



FIRESAFE PLANTING CHECKLIST

Planting and maintaining firesafe vegetation is very important to help resist the spread of fire on your grounds and to your home. Many fire-resistant plantings are natives that have evolved in our region to be drought-tolerant and to conserve water. These can provide wildfire protection while adding value to your property.

CHOOSE FIRE-RESISTANT VEGETATION

Fire-resistant plants typically have a high moisture content, larger leaves and grow lower to the ground. Their leaves and stems contain lower levels of sap or resin. Deciduous trees that shed their leaves every fall are generally more fire-resistant than evergreens. This is because they have a higher moisture content when leaves are present and a lower volume of fuel when the leaves have fallen off.

Keep in mind through that there is no such thing as a fire-proof natural plant or tree. Any vegetation can burn when exposed to high enough temperatures and flames, especially if they are allowed to dry out. Still, many plants and trees are much more fire-resistant than others and are the species you want to concentrate on for your property.

Other important considerations when selecting vegetation for your property include of course appearance, maintenance requirements, ability to limit erosion, attractiveness to pollinators and habitat for wildlife.



EXAMPLES OF FIRE-RESISTANT VEGETATION (COMMON NAMES) INCLUDE:

PLANTS & SHRUBS

- ✓ Aloe
- ✓ Bush Anemone
- ✓ California Poppy
- ✓ California Red Bud
- ✓ Common Lippia
- ✓ Coreopsis
- ✓ Cotoneaster
- ✓ Creeping Thyme
- ✓ Fuchsia
- ✓ Lamb's Ear
- ✓ Lantana
- ✓ Lavender
- ✓ Lilac
- ✓ Monkey Flower
- ✓ Ornamental Strawberry
- ✓ Rhododendron
- ✓ Rockrose
- ✓ Sage
- ✓ Society Garlic
- ✓ Yarrow
- ✓ Yellow Ice Plant
- ✓ Yerba Buena

TREES

- ✓ Ash
- ✓ Beech
- ✓ Citrus
- ✓ Elm
- ✓ Ironwood
- ✓ Maple
- ✓ Oaks

Check with your local nursery, landscape contractor or resources such as the California Native Plant Society (www.cnps.org) for advice on fire-resistant plants that are suited for your area.

Firesafe Marin (www.firesafemarin.org) also provides an extensive list of fire-resistant as well as fire-prone plants.

REMOVE FIRE-PRONE VEGETATION



Fire-prone plants, shrubs and trees have unfortunately been planted in our area over many years. Juniper, cypress, pampas grass and bamboo are very flammable and should be removed if at all possible. These plants are notorious for the amount of dead fuel that accumulates inside them and their low moisture content.



Trees including eucalyptus, pine and cedar are also fire-prone and should be removed or maintained aggressively for fire resistance. These trees can be high in oil or sap content, have peeling bark that can become firebrands or have volatile, needle-like leaves that easily catch fire.



Understand that highly flammable plants can catch on fire quickly and release a lot of heat, even if they are healthy and well-watered. And in areas experiencing drought, even moderately flammable plants, shrubs and trees can become more prone to ignite and burn. The risk associated with any one type of vegetation can be reduced with regular maintenance, but the best option is to limit or remove fire-prone plants from your property.

EXAMPLES OF FIRE-PRONE VEGETATION (COMMON NAMES) INCLUDE:

PLANTS & SHRUBS

- | | | |
|----------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| X Algerian Ivy | X Coyote Brush | X Juniper |
| X Bamboo | X Fountain Grass | X Pampas Grass |
| X Black Sage | X French Broom | X Rosemary |
| X Chamise | X Gas Plant | X Scotch Broom |
| X Chaparral Pea | X Hemlock | X Toyon |
| X Coastal Sagebrush | X Huckleberry | X Yew |

TREES

- X** Acacia
- X** Cedar
- X** Cypress
- X** Eucalyptus
- X** Manzanita
- X** Pines

PLANT SMART



Placement and maintenance of plants, shrubs and trees can be as important as actual plant selection (see OCP&R Guide #13 – Defensible Space and Landscaping for Fire Safety).

Maintain vegetation throughout the year and especially during the dry season, and limit the amount of leaves and needles laying on the ground.

Do not have any vegetation within 5' of your home!



OCP&R is a program of the Oakland Firesafe Council

Contact OCP&R for more information and assistance with the firesafe planting checklist

Thanking Firesafe Marin and the CNPS for their contribution to this content. Version 1.1 7/21/20

OAKLAND COMMUNITY PREPAREDNESS & RESPONSE

www.oaklandcpandr.org | 510.575.0916 | info@oaklandcpandr.org