

# CENTRAL MARIN FIRE DEPARTMENT



Developed by

Ruben Martin, Fire Marshal  
Approved by

Scott Shurtz, Fire Chief

Fire Protection Standard 220-A

## VEGETATION MANAGEMENT PLAN CONTENT

Date: 8-21-2017

Revision: 8-01-2019

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The following information is provided to assist you in the evaluation of the vegetation on your property, and creating a vegetation management plan and narrative for plan submittal. Please note all properties are different and may require additional details or explanation. Please consult with you Fire Department or District to identify specific detail requirements for your property/project. See Standard 220 for requirements, intent, and definitions and Standard 220-B for an example VMP graphic plan.

### **REQUIREMENTS AND PRESCRIPTIONS PER ZONE**

The following information will help identify prescriptive measures in each of the Home Ignition Zones. The VMP shall identify compliance with the requirements for each zone. Check with your local fire department or district for any additional defensible space or weed abatement requirements. FIRESafe MARIN and the NFPA Firewise USA Program are great resources for additional design information.

#### **Immediate Zone (ZONE 0): 0'-5'**

The Immediate Zone extends 0-5' from your house. ZONE 0 is the area closest to your house, including the structure itself, decks, outdoor furniture, and the outside walls and coverings. This area is most vulnerable, and should be most aggressively maintained for fire resistance.

- Remove any combustible outdoor furniture. Replace jute or fiber doormats with fire resistant materials.
- Remove or relocate all combustible materials, including garbage and recycling containers, lumber, trash, and patio accessories.
- Clean all fallen leaves and needles regularly. Repeat often during fire season.
- No vegetation is recommended within 5' of structures.
- Remove tree limbs that extend into this zone. Fire-prone tree varieties should be removed if they extend within 5' of structures.
- Do not store firewood, lumber, or combustibles here, even (especially) under decks or overhangs.
- Move stored combustibles inside, or at least 30' away from structures.
- Use only inorganic, non-combustible mulches such as stone or gravel.

#### **Intermediate Zone (ZONE 1): 5'-30'**

The Intermediate Zone from 5' to 30' out from buildings, structures, decks, etc. Keep ZONE 1 "Lean, Clean, and Green" and employ careful landscaping to create breaks that can help influence

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and decrease fire behavior.

- Remove all dead plants, grass, and weeds (vegetation).
- Remove dead or dry leaves and pine needles from your yard, roof and rain gutters.
- Trim trees regularly to keep branches a minimum of 10 feet from other trees.
- Remove branches that hang over your roof and keep dead branches 10 feet away from your chimney.
- Remove vegetation and items that could catch fire from around and under decks.
- Create additional separation between trees, shrubs and items that could catch fire, such as patio furniture, wood piles, swing sets, etc. Provide adequate spacing between all plants.
- Remove fire-prone plants, and choose only fire-resistant varieties. Irrigate regularly.
- Use only fire resistant inorganic mulches. "Gorilla Hair" or similar shredded bark mulch should be removed in this zone. Composted mulch and large bark and chips (greater than 1/2" diameter) may be OK.

### **Extended Zone (ZONE 2): 30'-100'**

The extended zone from 30' to 100' (or more, if required due to steep slopes, nearby vegetation conditions, and/or your local fire department). The goal here is not to eliminate fire but to interrupt fire's path and keep flames smaller and on the ground. This zone should include at a minimum:

- Cut or mow annual grass down to a maximum height of 4 inches.
- Create horizontal spacing between shrubs, trees and vertical spacing between grass, shrubs and trees.
- Remove fallen leaves, needles, twigs, bark, cones, and small branches. However, they may be permitted to a depth of 3 inches if erosion control is an issue.

### **Access Zone (ZONE 3): 0'-10'**

Extends 10 feet horizontally from the edge on either side of the road or driveway.

- Within this zone, plantings shall be fire resistant and shall not extend within the 14 foot vertical.
- Clearance above the surface of the roadway or driveway, as required for emergency access.

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- All landscape shall meet the requirements for separation as stated in the Zone 2 above.

### VEGETATION MANAGEMENT PLAN: PLANT LIST

FIRESafe Marin maintains a list of approved fire resistant plants at [www.firesafemarin.org/plants](http://www.firesafemarin.org/plants). Other plant species not listed or named shall require approval by the Fire Code Official. All VMP's shall include a legend/list of all plants that exist, plants that will be added, or will be removed as part of the VMP process.

Symbol	Common Name	Latin Name	QTY	Fire Resistant	Type	New or Existing	Remarks
DIE IRI	Fortnite Lily	<i>Dietes iridioides</i>	10	Yes	Perennial	Existing	Prune
ECH SEC	Hen and Chicks	<i>Echevaria secunda</i>	25	Yes	Perennial	New	Irrigated
Car Cal	Brush Anemone	<i>Carpenteria californica</i>	5	Yes	Shrub	New	Irrigated
Coy Bsh	Coyote Brush	<i>Baccharis spp</i>	10	No	Shrub	Existing	Remove
Bamb	Bamboo	<i>Bambusa spp</i>	20	No	Hedge	Existing	Remove
Jun	Juniper	<i>Juniperus communis</i>	10	No	Shrub	Existing	Remove
Cyp	Cypress species	<i>Cupressus spp</i>	5	No	Tree	Existing	Remove

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## VEGETATION MANAGEMENT PLAN NARRATIVE

The following “example” narrative language is provided to illustrate typical language and details that shall be included in your plan. Please note all properties are different and may require additional details or explanation.

### 1. Existing Conditions

- a. There are currently mature coast live oaks, redwood trees, eucalyptus trees and a few other miscellaneous native shrub species located throughout the property.

### 2. Proposed Scope

- a. The intent of this plan is to properly maintain the mature live oak and redwood trees with selective pruning and removal of all dead material per Firewise standards. The eucalyptus trees will be removed. Fire prone species including scotch broom and juniper will be removed. The existing shrubs will be thinned or removed to provide a firebreak from 0’ - 30’ from the home.

### 3. Future Planting

- a. Any future plantings throughout the site will include fire-resistant, irrigated shrubs, perennials, and ground covers as in the FIRESafe MARIN planting lists located at [www.firesafemarin.org/plants](http://www.firesafemarin.org/plants)

### 4. Long Term Maintenance Schedule and Safety Practices

- a. All fire prone fuels and dead material will be removed within 100’ of the home.
- b. Remove branches beneath large trees for a 6-foot minimum clearance.
- c. Needles and leaves and other combustible debris and litter shall be removed from roofs and gutter at minimum twice yearly.
- d. All weeds and grasses shall be cut regularly to a height of 4” or less.
- e. Vegetation shall be trimmed to within 10’ horizontally of roadways, and trees shall be trimmed as not to overhang roadways and provide 14’ of clearance vertically.
- f. All dead and dying vegetation shall be removed seasonally to reduce vegetation volume and ladder fuels.
- g. Coordinate with adjacent property owners to maintain tree canopies, vegetation and ladder fuels on an annual basis.
- h. No native grasses shall be planted within Home ignition zones 1 and 2.
- i. All planted areas inside Home ignition zones 1 and 2 shall be irrigated.
- j. All plantings shall be selected in coordination with the FIRESafe MARIN planting list located at [www.firesaemarin.org/plants](http://www.firesaemarin.org/plants). Other fire resistant plants can be

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utilized with prior approval of the Fire Code Official.

- k. Regardless of plant selection, shrubs shall be spaced so that no continuity exists between ground fuels and tree crowns, such that a ground fire will not extend into the tree canopy.

## **Design Information Resources**

### **FIRESafe MARIN**

FIRESafe MARIN (FSM) is Marin County's Fire Safe Council. FSM promotes public and private partnerships to enhance wildfire safety and build Firewise Communities. FSM is a nonprofit organization with the dual mission of reducing wildland fire hazards and improving fire-safety awareness in Marin County. FSM maintains a wealth of fire preparedness information including fire resistant plant listing, defensible space information, living with fire resources, emergency planning information, and home hardening tips. <https://www.firesafemarin.org/preparedness>

### **National Fire Protection Agency (NFPA), Firewise USA**

NFPA's Firewise USA program teaches people how to adapt to living with wildfire and encourages neighbors to work together and take action now to prevent losses. Information includes details for homeowners to prepare their homes to withstand ember attacks and minimize the likelihood of flames or surface fire touching the home or any attachments. <https://www.nfpa.org/Public-Education/By-topic/Wildfire/Preparing-homes-for-wildfire>

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