

PROTECTING YOUR HOME

Tips for Wildfire Safety and Clean Water

California residents play a crucial role in protecting their communities from the devastating threat of wildfires, and many preventative actions have a bonus: keeping our waterways clean. Creating defensible space around homes is the first line of defense against wildfires. Defensible space is the buffer between your property and nearby wildland. The actions you take to maintain it also help keep waterways cleaner by preventing pollutants like pesticides, nutrients, and heavy metals from washing into lakes, rivers, streams, and the ocean.



1. Within 0-5 feet from your home: It is crucial to focus on the first five feet of your home, using hardscape materials such as gravel or concrete, and avoiding combustible bark or mulch. It is essential to remove all dead plants, weeds, and debris from roofs, gutters, decks, and areas beneath your home, as these materials are highly combustible and can easily ignite from embers. Proper disposal of these materials prevents them from washing away and polluting waterways.

2. Within 30 ft of your home: Remove dead plants, grass, weeds, leaves, and pine needles, as these materials are highly flammable. Always dispose of organic debris in your green bin to reduce wildfire fuel and prevent nutrient pollution from entering stormwater and waterways. Also, trim trees regularly to keep at least 10 feet of space between branches to slow the spread of fire.

3. Within 100 feet of your home: It is very important to continuously trim and clean up vegetation. Be sure to clear areas around outbuildings if you have a propane tank, ensuring 10 feet of bare mineral soil and an additional 10 feet of flammable vegetation around their exteriors. When cleaning, sweep dirt and debris from driveways and pathways instead of hosing them down, which can wash pollutants directly into storm drains.

Additionally, if areas beyond just your property need a little revitalization, consider leading a local clean-up where neighbors can help neighbors. And, if you're looking for more ways to make an impact, consider becoming a Clean California designated community. Learn more at CleanCA.com/Designation.

Small actions can make a big impact. That's why it is important for every Californian to do their part and protect communities from wildfires and stormwater pollution. Find more tips on preventing water pollution at CleanWaterCA.com.

