

Mulches

Consider gravel and rock mulches in the immediate zone next to buildings.

Mature or well-decomposed compost is FireSmart and beneficial for fire-resistant plants. It helps keep moisture in the ground and protects plants from frost or drying out in the heat.

Bark, pine needles, and other plant-based mulches can be flammable and should not be used in the immediate zone next to buildings.

Maintenance

A properly maintained property not only keeps plants healthy, it also reduces fire risk.

Watering: Infrequent deep watering will encourage deep rooting and keep more moisture in the ground.

Mowing: Keep grass between 5 and 10 centimetres. If too short, grass will dry out more quickly; if too long, it will burn more intensely. Consider leaving grass clippings on the lawn. Clippings are mostly water and help nourish the soil.

Pruning: Remove dead plant material. Prune all lower tree branches 2 metres from the ground. Prune tree branches away from your roof.

General:

- ✓ Pile firewood, leaves, or dead materials at least 10m away from buildings.
- ✓ Remove all combustibles from the 1.5 m immediate zone around the exterior of your home.
- ✓ Keep roofs and gutters clear of debris.



FireSmart™
Plant Program

FireSmart™ BC Landscaping Tips

Together we can
build a **FireSmart BC.**

Happy landscaping!



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Wildfire spreads to structures by embers landing on materials that will readily ignite, and by following a fuel pathway from a forest or grassland to your home.

Immediate Zone: Make sure you maintain a 1.5 metre immediate zone around your entire home, deck, and any accessory buildings.

Intermediate Zone: From 1.5 metres to 10 metres of a building is next in priority. FireSmart plants may be used in this space.

Extended Zone: Regularly clean up accumulations of plant debris to reduce surface fuels.

FireSmart BC Landscaping

Being FireSmart is about living with wildfires and managing for it on our landscapes.

FireSmart landscaping includes designing, installing, and maintaining landscapes in a way that improves wildfire resilience.

By making some strategic choices in your yard, you can increase the wildfire resiliency of your property.

FireSmart methods have proven to reduce the risk of losses, even under the most extreme fire conditions.

Design

Slow the spread of fire by spacing out your trees.

Use decorative rock, pathways, retaining walls.

Incorporate ponds and streams or dry creek beds.

A healthy green lawn is an effective fuel break. Try using clovers to keep your lawn green with less water.

Be wary of **fuel ladders:** these are live or dead vegetation that allow a fire to climb up the landscape onto buildings or into the tree canopy. Common fuel ladders include tall grasses, shrubs, and tree branches.

Plant Selection

Making FireSmart choices for plants will reduce risk of structure loss due to wildfire. FireSmart selections can be compatible with conserving water and attracting pollinators.

The FireSmart BC Plant Chart can be found online and in the FireSmart BC Landscaping Guide. It's important to remember that while FireSmart plants are more resilient to fire, there are no fireproof plants. There are certain highly flammable plants that should be avoided such as cedars and junipers. But there are also plants that take longer to ignite than others and these are considered fire-resistant (i.e. FireSmart).

In an ecosystem, everything is connected. Be mindful about using native plants, avoiding invasive species, and considering pollinators and wildlife food needs in your area.



Visit firesmartbc.ca/landscaping-hub/fire-resistant-plants to see our chart of fire-resistant plants.