



## Fire Hazard Mitigation Standard

### Standard

2018 International Fire Code  
304.1.2 Richland Municipal Code,  
Title 10.04.040

### Practice

The Fire Marshal or designee may determine a fire hazard exists on a property.

A fire hazard may be created by the deposit, accumulation, existence, or growth of any dead or dry weeds, grasses, vegetation, or other like combustible materials of any kind.

Wildland/Urban interface boundaries may be exempt as determined by the Fire Marshal or designee.

It is the responsibility of an owner or person in charge of a property to cut down or remove grass, shrubbery, brush, and bushes that may present a fire hazard or that has been determined to be a fire hazard.

The City may require additional or more stringent abatement on certain properties because of special conditions with terrain, land use, growth, location, or the fire history of the property.

The abatement standards apply to all properties, including vacant and unimproved lots, and lots with vacant structures, throughout the year.

#### **Lots less than 1 acre in size:**

- Shall be maintained completely free of dry grass and weeds that exceed 6 inches in height.

#### **Lots over 1 acre and less than 5 acres, or over 5 acres with structures:**

- Remove all dry grass and weeds to less than 6" in height. All other flammable debris must be removed within 30 feet of structures and within 30 feet of any streets and property lines of improved lots as determined by the Fire Marshal's Office.

#### **Unimproved parcels in excess of 5 acres:**

- Maintain a 30 feet continuous strip (fire break) around the perimeter of the lot by mowing, hoeing, disking, or cutting and removing all material so cleared in order prevent the travel of fire through the break.

## Urban Interface Requirements

Wild-land areas are areas which are undeveloped, uncultivated or unfit for cultivation, wasteland or desert, or which are any combination of these descriptions and which are deemed by the Fire Code Official as a hazard for wild fire purposes. The following requirements apply to buildings and structures constructed on, in, or near wild-land areas:

- a. All structures within 30 feet of a property line adjoining a wild-land area shall have noncombustible siding, soffit, and skirting on the side adjacent to the wild-land area when the wild-land area is in excess of five contiguous acres. This requirement shall not apply to interior lots of platted parcels of land and development phases whose streets are accessible and whose water system is operational.
- b. Decks and porches 36 inches or less in height shall have skirting if within 30 feet of adjacent wild-land areas when the wild-land area is in excess of five contiguous acres. Skirting shall be sufficiently constructed so as not to allow the accumulation of combustible material under the deck or porch. The area under the deck or porch shall not be used for storage.
- c. When determined by the Fire marshal, noncombustible siding or soffit material shall be required on the downhill side(s) of a structure that is within 30 feet of a grade that is 15 percent or greater in steepness. The grade shall be determined by the predominate slope on the downhill side measured from the structure or building and extending a maximum of 300 feet.

## Guide

Our neighborhoods are the environment in which we live, raise our families, and conduct business. The threat of fire impacts the quality of life our community enjoys. The primary goal of this policy is prevent fire hazards, particularly those that may become extreme during the fire season, which typically runs from April 15 through September 30.

Property owners and managers are expected to pay careful attention to minimizing the risk of fire on their property year round, through sound management practices of combustible materials, such as those described for Firewise Communities.

See: <https://www.nfpa.org/Public-Education/Fire-causes-and-risks/Wildfire/Firewise-USA>

Over 350,000 brush, grass, and forest fires occur in the U.S. each year. More than one-third of these are grass fires and 9% (31,500) occur at one- or two-family homes.

Proactive mitigation of fire hazards improves the quality of life in our community and ensures that tax payer's resources are used appropriately and efficiently.