or extreme risk of wildfire. These areas are determined by a map created by Oregon State University and the Oregon Department of Forestry.

What is the purpose of the Oregon Defensible Space Code?

The purpose of the Oregon Defensible Space Code is to establish minimum requirements for protecting life and property. Standards in the code are intended to mitigate the risk to life, structures, and other values from wildfire.

What are the processes to adopt the Oregon Defensible Space Code?

In creating the Oregon Defensible Space Code, the Office of State Fire Marshal went through the same process as the Oregon Fire Code adoption process. A committee of stakeholders was created to offer suggestions, ask questions, and help shape the code within the legislative framework. Public comment was also received during the code adoption process. Public comments can be requested or submitted at any time.

Who was involved with the code development process?

A list of the Oregon Defensible Space Code Committee members, minutes, and meeting recordings can be found on our website at tinyurl.com/2udrjzny.

Is public comment still being accepted as part of the code development process?

Yes, public comment is still being accepted as part of the code development process. Anyone wishing to submit a comment should send it to SB762@osp.oregon.gov.

Who does the Oregon Defensible Space Code apply to?

The Oregon Defensible Space Code applies to homes and businesses identified on the wildfire risk map, developed by Oregon State University and the Oregon Department of Forestry, in both the wildland-urban interface ***and*** high or extreme risk.

When will the Oregon Defensible Space Code take effect?

The code development process and the adoption must be complete by December 2022. When the code is complete, it will be reviewed by the Oregon Fire Code Advisory Board (OFCAB). The OFCAB will consider, review, and recommend the draft code to the State Fire Marshal for adoption. The code will take effect in 2023.



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-Can local governments adopt a more stringent defensible space code?

Yes. The Oregon Defensible Space Code establishes the minimum defensible space requirements across the state for wildfire risk reduction on lands identified on the wildfire risk map. Any local requirements that a local government adopts for defensible space must be defensible space standards selected from the framework set forth in the International Wildland-Urban Interface Code.

Who will be enforcing the code?

The Oregon Defensible Space Code can be enforced by the Office of State Fire Marshal and those identified as assistants to the State Fire Marshal (ORS 476.060).

How will the code be enforced?

The Office of State Fire Marshal's philosophy is to prioritize education before enforcement. When the Office of State Fire Marshal begins inspections, the Office will follow the existing code enforcement practices.

What is the process to determine if my home/business meets code requirements?

The code inspection process and assessment tools are under development. For an educational consult or questions about defensible space, please contact our Office at SB762@osp.oregon.gov or 503-934-8204.

Where can I learn more about the Oregon Defensible Space Code adoption process?

A portion of OSFM's website explains the defensible space code. Please visit tinyurl.com/2udrjzmv for previous meeting recordings and to provide public comment.