

RESIDENTIAL DEFENSIBLE SPACE EVALUATION TAHOE BASIN--NEVADA

Evaluation # **0001**

The key to improving the odds of your house surviving
a wildfire is the defensibility of the entire property.

NLTFPD Residential Evaluations require owner or authorized agent to be present at evaluation.

Homeowner's Name: _____ Homeowner's contact #: _____

Homeowner's Address: _____

E-mail address: _____ APN #: _____

Signature: _____ Homeowner Authorized Agent

CHECKLIST

(SEE BACK FOR EXPLANATION ON EACH CHECKLIST ITEM)

- | | YES | NO | | YES | NO |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1 Class A roof installed?
_____ | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 8 Limbs within 10 feet of structure removed?
_____ | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2 All combustible materials removed from
beneath decks, stairways, and overhangs?
_____ | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 9 All dry, flammable vegetation within ten feet of
propane tank removed?
_____ | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3 All dry, flammable vegetation within 30 to
100 feet of structure removed? Brush height
and continuity reduced 30 feet from
structure?
_____ | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 10 All dead trees removed?
_____ | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4 Vegetation cleared 5 feet from house?
_____ | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 11 All leaves and pine needles removed from roof and
gutter?
_____ | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5 All branches and scrap lumber removed 30
feet from structure?
_____ | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 12 Firewood, lumber, and large woody materials
removed 30 feet from structures?
_____ | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6 All green trees limbed six feet from the
ground or 1/3 total tree height?
_____ | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 13 Is your address clearly visible to emergency
response personnel?
_____ | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7 Spark arrester in place? All vents to crawl
space and attic screened?
_____ | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | 14 Excessively dense tree cover removed? (Live trees
over 6" DBH require permit. Contact local Fire
District or TRPA.)
_____ | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

COMMENTS: _____

Evaluated by: _____ Date: _____

* Nevada Tahoe Conservation District (NTCD) works in cooperation with the Nevada Fire Protection Districts in an advisory role, providing recommendations to Nevada Lake Tahoe residents for creating defensible space around their homes. While the creation of defensible space does not guarantee protection, it can greatly increase the probability of structural survivability in the event of a wildfire. Contact your local fire district for more information.

Your local fire district conducted a defensible space fire safety evaluation of your property. The purpose of the evaluation was to help your home survive in the event of a wildland fire, and help your property comply with state and local fire safety ordinances. If your property was found to be "not in compliance" your property may be re-evaluated within 30 days. If you have any questions about the results of this evaluation, or need further information on actions you should take, please call your local fire district.

CHECKLIST EXPLANATIONS

- 1. Flying embers landing on combustible roof materials are the #1 cause of homes destroyed by wildfire.** A Class A roof kept clear of branches, pine needles, etc. is your best protection against flying embers. Replace wood shake roofs with a Class A metal, composite, or tile roof with capped ends.
- 2. Houses are often destroyed by flames that ignite combustible materials under or adjacent to decks and stairways and overhangs.** Overhangs, because of their angle, can catch and trap hot embers and fire brands. To avoid this threat, you should not store combustible materials under decks and stairs and overhanging eaves should be enclosed. Keep areas under and adjacent to decks and stairways free of pine needles, leaves, or other debris. A thin layer of gravel, rock, or aggregate should be applied under decks and stairways.
- 3. Fire spreads from the wildland to homes and other buildings by traveling along the fuel bed (plants, trees, brush) until it is close enough to ignite the structure. Regulations require the removal of all dead and dying vegetation within 30 to 100 feet of any structure depending on the slope of surrounding terrain.**

In the Lake Tahoe Basin we will allow for thinning of vegetation. If you decide to allow some flammable brush to remain such as manzanita, scrub oak, white thorn, etc., then it must be thinned. A good rule of thumb is a space between shrubs 2 times the height of the shrub. For example, if you have a shrub 3 feet high, then the space before the next shrub should be 6 feet across. Root systems and duff layer should be left intact for erosion control and soil stabilization.

The above does not apply to short, green, well-maintained groundcovers, which do not need to be thinned. Please ensure that all dry weeds and grasses are cut to a height of no more than 6 inches within 30 feet of your structure. Fire travels extremely fast in tall grass or weeds. Cutting them to 6 inches or less helps to reduce that threat. Also, do not rake to bare dirt, unless within five feet of a structure. (See #5) Regarding clearance distances, if your lot is flat, then a distance of 30 feet from the structure may be sufficient. If your lot is on a steep slope, the distance may need to be increased up to 100 feet below, or on the downhill side. If the property line is closer than the required distance, you must only clear to the property line.
- 4. When removing debris, rake to bare dirt within 5 feet of structures and apply a thin layer of gravel, rock, or aggregate.** Beyond 5 feet, DO NOT rake to bare dirt. A layer of pine needles, small twigs, or wood chips 1-2" in depth is needed to prevent erosion. Well maintained turf is an exception to this guideline.
- 5. Please remove ALL combustible debris including branches and scrap lumber from your yard within 30 feet of your structure.** This will help reduce the chance of fire spreading from the wildland to your buildings.
- 6. Limbs should be removed from green trees to a height of at least 6 feet from the ground.** No more than one third of the live green limbs should be removed from any tree. Taking more than this amount can weaken the tree and make it susceptible to bark beetle attack.
- 7. Please remove all tree limbs, whether live or dead, within 10 feet of any chimney.** In Nevada, a spark arresting screen with no greater than ½ inch mesh is required on all chimneys (Section 605; IJWIC, 2003 Ed.). This helps to prevent sparks, embers or flames from a chimney fire spreading to the wildland. Screens are encouraged on all vents to prevent flying embers from entering crawl spaces and attics, igniting the structure.
- 8. Limbs hanging over or leaning against a structure can also contribute to the fire threat.** Remove limbs within 10 feet of the structure.
- 9. Please remove all dry, flammable vegetation within 10 feet of any propane tank.** In the event of a fire, this will help reduce the amount of heat that the tank is exposed to by preventing fire from traveling through a fuel bed right up to the tank.
- 10. Dead trees are hazardous because they will fall, in time, and could damage property, or injure or kill a person.** In addition, the dry wood of a dead tree is a tremendous fire hazard. The Tahoe Regional Planning Agency does not require a Tree Removal Permit to remove a DEAD tree unless they are larger than 24 inches dbh and in a Stream Environment Zone. Please call TRPA at (775) 588-4547, Ext. 266 regarding removal of trees greater than 24 inches dbh located in a Stream Environment Zone.
- 11. Routinely remove pine needles, leaves, and litter from roof and gutters.** Airborne fire brands account for the majority of homes burned by wildfire. You can help minimize this problem by keeping the roof and rain gutters free of debris.
- 12. Firewood, lumber, or other large woody material should not be stacked within 30 feet of any structure on your property.** They can act as a fuel source to spread fire to the structure. In addition, green firewood should be covered with 6 millimeter CLEAR plastic sheeting to prevent breeding of bark beetles. Lumber and other large woody material can be covered with any material that is durable enough to withstand sun and wind and would prevent embers and burning brands from becoming lodged in the wood, igniting the pile.
- 13. The proper address to your property should be displayed so that the numbers can be easily read from the street, both day and night.** This assists firefighters in locating your property during all types of emergencies including medical aid calls. Houses that do not have appropriate address identification are in violation of county and district codes (Ordinance 00-4, Section 901.4.4.1: 6 inch residential; 12 inch commercial of a highly contrasting color with the background).
- 14. If excessively dense tree cover removed is checked "NO" you should call your local fire protection districts (for trees are within 30 feet of structure) or the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency (for trees more than 30 feet from structure) to schedule an appointment with their forester.** To contact the Tahoe Regional Planning Agency, call (775) 588-4547 ext. 266. The forester will inspect your trees and issue a Tree Removal Permit if necessary. If your trees are less than 6 inches in diameter at breast height, then no permit is required. Excessive tree cover is not only hazardous to your home, but also to the health of the trees.

LOCAL FIRE DISTRICTS

No. Lake Tahoe Fire Protection Dist. (775) 831-0351 x118 Tahoe Douglas Fire Protection Dist. (775) 588-3591
