



Firewise Communities USA was developed by the National Fire Protection Association as a resource for agencies & communities wanting to work toward a reduction in lost lives & destruction of property caused

by wildland fire, & to protect natural resources from its effects. With an increasing human population stretching into wildland areas and expanding the WUI (Wildland Urban Interface), the need for education, community wildfire assessments, and wildland fire planning is clear. Any community interested in having an assessment completed or in becoming **Firewise**,

should contact the Maine Forest Service below, or visit www.firewise.org for more info.



Maine Forest Service
FIREWISE Program
 22 State House Station
 Augusta, ME 04333-0022
 Tel: 207-287-4990
www.maineforestservice.gov



HOW TO BE...

LakeSmart



&



FIREWISE

The State of Maine has more than 6,000 scenic lakes, and over 400,000 residents using lakes as a source of drinking water. The importance of protecting clean waters from nutrient runoff is clear, as well as the importance of protecting the growing number of homes in these shoreland areas from the threat of fire and the potentially devastating effects it has to surrounding waters. By applying both **LakeSmart** and **Firewise** principles to your shorefront property, your home, camp, and local waters have a much greater chance of surviving one of the more than 400 forest fires that occur in Maine each year—75% of which threaten, damage, or destroy structures.

Brought to you by the
Maine Forest Service

in association with the
Department of

Environmental Protection

and the cooperative assistance of the

University of Nevada Cooperative Ext.

Communities located around lakes have a larger responsibility—to keep the water clean. The Maine Dept. of Environmental Protection's **LakeSmart** program recognizes property owners around lakes who manage and landscape their property to protect water quality. Studies have shown that as water quality declines, the value of shorefront property also decreases, resulting in higher taxes for other property owners in the watershed. For more information, visit: <http://www.maine.gov/dep/blwq/watersh.htm> and click on **LakeSmart**.



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Maine Forest Service

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= Safer Homes & Healthy Waters



30 FT PERIMETER: Within 5' of your structure(s), create a non-combustible area using inorganic mulch (gravel, rocks, or erosion control mix). Maintain 30' of Lean, Clean & Green defensible space around your structure(s). Regularly rake up & compost or recycle needles & leaves; cover any bare soil with non-flammable mulch. Trim low branches & prune shrubs. Remove dead vegetation within 30' of home. Keep lawn trimmed to 3". Cut branches 10' from house & chimney, & raise branches off the ground by 10 ft or 1/3 tree height—whichever comes first. Make sure softwood tree crowns are a min 14' apart.



SEPTIC: Pump septic every 3-5 yrs & keep septic area free of woody growth.



YARD AREA: Keep firewood & compost piles 30' from buildings & fuel tanks.



30' - 100' PERIMETER: Remove or chip fine fuels (smaller than wrist-size). Raise tree branches to 10ft or 1/3 height—whichever comes first. If necessary, use inorganic mulch for erosion control.



MORE FIREWISE TIPS:

- Think twice about building materials. Choose fire-resistant & non-combustible products whenever possible; avoid wooden roofing (ie cedar shingles).
- Enclose soffits, vents, & eaves with nonflammable materials (1/8" metal screen) to prevent embers from starting fires in or on the home.
- Keep 100' of garden hose attached to the house during fire season (Mar—Nov).



ROOF: Keep gutters free of leaves, needles, & debris. Make sure roof is free of fuels. Cover chimney with 1/2" mesh screen. Direct roof runoff to a rain garden or collect & use for watering vegetation.



ENTRANCE/EXIT:

Make sure this is a min 12' wide, & accessible & supportive of firefighting vehicles.



DRIVEWAY:

Crown & stabilize road surface. Create water diversion bars if necessary to control runoff. Plant vegetation downhill of parking area.



STAIRS/OPENINGS:

Screen or wall out areas that tend to collect leaves, needles, & burnable materials, or clear them regularly by hand. Compost debris.



SHORE/FOOT PATHS:

Make paths stable & winding to reduce erosion & runoff; paths serve as a firebreak between vegetated areas.



VEGETATION: (See *Note) Remove, Reduce, Replace. Remove any clusters of highly flammable vegetation (softwoods) that are within 30' of structure(s) & posing significant risk (leaning against home, hanging into home, etc). Reduce vegetation by trimming & pruning; the goal is to minimize the amount of fuels near the structure(s). Replace flammable vegetation with more 'fire-resistant' vegetation & separate groups of smaller plantings/gardens with rocks, etc. For a list of recommended plants, visit: <http://www.maine.gov/doc/mfs/> & click on the *Maine Firewise* link on the left.



MORE LAKESMART TIPS:

- Stabilize shorefront areas by leaving rocks, shrubs, & trees (trim if within 30' boundary of home). Where necessary, plant grasses or apply non-eroding ground cover.
- Properly dispose of pet waste.
- Only use pesticides as a LAST resort—avoid use for aesthetic purposes.
- Leave native water plants.

***NOTE: Do not clear or thin vegetation within the shoreland zone (within 250 ft of normal high water mark) without adhering to appropriate limitations outlined by DEP, LURC & your local codes.**

