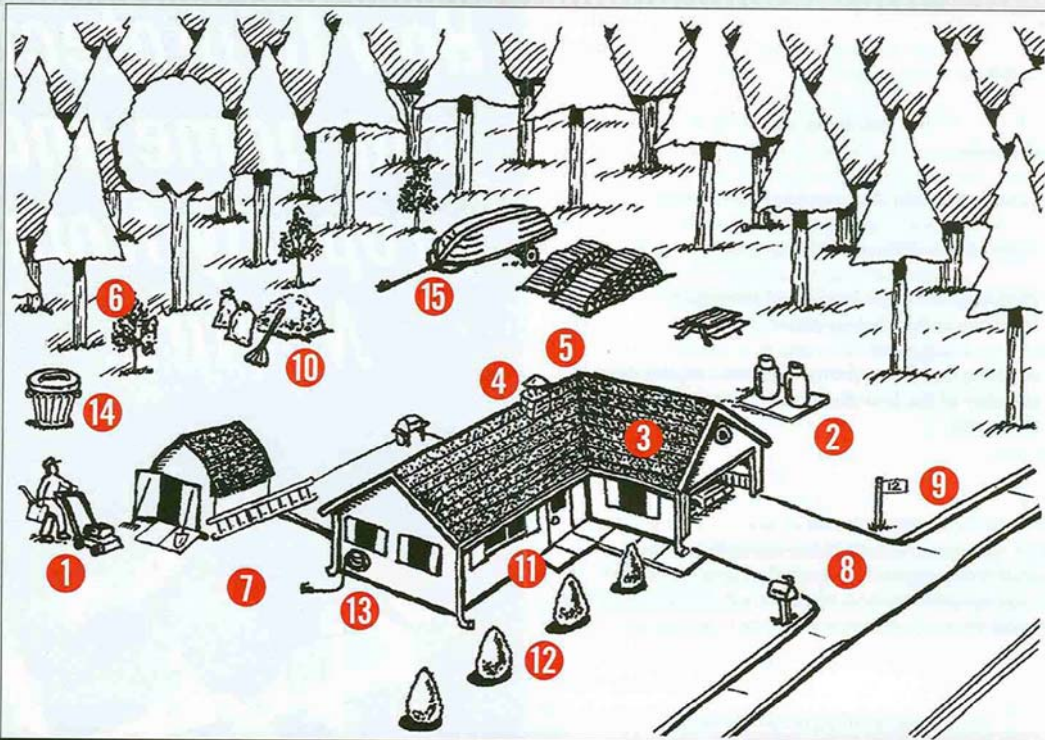


An aerial photograph of a white, two-story house with a dark green roof and a chimney. The house is surrounded by trees and a road. The text is overlaid on the top half of the image.

How to protect your home and property from Wildfire.

Many Nova Scotians' homes and possessions are threatened by forest, brush and grass fires every year.



15 IMPORTANT STEPS TO A WELL PROTECTED HOME AND PROPERTY

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Gasoline and other flammable liquids stored in approved containers and away from occupied buildings. 2 Propane tanks away from buildings. Valves shut off as fire approaches. Barbecue propane tanks stored away from the house. 3 Roofs and gutters cleaned regularly. 4 Spark arresters on chimneys and stove pipes. 5 No tree limbs within 3 m of the flue or chimney. 6 Tree limbs removed to a height of 3 to 4.5 m. 7 Easy access to fire tools: shovel, rake, bucket and ladder long enough to reach the roof. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 8 Roads and driveways at least 5 m in width. 9 Civic number posted at driveway entrance. 10 Leaves and flammable debris removed from around building. 11 House has at least two entrance/exits routes. 12 Shrubs spaced at least 4.5 m apart. 13 Garden hose connected to exterior tap. 14 Fireplace and stove ashes disposed of in fire safe container. 15 Combustibles such as firewood, picnic tables and boats stored away from the house. |
|---|---|



SELECT FIRE RESISTANT BUILDING MATERIALS

The roof and exterior structure of your dwelling should be constructed of non-combustible or fire resistant materials such as asphalt shingles, tile, slate, aluminum, brick, or stone. Wood siding, cedar shakes, exterior wood paneling and other highly combustible materials should be treated with fire retardant chemicals. If the building rests on wooden posts (open foundation), use metal sheeting to close off the area underneath the structure and do not use this area for storing flammable materials such as lumber and firewood.

CHECK AND CLEAN YOUR ROOF

Clean roof surfaces and gutters regularly to avoid accumulation of leaves, needles, twigs, and other flammable materials.

KEEP YOUR CHIMNEY CLEAN

Chimneys should be inspected twice a year for accumulations of soot or creosote. Clean your chimney at least once a year, or as necessary, and keep the dampers in good working order.

STORE FIREWOOD AWAY FROM YOUR HOME

Combustibles such as firewood, picnic tables, and boats should be stored away from structures and out from under decks.

USE ONLY APPROVED WOOD BURNING EQUIPMENT

Select only approved wood burning fireplaces, stoves, and inserts, and be sure they are installed according to the manufacturers' recommendations and local regulations.

INSTALL A SPARK ARRESTER

Every dwelling located in a wooded area should have a spark arrester constructed of non-flammable, corrosive-resistant material on its chimney. The openings in the mesh should be no larger than 5 mm in diameter. Spark arresters should be inspected annually.

VERANDAS AND PATIOS

Build these additions from non-flammable materials such as concrete, concrete blocks or stone. If pilings are used, they should be made of metal or concrete and the area under the deck floor should be closed in.

CONTROL VEGETATION

Vegetation should be managed 30 metres out from the structure in two zones: a Fire Break Zone extending 10 metres out from the edge of the structure, and a Fuel Break Zone extending 20 metres out from the Fire Break Zone.

The Fire Break Zone should be cleared of any flammable matter such as lumber, firewood, softwoods and dry grass. If there is an up slope toward the structure, the fire break zone should be even wider as a fire's intensity is greater when it burns up slope. Foundation plantings should be of fire resistant varieties and free of dead and dying vegetation.

A Fuel Break Zone should be maintained around all structures. Wider fuel breaks are needed around buildings located on steep slopes or in areas of dense, highly flammable fuels. Single shade trees and ornamentals are acceptable, as they seldom allow fire to spread rapidly from native vegetation to buildings. Shrubs and trees should be at least 4.5 m apart. Remove branches to a height of 3 - 4.5 m to prevent ground fire from spreading to tops of trees.

DEVELOP AN EXTERNAL WATER SUPPLY

A reliable water supply is essential to protect structures and natural areas from fires. A garden hose, 30 meters in length, should be connected to a tap on the exterior of the structure. Swimming pools may also be considered as a water source.

HAVE FIRE TOOLS HANDY

Your home should have a ladder long enough to reach the roof, a shovel, rake, and bucket. These tools should be easily accessible, and all occupants of the house should know where they are.

PLAN ADEQUATE ACCESS AND ESCAPE ROUTES

Driveways should be at least 5 m wide to allow for easy entrance of fire trucks and the passage of vehicles evacuating the area, and should not have grades greater than 12 per cent. Dead-end roads and cul-de-sacs should have a minimum turnaround radius of 18 m. In order to accommodate fire-fighting equipment, bridges must be able to support a minimum gross weight of 13,608 kilograms. The civic number should be posted at the driveway entrance.

Plan a safe escape route for you and your family before a wildfire occurs, and make sure everyone knows the plan.





RISK ASSESSMENT

Use this chart to determine your home's vulnerability.

Circle the number that best corresponds to your situation.

Add the circled numbers together and refer to the risk chart below.

House Location –	Level or less than 5% upslope toward building: (1)	5 to 20% upslope to building: (3)	Top of a hill with slope of 20% or more: (6)
Softwoods near house –	None within 0 to 10 m: (0)	Within 3 to 10 m: (9)	Less than 3 m from building: (15)
Piles of wood or other flammable materials –	None, or more than 15 m away from building: (0)	Within 3 to 15 m of building: (3)	Within 3 m of building: (6)
Softwood forest –	Thinned, pruned and cleared within 10 to 30 m of building: (1)	Unmanaged forest within 10 to 30 m: (12)	
Roofing Materials –	Metal, asphalt shingles, tiles with closed eaves: (0) With open eaves: (3)	Treated wood shingles with closed eaves: (3) With open eaves: (15)	Untreated wood shingles with open or closed eaves: (24)
Cleanliness of Roof –	No leaves, twigs etc.: (0)	Accumulation less than 1 cm thick: (3)	Accumulation more than 1 cm thick: (6)
Siding –	Stucco, brick, stone, metal, aluminum: (0)	Logs: (1)	Vinyl, wood: (6)
Veranda or Patio –	None, or built entirely of non-flammable materials: (0)	Wood, underside enclosed: (3)	Wood, underside open: (6)
Protective Equipment –	Garden hose with water pressure & sprinklers: (-3)	Barrels of water, buckets, shovels, axe: (3)	No hose, water or tools: (9)

RISK: Less than 15 = low 16 - 24 = medium
25 - 34 = high 35 and up = very high





IF A WILDFIRE OCCURS

1. Call 911.
2. Close windows and doors, including those inside the house.
3. Take down light drapes and close curtains.
4. Turn off gas at the meter or propane tank.
5. Prepare to evacuate family and pets upon notification from fire authorities or police.
6. If police and fire authorities permit, an able-bodied member of the household may remain to protect the house.

Please remember:

Taking the steps recommended in this brochure will help protect your home or cottage but does not guarantee your structure won't sustain damage in the event of a wildfire. It is always advisable to carry adequate homeowners insurance to protect your investment in the event of a tragedy.

For more information contact:

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