

FIRE RESISTIVE LANDSCAPING CAN SAVE YOUR HOUSE AND YOUR LIFE

Making your home safe from fires is an important and complex issue. The High Desert has some high fire danger areas, particularly at higher elevations. It is possible to plant an attractive fire retardant landscape in the High Desert. It takes thoughtful planning and careful maintenance. Use low-fire-fuel plants and grouping plants in fire-fuel zones to protect homes and structures. Within 30 feet of your residence, low-growing, fire-retardant plants should be used. In this 30-foot critical zone, maintain nonflammable landscaping such as small lawn areas and recreation areas. Large shrubs and trees should not be planted directly adjacent to your home, and in no case should trees overhang the roof. Keep trees and shrubs trimmed of dead material. In extremely hazardous areas, a clearance of flammable vegetation for a minimum distance of 30 to 100 feet from structures is recommended.

Fire Retardant Checklist:

- Plant low-fire-fuel plant materials, particularly within the 30-foot “critical zone.”
- Keep trees and shrubs away from structures.
- Prune **all** plant materials of dead wood and excess stems and branches.
- Apply just the right amount of water to keep plants healthy. Too much water will promote excess plant growth, which means more potential fire fuel. Too little will lower the plants’ moisture content causing them to burn more readily.

Fire Retardant Plant List:

Grass Species: With irrigation, *turfgrasses* are fire resistant.

Groundcover: *Achillea* spp (Yarrow)
Baccharis (Coyote Bush)
Ceanothus griseus horizontalis (Carmel Creeper)
Helianthemum (Sunrose)
Oenothera (Mexican primrose)
Santolina virens (Lavender Cotton)
Sedum species (Stonecrop)

Shrubs: *Ceanothus* spp. (California Lilac)
Cistus Spp. (Rockrose)
Heteromeles (Toyon)
Lavendula spp. (Lavender)
Rhanus spp. (Buckthorn)
Rhus ovata (Sugar Bush)

Trees: *Arbutus unedo* (Strawberry Tree)
Gleditsia triacanthus (Honey Locust)
Parkinsonia spp. (Palo Verde)
Unbellularia californica (Laurel)
Washington filifera (California Fan Palm) – if dead fronds are removed