

UNDERSTANDING OAKMONT'S FIREWISE LANDSCAPE POLICY

OVA Town Hall

May 4th, 2021

Oakmont Firewise Committee

Today's Presenters

Iris Harrell, Firewise Committee Chair

Marianne Neufeld, Firewise Committee Vice Chair

Christel Antone, Architectural & Compliance Director

Jeff Young, OVA Board Liaison

Firewise Committee Members

Katy Carrel, Jackie Ryan, Dave Watts, Burt Schraga

Powerpoint presentation by Katy Carrel

Why did the OVA board pass the policy?

Hanley Fire: 1964

Porter Creek Fire: 1996

Tubbs Fire: Oct 2017

Campfire Fire: Nov 2018

Kincaid Fire: Oct 2019

LNU Fire: Aug 2020

Glass Fire: Sept 2020

Wildfires are larger, more frequent, & more destructive than ever!

Oakmont became a Firewise USA Community in 2018



How did the Firewise Safety Committee decide what to include in the new landscape policy?



- ✧ Santa Rosa City guidelines (codes)
- ✧ Santa Rosa Fire Department
- ✧ Firesafe Marin and Sonoma
- ✧ CalFire/State laws and guidelines
- ✧ Wildfire Science Research
- ✧ PG&E recommendations



What does the new landscape policy mean for me?

Assessors will use this form:

| | | | | | |
|---|--|---|--------------------------|---|--|
| Owner Name: | | Visit Date: 2021-04-14 | | | |
| Address: | | Assessor: | | | |
| Sub HOA: Owner Maintained | | | | | |
| Completion Due by August 31st 2021 | | Completion Due by August 31st 2022 | | | |
| Zone 1 0'-5' | Junipers removed. | Yes | Zone 1 0'-5' | Tree limbs extending into this 0-5' ignition zone around home removed. | |
| | Plants on OVA flammable "Do Not Plant" list removed. | Yes | | | |
| | Allowed shrubs healthy & cleaned of dead wood. | Yes | | | Dead & dying branches overhanging roof removed. |
| | Wood & rubber mulches removed. | Yes | | | Healthy overhanging branches & limbs trimmed to >6' from roof or structures and 10' from chimney. |
| Zone 1 Notes: | | | | | |
| Zone 2 5'-30' | Dead branches removed from trees & shrubs. | Yes | Zone 2 5'-30' | Junipers removed. | |
| | Dead trees & shrubs removed. | Yes | | | Dead branches removed from trees & shrubs. |
| | Wildland grasses cut/mowed to 4" | Yes | | | Dead trees & shrubs removed. |
| | Finely shredded redwood & cedar bark removed (gorilla hair, rubber mulch). | Yes | | | Wildland grasses cut/mowed to 4" |
| | | | | Ladder fuel removed from areas under tree canopies, making it free of weeds & dry plant material. Shrubs should be pruned so that they do not create ladder fuel. | |

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1.

2.

3.

4.

Zone 1: 0-5' by August 31 2021

1.

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|------------------------------------|--|-----|
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Zone 1: 0-5'

August 31, 2021

What goes?



Source: <https://Do Not Plant List/article/do-not-plant-list-2/>

Do Not Plant List

[Click Here For A Printable / Searchable Version: Oakmont Do Not Plant List](#)

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Oakmont Do Not Plant List

| Common Name | Botanical Name | Common Name | Botanical Name |
|------------------------|--|----------------------------|---|
| <u>Trees</u> | | <u>Shrubs/Vines</u> | |
| Acacia | <i>Acacia</i> spp. | Bamboo | <i>ALL genera</i> |
| Arborvitae | <i>Thuja</i> spp. | Bluebeard | <i>Caryopteris</i> spp. |
| Australian tea tree | <i>Leptospermum laevigatum</i> | Broom | <i>ALL genera</i> |
| Black walnut | <i>Juglans nigra</i> | California buckwheat | <i>Eriogonum fasciculatum</i> |
| California bay | <i>Umbellularia californica</i> | Chamise or greasewood | <i>Adenostoma fasciculatum</i> |
| California pepper tree | <i>Schinus molle</i> | Chaparral pea | <i>Pickeringia montana</i> |
| Cedar | <i>Cedrus</i> spp. | Coyote brush | <i>Baccharis</i> spp. |
| Cypress | <i>Cupressus</i> spp. | Evergreen huckleberry | <i>Vaccinium ovatum</i> |
| Eucalyptus | <i>Eucalyptus</i> spp. | Gas plant | <i>Dictamnus albus</i> |
| False cypress | <i>Chamaecyparis</i> spp. | Gorse | <i>Ulex europaeus</i> |
| Fir | <i>Abies</i> spp. | Honeysuckle | <i>Lonicera japonica</i> 'Halliana' |
| Giant chinquapin | <i>Chrysolepis chrysophylla</i> | Hopbush or hopseed bush | <i>Dodonaea viscosa</i> |
| Hemlock | <i>Tsuga</i> spp. | Juniper | <i>Juniperus</i> spp. |
| Honeylocust | <i>Gleditsia triacanthos</i> | Manzanita | <i>Arctostaphylos</i> spp. (Ground cover variety okay) |
| Juniper | <i>Juniperus</i> spp. | New Zealand tea tree | <i>Leptospermum scoparium</i> |
| Leyland cypress | <i>Cupressus x leyandii</i> (used as a hedge) | Rosemary | <i>Rosmarinus</i> spp. |
| Palm | <i>ALL genera</i> | Sagebrush | <i>Artemisia californica</i> |
| Paperbark tree | <i>Melaleuca</i> spp. | Scrub oak | <i>Quercus berberidifolia</i> |
| Pine | <i>Pinus</i> spp. | Grevillea | <i>Grevillea noellii</i> |
| Spruce | <i>Picea</i> spp. | Yew | <i>Taxus</i> spp. (Also a tree) |
| Sweet gum | <i>Liquidambar styraciflua</i> | | |
| Tamarisk | <i>Tamarix</i> spp. | | |
| Tan Oak | <i>Notholithocarpus densiflorus</i> | | |
| Tree of heaven | <i>Ailanthus altissima</i> | | |

(Fourth Revision - 8/19/2018)
(1/31/2021- Title and Spelling Corrections only)

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Zone 1: 0-5'

August 31, 2021

Remove Junipers



Zone 1: 0-5'

August 31, 2021

[Click to view Photo Guide](#)

**Photo Guide to the OVA Do Not Plant List
for the
0-5 Foot Defensible Space Zone**

by

The Oakmont Firewise Safety Committee

First Edition: 3/19/21

Zone 1: 0-5'

August 31, 2021

What goes and what stays?

✳️ Prune all dead wood from allowable plants.

✳️ Keep healthy plants lean and green



Zone 1: 0-5'

August 31, 2021

No Gorilla Hair, wood or rubber mulch allowed.
Replace with hardscape or leave just dirt.



Zone 2: 5-30'

August 31, 2021

2.

| | | |
|--------------------------|--|------------|
| Zone 2 5'-30' | Dead branches removed from trees & shrubs. | Yes |
| | Dead trees & shrubs removed. | Yes |
| | Wildland grasses cut/mowed to 4" | Yes |
| | Finely shredded redwood & cedar bark removed (gorilla hair, rubber mulch). | Yes |

Zone 2: 5-30'

August 31, 2021

Prune dead
wood and
branches
from trees.



Zone 2: 5-30'

August 31, 2021

Remove
dead trees &
shrubs



Zone 2: 5-30'

August 31, 2021

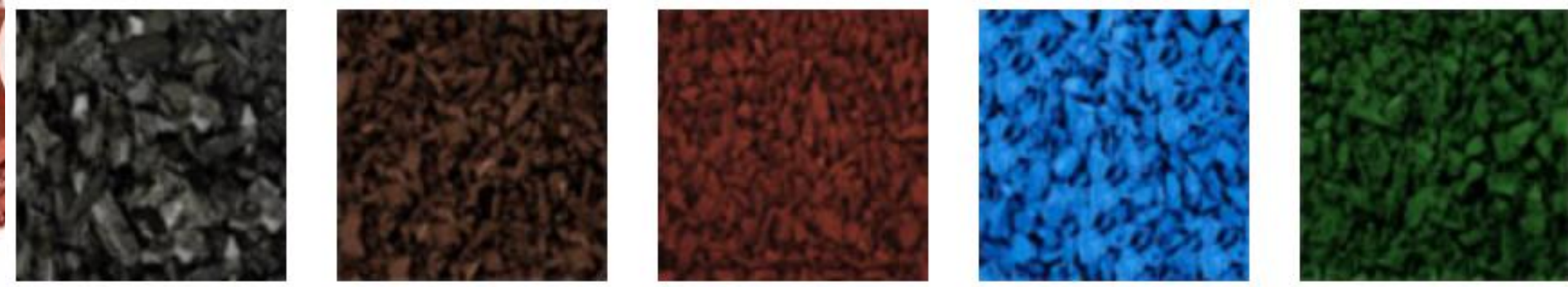
Cut or mow
wildland
grasses to 4"



Zone 2: 5-30'

August 31, 2021

Finely shredded redwood and cedar bark (gorilla hair, rubber mulch) NOT allowed



Rubber mulch is a fire hazard -- it burns at a much higher temperature than natural mulches and belches toxic smoke.

Use of Wood Mulches

These Guidelines are based on the Nevada mulch study, conversations with Dr. Stephen Quarles (co-author of the Nevada study) and Steven Swain (a compost specialist), and professional landscapers

Firewise Committee: firewise@oakmontvillage.com

Recommendations on the Use of Wood Mulches in the Landscape

The ecological benefits of wood mulches are many such as soil enhancement, water conservation, weed control and aesthetics. Unfortunately, wood mulches also present fire hazards which must be considered, especially in the dense neighborhoods of Oakmont.

This information reflects the best advice from respected experts.

It must be emphasized that any wood mulch can be ignited by embers or a ground fire and possibly carry a fire to a structure. Some wood mulches are more dangerous than others, but caution must be used when applying any type of wood mulch.

1) In the 0-5 feet from buildings and attached decks:

- No wood or rubber mulches are allowed.
- Rock or gravel mulches are acceptable.

2) In the 5 ft zone and further zones:

- No redwood or cedar gorilla hair mulches or rubber mulches are allowed.
- It is highly recommended that dyed wood mulches are not used.
- Other wood mulches are allowed such as Arbor Mulch. Note: larger size wood mulches over 1 inch in size are harder to ignite from embers so their use is encouraged.
- Organic compost products may be used as a mulch, but they can smolder and carry a hidden fire danger.
- Avoid putting Wood mulches immediately adjacent to a deck, fence or other structures made from combustible materials.
- Leaves are a natural beneficial mulch for plants but limit their depth to 2 inches.

3) Wood mulches shall not be applied deeper than 3 inches.

4) Regardless of the type of wood mulch used, wood mulch should not be installed in a widespread or continuous manner. Meaning wood mulched areas shall be separated by creating islands in between wood mulch areas, of plantings, shrubs or breaks of hardscape elements such as concrete, gravel, rock or lawns or other noncombustible material.

5) Wood and Rock Samples must be presented to the Architectural Committee along with a landscape plan, before their installation. The size and noncombustible areas will depend on site specific conditions.

The main goal of these recommendation is to implement what, Stephen Quarles, expert on how building materials perform and how different building designs fare in wildfires. is very clear about, which is that “any wooden mulch product can ignite from embers” and thus his recommendation about isolating wood mulched areas in the landscape.

What happens in 2022?

Zone 1: 0-5'

August 31, 2022

| Completion Due by August 31st 2022 | |
|------------------------------------|---|
| Zone 1 0'-5' | Tree limbs extending into this 0-5' ignition zone around home removed. |
| | Dead & dying branches overhanging roof removed. |
| | Healthy overhanging branches & limbs trimmed to >6' from roof or structures and 10' from chimney. |

3.

Zone 1: 0-5'

August 31, 2022

Remove tree limbs that extend into the 0-5' zone.



Zone 1: 0-5'

August 31, 2022

Remove dead
and dying
branches
overhanging
the roof.



Zone 1: 0-5'

August 31, 2022

Trim healthy overhanging branches and limbs to 6 feet or more from the roof or structures and 10 feet or more from chimneys.



Zone 2: 5-30'

August 31, 2022

| | | |
|--------------------------------|---|--|
| Zone 2 5'-30' | Junipers removed. | |
| | Dead branches removed from trees & shrubs. | |
| | Dead trees & shrubs removed. | |
| | Wildland grasses cut/mowed to 4" | |
| | Ladder fuel removed from areas under tree canopies, making it free of weeds & dry plant material. Shrubs should be pruned so that they do not create ladder fuel. | |

4.

Zone 2: 5-30'

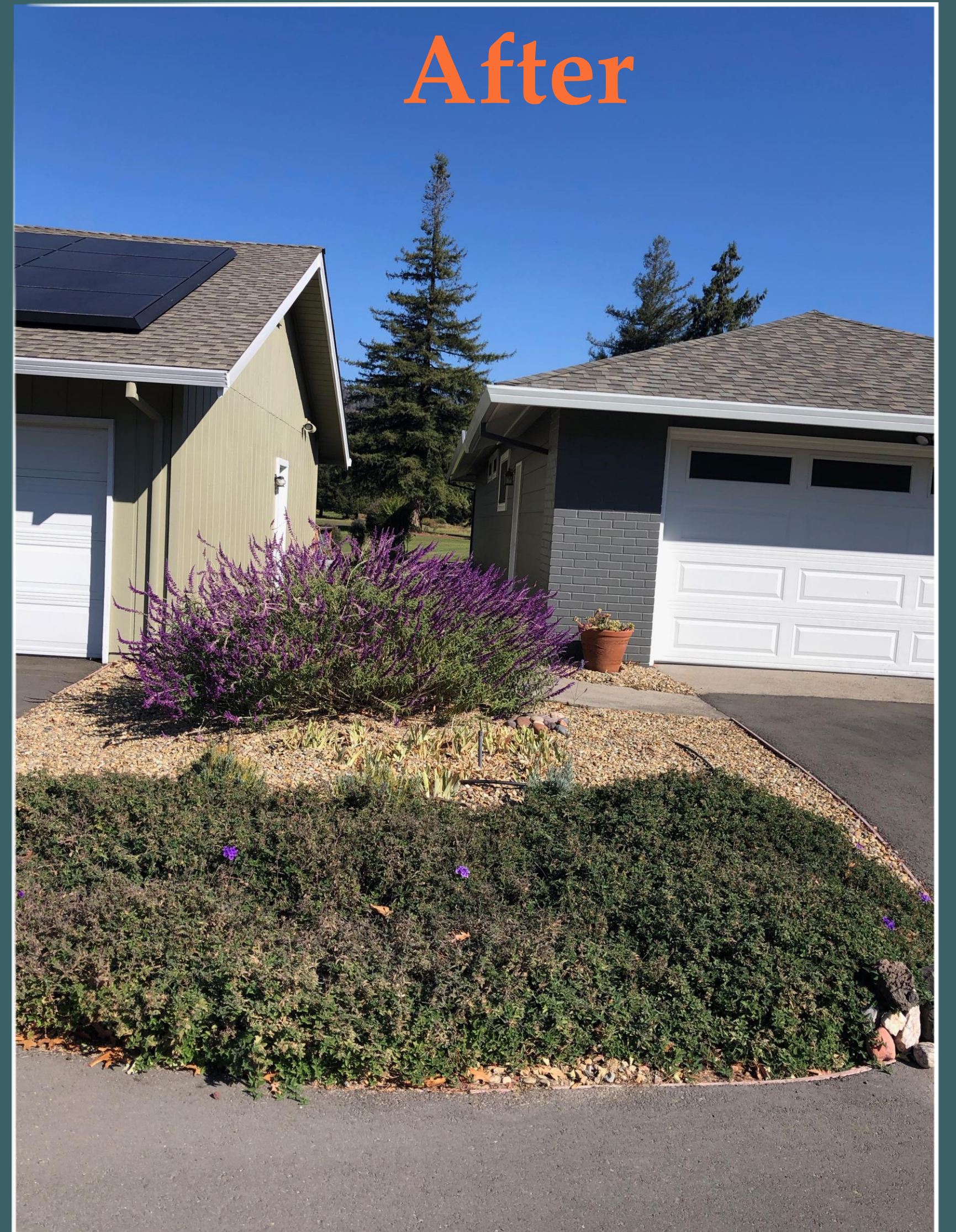
August 31, 2022

Before

Remove
Junipers



After



Zone 2: 5-30'

August 31, 2022

Remove dead branches from trees and shrubs.



Zone 2: 5-30'

August 31, 2022

Remove
dead trees
and shrubs.



Zone 2: 5-30'

August 31, 2022

Every year cut,
mow wildland
grasses to 4"



Zone 2: 5-30'

August 31, 2022

Remove all ladder fuel from areas under tree canopies.

Keep area free of weeds and dry plant material.

Prune shrubs under trees.



Zone 2: 0-5' and 5-30'

August 31, 2022

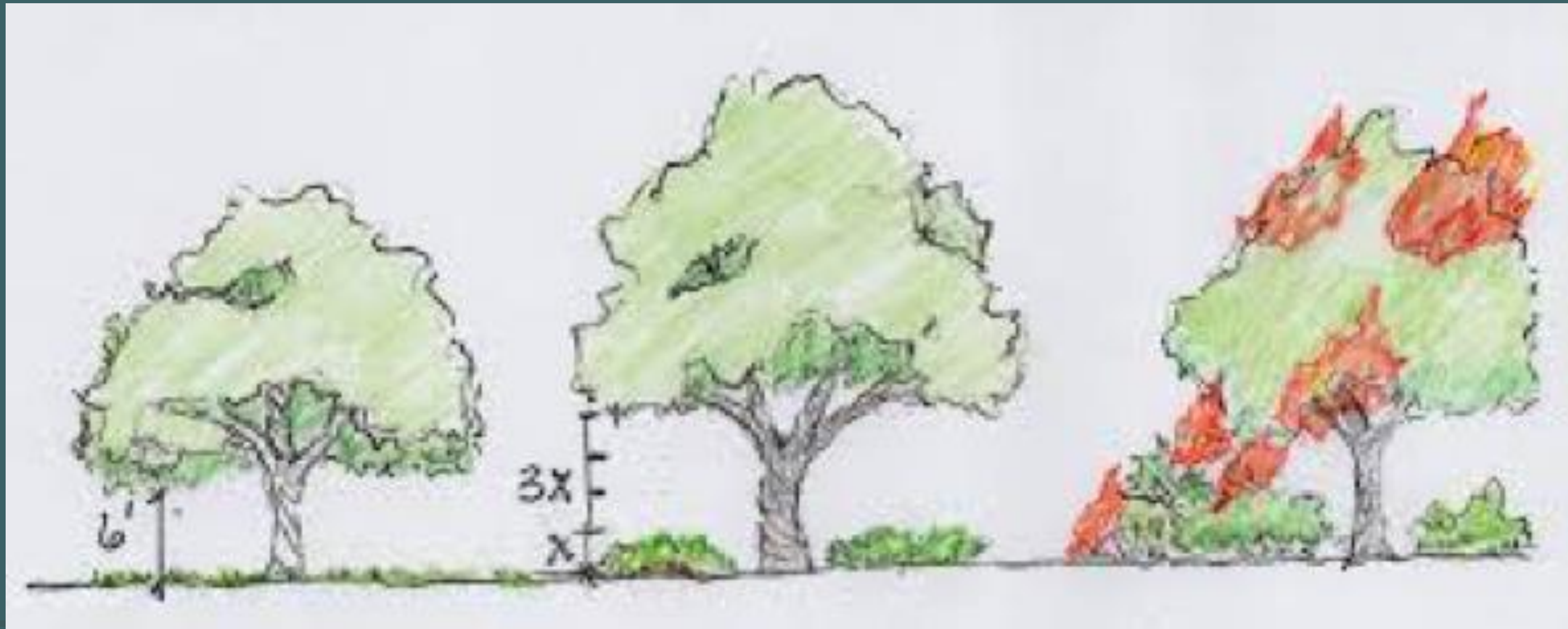
Remove Ladder fuel!



Zone 2: 0-5' and 5-30'

August 31, 2022

Limb up trees to 6' or more and remove ladder fuel.



Rock as Mulch

Rock can be used as mulch between plants.



Rock as Mulch

But there have to be some plants!
(1 plant every 25 sq ft.)



Fill out an application!
 Any plants being removed or installed require an approved application from the Architectural Office.

[Click to visit the OVA Architectural Page](#)

**Oakmont Village Association
 Architectural Application
 Buff Form**

Sub: ____ Lot: ____

Owner (Applicant): _____ Phone Number: _____

Property Address: _____ Zip: _____

Mailing Address (if different than above): _____ Zip: _____

Email Address: _____ Sub-HOA (Yes / No) Sub-HOA Name: _____

Is this request in response to a violation letter sent to you? Yes No

Proposed Start Date: ____ / ____ / ____ When any work starts on this project it shall be completed by ____ / ____ / ____
 (Entered by AC)

Modification or Addition Requesting:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Attached/Detached Structure/Building | <input type="checkbox"/> Solar | <input type="checkbox"/> Shed |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fence | <input type="checkbox"/> Exterior Modifications (doors/windows, etc.) | <input type="checkbox"/> New Construction |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Landscaping | <input type="checkbox"/> Paint | <input type="checkbox"/> Pool/Spa |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Patio/Arbor/Dock | <input type="checkbox"/> Retaining Wall | <input type="checkbox"/> Satellite Dish |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Roof/Siding | <input type="checkbox"/> Golf Screen | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

Brief description of and reason for request: _____

Please make sure you have attached / included all of the following information:

- o A completed Application (including your signature below and on the next page under the Owner Acknowledgement)
- o A description of the project, including height, width and depth, colors, etc.
- o A complete materials list of the project, including paint samples and/or stain color
- o A picture or drawing of the intended/existing project (sketches, clippings, catalog illustrations and other data)
- o A site plan showing the location of the house along with any other structures on your lot and the proposed structure (including dimensions from the property line or other structures)
- o A complete Statement By Board of Governors To Approve Application By Homeowner if part of a Sub-HOA

State Law requires that contractors performing work totaling \$500 or more (including materials and labor) must be licensed by the Contractors State License Board (CSLB)

Applications and documents may be submitted via email to clerk@oakmontvillage.com, dropped off at the AC door used site, or mailed to the attention of the Architectural Office at 6687 Oakmont Dr., Suite A-1, Santa Rosa, CA 95408

Owner/Applicant Signature: _____

For Office / Committee Use Only:

Date Application Received: ____ / ____ / ____

Stipulations / Comments / Suggestions: _____

Site Visit Date: ____ / ____ / ____

Signature 1: _____ Signature 2: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / ____

JUNK

THE

JUNNIPIERS



NEXT

JUNK THE JUNIPERS

May 5-10

Next
Junk the Junipers
May 5-10

Junipers ONLY
No root balls, dirt or loose leaves

Need suggestions for people that do hauling?
Contact firewise@oakmontvillage.com

**Next are the most commonly
asked questions that are asked.**

0-5' Defensible Space - FAQ

1.

Q. Why is the 0-5 ft zone so crucial?

- ✱ Direct flame (burning plants 2.5 times the height).
 - ✱ Radiant heat from burning plants next to the house can cause entry of fire into house.
 - ✱ Ember showers from close plants into vents/cracks in the house.
 - ✱ Firefighter space to protect your home
-

0-5' Defensible Space - FAQ

2.

Q. What is home hardening?

- ☒ Addresses the most vulnerable components of your home - roof, vents, gutters, windows, gutter guards, etc.
 - ☒ Near-home ignition (0-5' zone)
-

0-5' Defensible Space - FAQ

3.

Q. Which plants have to be removed in the 0 to 5 foot defensible zone by August 31st, 2021?

Anything on the ["Do Not Plant" list](#)

0-5' Defensible Space - FAQ

4.


Q. Can I add new plants in the 0 to 5 foot zone?

Yes—but new approved plantings must be kept at 18” or less & be irrigated.

0-5' Defensible Space - FAQ

5.

Q. I have existing shrubs that are not on the “Do Not Plant” list in the 0 to 5 foot zone. Can I keep them?

 Yes, you may keep shrubs. But it is suggested that you remove them especially from in front of windows because of the risk of glass cracking if these shrubs catch fire.

0-5' Defensible Space - FAQ

6.

Q. When do Junipers need to be removed?

☒ Junipers in the 0-5 ft zone must be removed by **August 31, 2021.**

☒ Junipers more than 5 ft from the home must be removed by **August 31 2022.**

0-5' Defensible Space - FAQ

7.

Q. Can I keep the tall shrubs under my roof eaves if they are not on the “Do Not Plant” list?

✳ Yes, but it's highly recommended to cut them back significantly or remove to be safer.

0-5' Defensible Space - FAQ

8.

Q. What kind of mulch can I use?

☒ Rock, gravel, decomposed granite, pavers or raw dirt can be used in the 0 to 5 ft zone

☒ Composted mulch, Arbor Mulch, thicker pieces of bark that is 1 inch or larger are allowed beyond the 0 to 5 ft zone

(Note: no rubber mulch, gorilla hair or finely shredded redwood or cedar bark allowed anywhere on the property.)

0-5' Defensible Space - FAQ

9.

Q. Can I leave the less flammable bark or woodchips in the 0–5-foot Defensible Space Zone?

-  No wood chips or bark of any kind are allowed in the 0-5 ft zone. It must be removed from this most vulnerable zone by August 31, 2021

0-5' Defensible Space - FAQ

10.

Q. Can I just have bare dirt in the 0-5 ft zone?

Yes. But regardless, the area needs to be kept clean of leaves & flammable plant debris

New Firewise Landscaping Policy key points:

0-5 foot zone by August 2021:

- ✳ No junipers
- ✳ No bark or rubber mulch
- ✳ No new plants more than 18 " high & must be irrigated
- ✳ No plants can remain that are on the "Do Not Plant" list

0-5 foot zone by August 2022:

- ✳ Tree limbs 6 feet from house; 10 feet from chimney
 - ✳ No ladder fuel under existing trees
 - ✳ Tree branches limbed up from ground
 - ✳ All dead & dying trees removed
-

Firewise committee is hosting a
Garden Tour in June or July showing
selected Oakmont homes with
firewise landscaping.

Firewise Committee:
firewise@oakmontvillage.com

Thank you for making
Oakmont a safer place to live!

Q&A

Firewise Committee: firewise@oakmontvillage.com
