

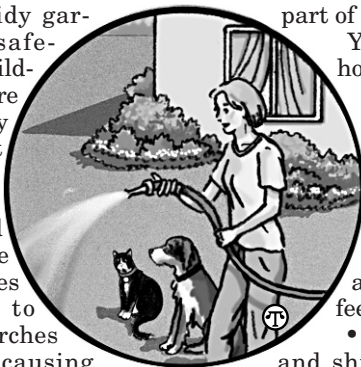
Gardening For A Firewise Home That's Safe From Wildfire

(NAPSA)—A tidy garden may help safeguard you from wildfire. During wildfire season, many homes can be lost as fires spread along the ground through dried leaves and pine needles. These fires can then leap to wooden decks, porches or house siding, causing devastation.

The way you garden around your property could protect your home during wildfire season. Reducing the amount of dry tinder and fuel, such as leaves and pine needles, can dramatically reduce the risk of a fire spreading to your house.

“It’s all about making sensible choices for safety from fire in the wildland/urban interface. Your home can survive a wildfire,” says Michele Steinberg, communities support manager for the national Firewise Program.

When a wildfire strikes a residential area, fire-fighting resources are stretched thin and may not be able to reach your home in time to save it. As a homeowner, you can take steps to prevent your home from becoming



part of a fire’s devastation.

You can make your home firewise if you:

- Remove dead or overhanging branches within six to eight feet of your roof.
- Prune low-hanging branches to a height of six to ten feet from the ground.
- Cut back brush

and shrubs to a minimum of 30 feet from the house to create a defensible space.

- Clean leaf and debris accumulation around your house and from roof gutters.

- Choose drought-resistant plants and trees that retain moisture longer.

These Firewise precautions can make a real difference when wildfire strikes. By cleaning up leaves and debris on your property and in gutters, you can help prevent flying sparks from igniting your home.

Detailed landscape techniques, homeowner checklists, and building construction choices are available online at www.firewise.org. The Web site also provides resources and strategies for creating homes and neighborhoods that are less susceptible to wildfire.