



**VENTURA COUNTY
FIRE DEPARTMENT**

April 3, 2025

FIRE RISK AND HAZARD REDUCTION

MOUNTAIN FIRE



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Mountain Fire 2024

MOUNTAIN FIRE

- **11/06/24 at 8:51 AM**
- **19,904** – Total acres
- **243** - Structures destroyed
- **0** - Deaths



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MOUNTAIN FIRE - AFTERMATH



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Mountain Fire 2024

PALISADES FIRE



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Palisades Fire 2025

PALISADES FIRE

- **1/07/25 at 10:30 AM**
- **23,448** – Total acres
- **6,837** - Structures destroyed
- **9** - Deaths



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PALISADES FIRE - AFTERMATH



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EATON FIRE



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EATON FIRE

- **1/07/25 at 6:18 PM**
- **14,021** – Total acres
- **9,418** - Structures destroyed
- **25** - Deaths



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EATON FIRE - AFTERMATH



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Eaton Fire 2025

OUR FIRE RISK



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Thomas Fire 2017

OUR FIRE RISK



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Woolsey Fire 2018

OUR FIRE RISK

- Drought conditions have increased the risk of wildfires.
- 2022-24 rains have created a different fuel type within our wildlands
- Extreme wind events – *Particularly Dangerous Situation*
- Many of the state's largest fires have taken place in the past six years
- In 2017, the Thomas Fire here in Ventura County was the largest fire in state history, it's now No. 9 !



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INCREASING RESPONSE CAPACITY



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- Firehawk helicopters added in 2021

INCREASING RESPONSE CAPACITY



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- VCFD & SCE fund a Heavy helitanker

INCREASING RESPONSE CAPACITY



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- Fourth crew for 2023
- Continual training to maintain expertise

PREVENTION EFFORTS

- VCFD supports five Fire Safe Councils across the county
- We work with them and other groups to educate people about how to further reduce their homes' fire risk
- This means maintaining proper defensible space and hardening your home against embers with fire resistant materials, vent screens and other equipment



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PREVENTION EFFORTS

Defensible Space

- VCFD's Fire Hazard Reduction Program is nationally recognized for reducing the risk to homes and businesses
- Notices sent to about 18,800 properties in April, outlining the minimum vegetation management requirements
- Residents have been incredibly supportive: More than 99 percent complete the vegetation management



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BRUSH CLEARANCE



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PREVENTION EFFORTS



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Effectiveness of proper defensible space. North Ranch County Club, Westlake

PREVENTION EFFORTS – ZONE 0

- New CA Zone 0 regulations (0-5 feet around structures) Still under development. Target is 2026 for new.
- Legislation for existing structures to retrofit possibly in 2029.
- **March 1, 2025: VCFD Has full Non-Combustible Zone 0 for all new buildings and additions.**
- **If the addition exceeds 150 sq ft, mandatory retrofit for the existing building too.** *(not yet enforcing; focused on education efforts)*



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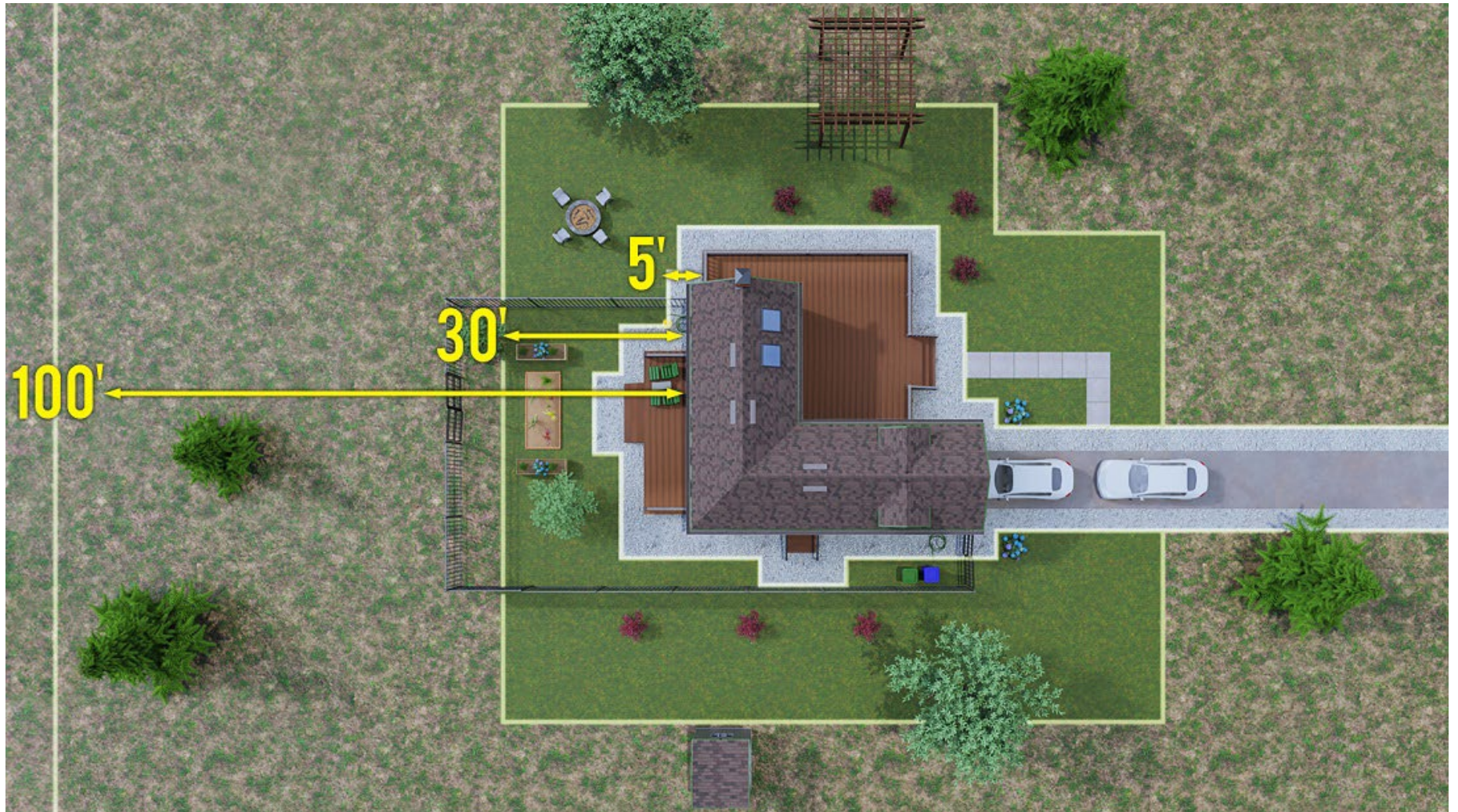
PREVENTION EFFORTS – ZONE 0

- **Zone 0:** Start closest to your home to be ember-resistant
- **Zone 1:** Keep it Lean, Clean and Green within 30 ft
- **Zone 2:** Reduce potential fuel within 100 ft



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DEFENSIBLE SPACE – ZONE 0



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ORNAMENTAL LANDSCAPE - *RISK*



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ORNAMENTAL LANDSCAPE - *RISK*



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ORNAMENTAL LANDSCAPE - *RISK*



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ORNAMENTAL LANDSCAPE - *RISK*



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ZONE 0 - LANDSCAPE



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ZONE 0 - LANDSCAPE



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COMBUSTIBLE FENCING



COMBUSTIBLE FENCING



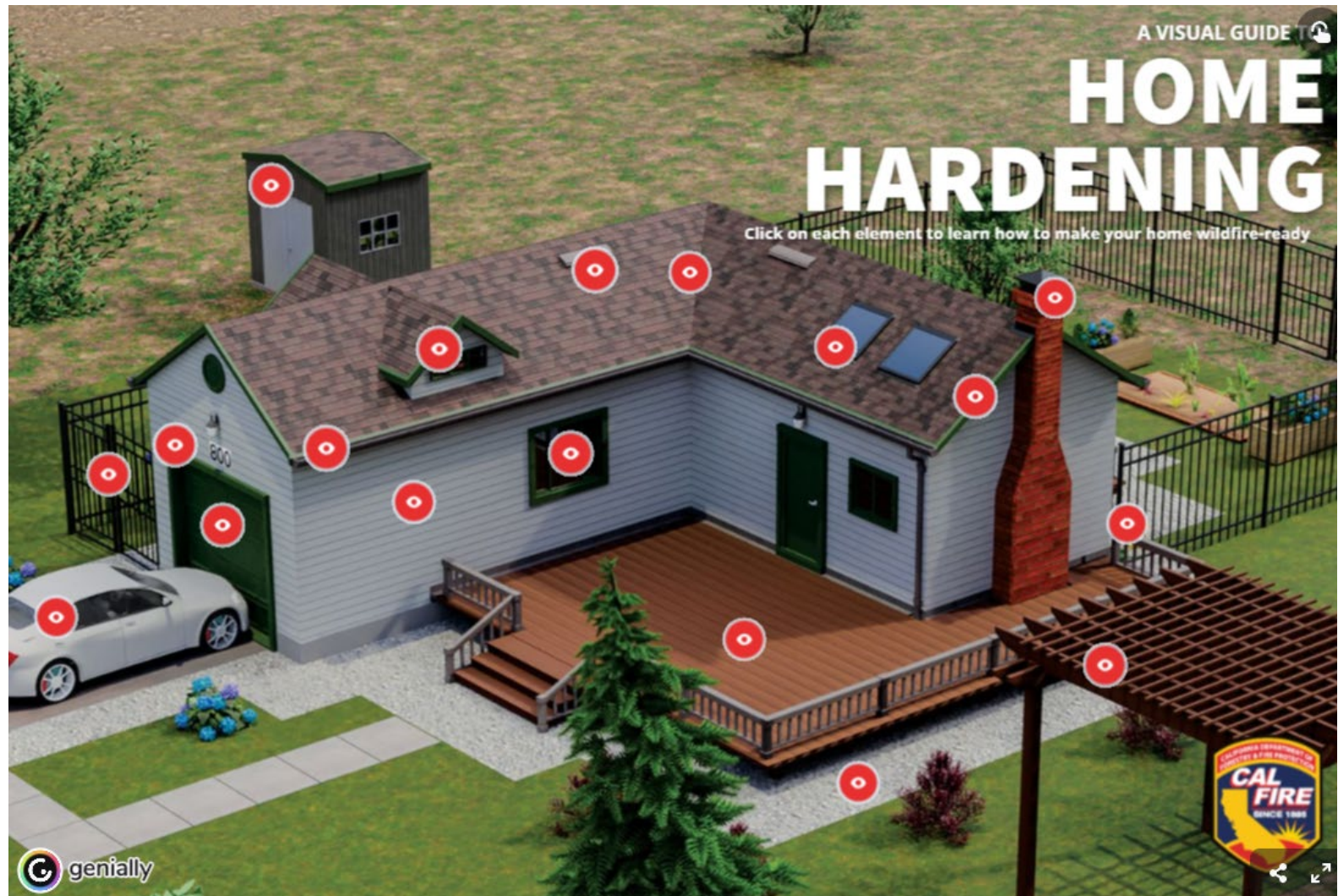
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COMBUSTIBLE FENCING – 5 FT



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HOME HARDENING INSPECTIONS



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HOME HARDENING INSPECTIONS

- Ventura Regional Fire Safe Council
- Venturafiresafe.org
- info@venturafiresafe.org
- 805-746-7365



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FIRE HAZARD SEVERITY ZONES

Public Resources Code 4201-4204 directs the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) to map fire hazard within the State based on fuel loading, slope, fire weather, and other relevant factors present, including areas where winds have been identified by the department as a major cause of wildfire spread. These zones, referred to as Fire Hazard Severity Zones (FHSZ), classify a wildland zone as Moderate, High, or Very High fire hazard based on the average hazard across the area included in the zone.

- VCFD has limited regulatory authority and will make final approval of the new LRA FHSZ map



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FIRE HAZARD SEVERITY ZONES

The FHSZ map evaluates “**Hazard**,” not “**Risk**”.

“**Hazard**” is based on the physical conditions that create a likelihood and expected fire behavior over a 30 to 50-year period without considering mitigation measures such as home hardening, recent wildfire, or fuel reduction efforts.

“**Risk**” is the potential damage a fire can do to the area under existing conditions, accounting for any modifications such as fuel reduction projects, defensible space, and ignition resistant building construction.



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LRA MAPS - WHAT'S COMPLETE

- State Fire Marshal released maps March 10, 2025
 - Updated LRA Very High Fire Hazard Area Maps
 - New: First time LRA moderate and high hazard areas mapped
- Law requires making available to public within 30 days
- VCFD provided link to maps on website and public displays at City Hall's in mid-March



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IMPLICATIONS

- VHFHA's: Expansion of areas where following laws apply:
 - Defensible space
 - Home hardening: Chapter 7A California Building Code
 - AB 38 real estate defensible space inspections
- High Fire Hazard Areas:
 - AB 38 real estate inspections
 - Home hardening: Chapter 7A
- State Board of Forestry Zone 0' regulation applicability



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LRA MAPS - WHAT'S NEXT

- Formal adoption is required by VCFPD as the “local agency providing fire protection services” within the seven incorporated cities of the district and the unincorporated areas of the county.
Ref: GC 51177 & 51179
- VCFD required to adopt within 120 days of 3/10. **VCFD is not recommending added areas beyond SFM proposed.**
- May 13th 1 p.m. – First hearing before Board of Directors
- May 20th 1 p.m. – Second public hearing for adoption
- Maps will be effective July 1, 2025



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STAY INFORMED - VC ALERT

- Have you signed up yet?
- Visit www.vcalert.org to register now to receive future emergency notifications specific to Ventura County.
- We hope you will join us in sharing those safety messages



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STAY INFORMED - VC ALERT

- Stay Informed
- Make a Plan
- Build a Kit
- Get Involved



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VENTURA COUNTY FIREWISE COMMUNITIES



FIREWISE USA®
RESIDENTS REDUCING WILDFIRE RISKS

- VCFD has launched Firewise USA in partnership with our Fire Safe Councils and Calfire
- **Learn about wildfire:** When people are more aware of their risk and better understand their risk, they tend to be more proactive in reducing their risk. Ventura County has a fire history that has shown residents living in and around an environment with frequent wildland fires.
- Firewise is one of 6 items identified in the CA Insurance regulations for wildfire prone areas.
- **Insurance discounts:** Recent evidence suggests that residents of Firewise Communities are less likely to receive letters of “non-renewal”. Many insurance companies provide discounts to homeowners who live in a Firewise recognized community.



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VENTURA COUNTY FIREWISE COMMUNITIES

- VCFD along with FSC and Calfire held a Firewise workshop on August 17, 2023.
- Recording of the workshop is available on the VCFD YouTube page.
- Website: VCFD.org/Firewise
- We hope you will join us in sharing those safety messages




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VENTURA COUNTY FIREWISE COMMUNITIES

SEE ACTIVE CALLS

TRANSLATION

SEARCH...



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WELCOME TO FIREWISE USA® COMMUNITIES



WHAT IS FIREWISE USA®. Firewise USA® is a program that encourages communities to organize at the community level to create fire-adapted communities that meet or exceed current fire space standards.

Why become a Firewise USA® community? Firewise USA® communities are communities that when adequately prepared can withstand a wildfire without the intervention of firefighters. Firefighters do make a stand to save a home, Firewise USA® Communities provide a safer working environment for firefighters.

The goal is to encourage and acknowledge action that can minimize home loss to wildfire. It teaches you to prepare for a fire before it occurs. The program adapts well to small communities, developments, and residential associations of all types, but can work for any neighborhood where motivated homeowners come together to create a safer environment.


The Ventura County Fire Department along with CAL FIRE and local Ventura County Fire Safe Councils can help you with understanding Firewise USA® and how to become a Firewise community. We are available to present to the community in person information about the Firewise program and the benefits of joining the program and can assist with providing free defensible space evaluations.

The Firewise USA® recognition program is administered by the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) and is intended to serve as a resource for city, county, state, federal agencies, tribes, organizations, fire departments and communities that work toward a common goal to reduce loss of life, property, and resources to wildland fire.

The Firewise USA® program emphasizes community/neighborhood responsibility in planning the design of a safe community, as well as an

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<https://vcfd.org/firewise/>

COMMUNITY WILDFIRE PREPAREDNESS

SEE ACTIVE CALLS

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COMMUNITY WILDFIRE PREPAREDNESS

FIRE HAZARD REDUCTION PROGRAM (FHRP)

The Fire Hazard Reduction Program, commonly known as "FHRP", is the cornerstone of our [Fire Hazard Reduction Plan](#). Property owners included in the program will receive an annual "Notice to Abate Fire Hazard". Property owners are expected to maintain their property free of fire hazards or nuisance vegetation year-round. For more information, please visit our [Ventura County Fire Code Chapter 49](#) for specific requirements of the FHRP program. For more information, please contact FHRP at (805) 389-9759 or fhrp@ventura.org.

BRUSH CLEARANCE NOTICE AND REQUIREMENTS

DEFENSIBLE SPACE REQUIREMENTS

Notices to Abate Fire Hazard are mailed on April 20th each year. For more information, see the links below.

- [Frequently Asked Questions](#)
- [Definitions Applicable to Fire Hazard Reduction Program](#)
- [Assessor Parcel Information](#)
- [FHRP Abatement Assessment and Appeal Process](#)
- [Tips for Safe Weed Clearing](#)

Contact FHRP

If you would like to notify the Fire District that your required fire hazard clearance has been completed or to request additional information, [please click here](#).

For information regarding the Fire Hazard Reduction Program, please see the following links:

- [Standard 515 – Defensible Space and Fuel Modification](#)
- [Standard 517 – Mulch and Chips in Defensible Space Zones](#)
- [Guideline 418 – Defensible Space](#)
- [Guideline 420 – Defensible Space Laws and Regulations](#)
- [Guideline 423 – Defensible Space Maintenance Guide](#)
- [Administrative Ruling 23-804 Applicability of the VCFC and VCFD Standard 515](#)
- [Fire Hazard Reduction Program Brochure](#)

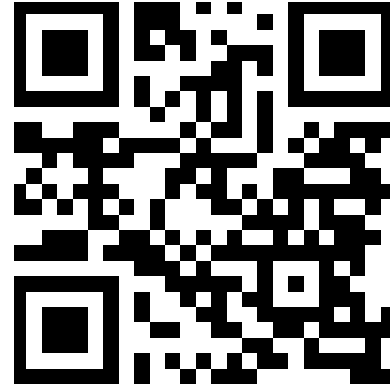
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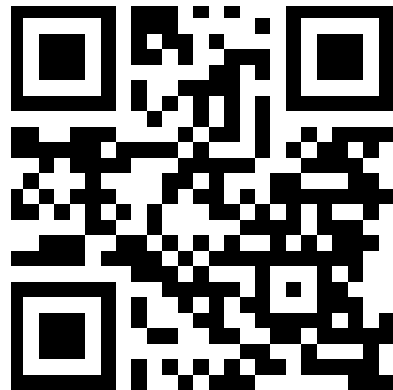
<https://vcfd.org/fire-prevention/fire-hazard-reduction-program-fhrp/>

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- **VCFD.ORG:**



- **VCFHRP.ORG**



VCFD.ORG/FIREWISE:



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ADDITIONAL INFO & LINKS

Palm trees burning:

<https://youtu.be/4ntvLjvtwyQ>

Italian cypress row burning next to house:

https://youtu.be/u3_WdvS87xY

Wood fences burning to houses:

<https://youtu.be/PoPiC3Ugk94>

IBHS Ember storm research:

<https://youtu.be/HjA9yLP1icg>

Fire spotting across street into ornamental landscape:

<https://youtu.be/K5DSwPfiRs8>

Reno grass fire spreads uphill quick:

<https://youtu.be/q7nprYdLM9E>

Additional Information and Resources:

- [VCFPD Wildfire Property Assessment Brochure](#)
- [Building and Living in the Wildland-Urban Interface](#)
- [Sustainable Defensible Space](#)
- [Ventura County Community Wildfire Protection Plan](#)
- [Ready-Set-Go Wildfire Action Plan](#)



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QUESTIONS?



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