

Permit Sonoma Fire Prevention Division

Fire Marshal James Williams

*Vegetation Management Inspection &
Enforcement Program:
Sonoma County Code Ordinance 13A*

Fire Inspector Caerleon Safford

Structural Hardening and Defensible Space

Defensible Space

- PRC 4290, 4291
“Defensible Space”
- Written by the Board of Forestry to protect the forest from house fires.
 - PRC 4290 applies only if there is a building on a property—
“Improved Properties”



Sonoma County Code Ordinance 13A

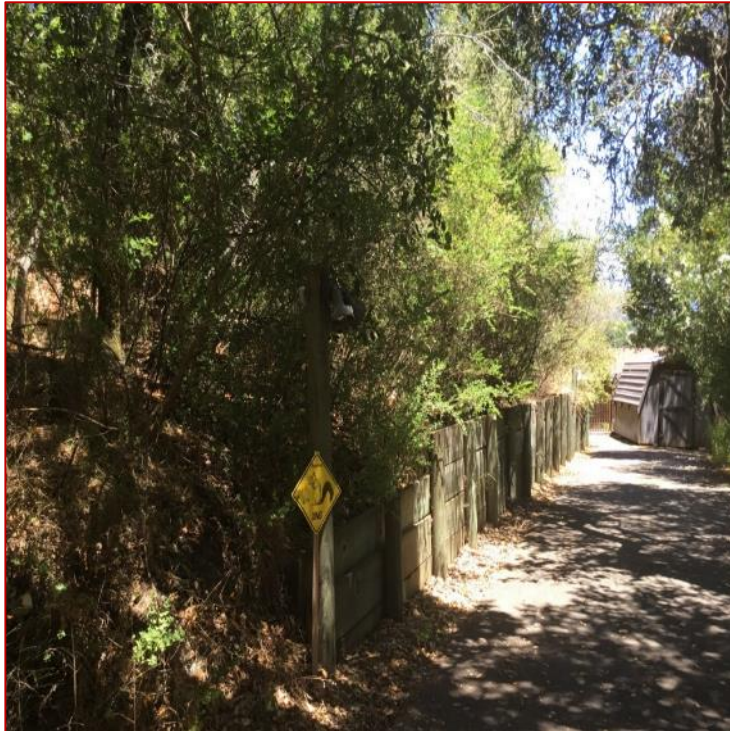
- Allows the County Fire to enforce vegetation management regulations on **improved AND unimproved** parcels
- Order abatement of properties which have been notified of required corrective actions and have not made required improvements.
- Authorizes the county to determine inspection areas based on criteria identified in State Law and Regulations.

Sonoma County Code Ordinance 13A

- Where does Ordinance 13A Apply?
 - Unimproved and improved parcels zoned for five acres or less in unincorporated areas of Sonoma County.
 - On unimproved parcels, the ordinance requires vegetation management:
 - Within 10 feet of roadways or Fire Department Access
 - Within 10 feet of neighboring structures.
 - For improved parcels, requirements mirror those of the PRC.

Chapter 13A: Ordinance at Work

Before



After

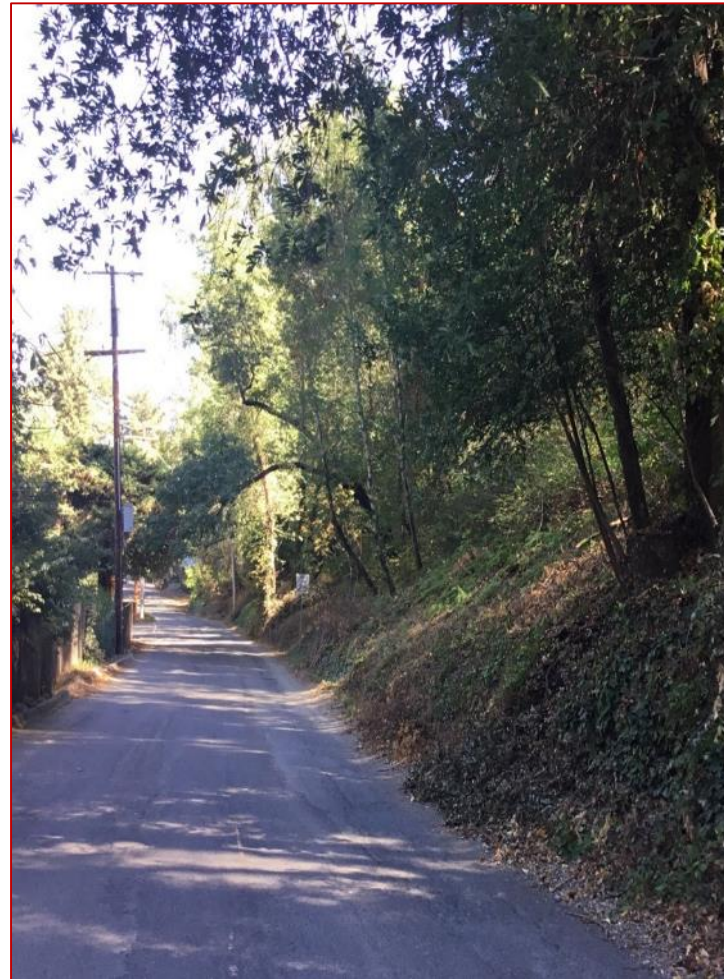


Chapter 13A: Ordinance at Work

Before



After



Current Inspection Program

- Effective July 1, 2018, Sonoma County Board of Supervisors authorized \$500,000 funding for inspections and enforcement.
- Currently, inspection program is complaint driven, in conjunction with multiple fire districts.
 - Developing agreements to expand target inspections county-wide in Spring 2019.
 - Developing Outreach and Education materials

Start at the House and Work Out

*Protecting lives, property and the
environment*

Caerleon Safford

Permit Sonoma, Fire Prevention Division
and Fire Safe Sonoma, Inc.



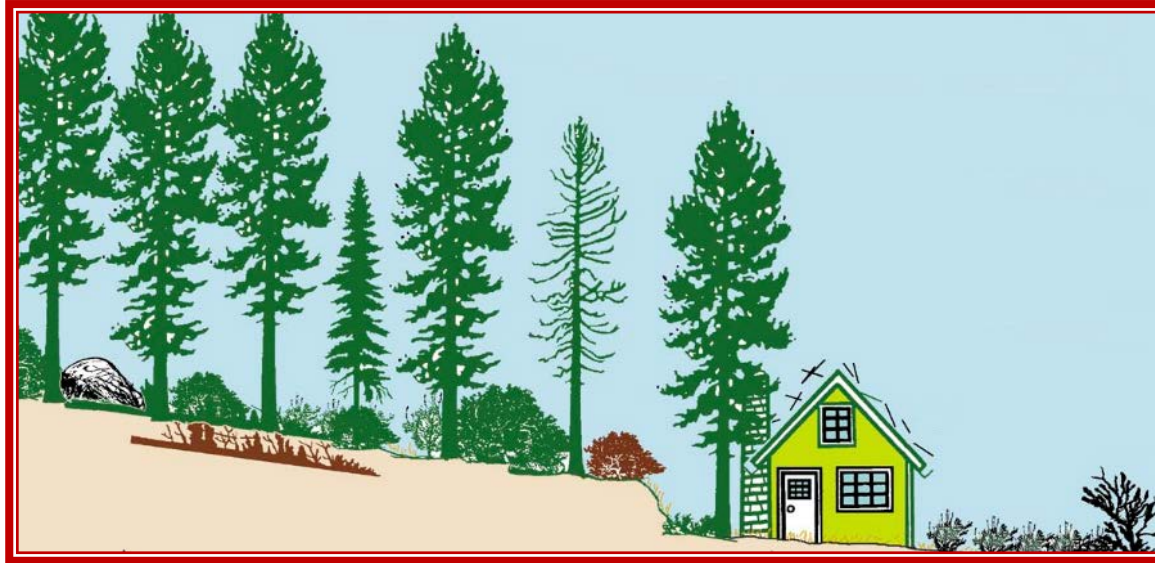
During wildfires, home ignition is primarily related to:

- Vulnerabilities on the structure itself
- Fuels 100+ feet surrounding it.
- Weather
- Position on slope



Jack Cohen, USFS

Two Guiding Principles to prevent wildfire home ignitions:

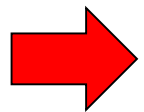
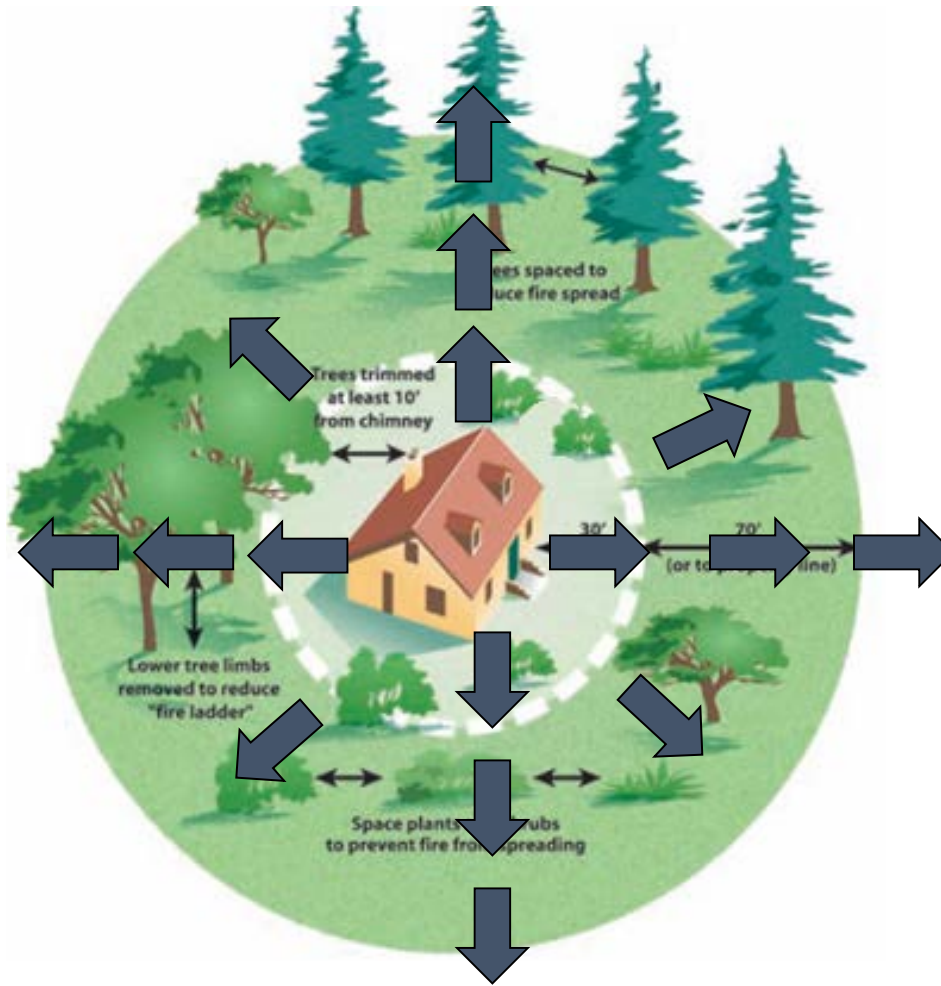


*“Harden”
structures to
resist ignition*

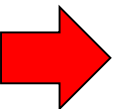
AND

*Decrease
surrounding
vegetation*

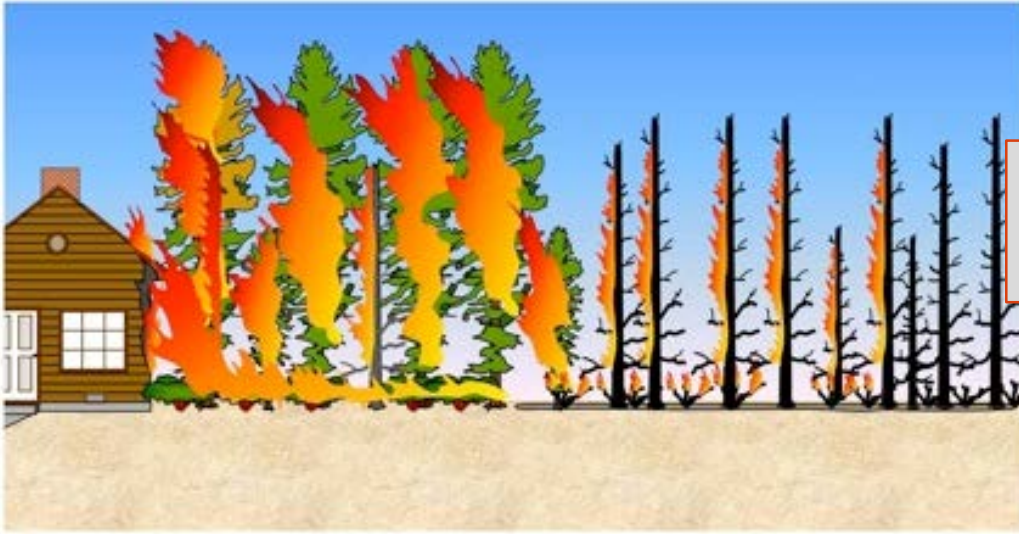
Start with the House and work out



Start with the house and work out

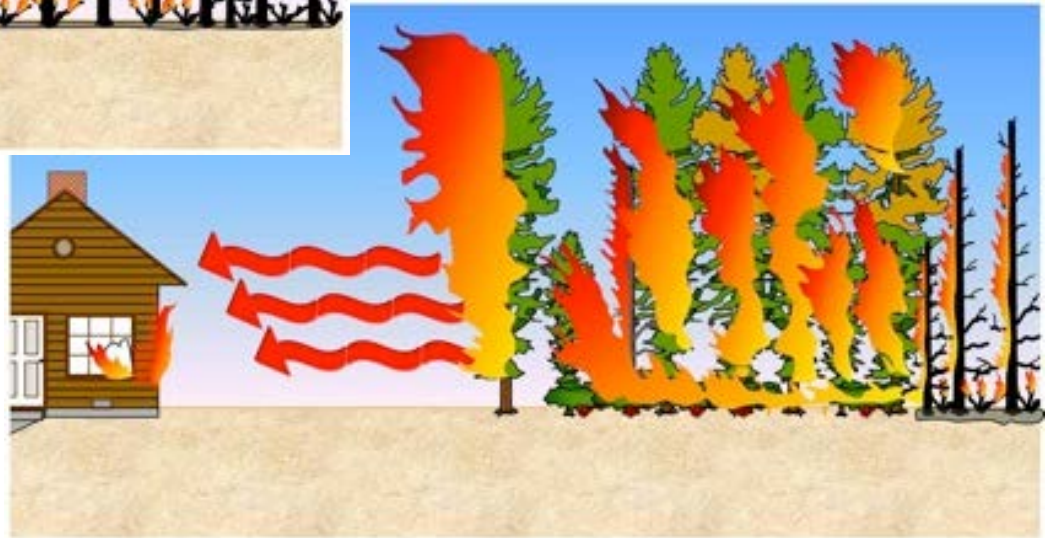


How do homes ignite in a Wildfire?



Direct Flame

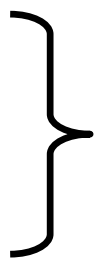
Radiant
Heat




Embers



Structure Survival Priorities for Wildland Fire :

- ① Roof / Edge
 - ② Vents
- 
- Exposure from embers that may have been blown a mile or more. Embers can also ignite near-home vegetation and debris.*

③ Vegetation/Defensible Space, 5 feet and STUFF

- ④ Windows
 - ⑤ Decks
 - ⑥ Siding
- 
- Ember, radiant, and/or flame impingement exposures from near-home vegetation, other structures, and wildfire*

The Critical 5 feet



0 to 5 feet from building walls

- Appropriate plants in appropriate places.
- Hard surfaces--concrete walkway, noncombustible mulch
- Landscape vegetation: irrigated lawn and low-growing herbaceous (non-woody) plants.

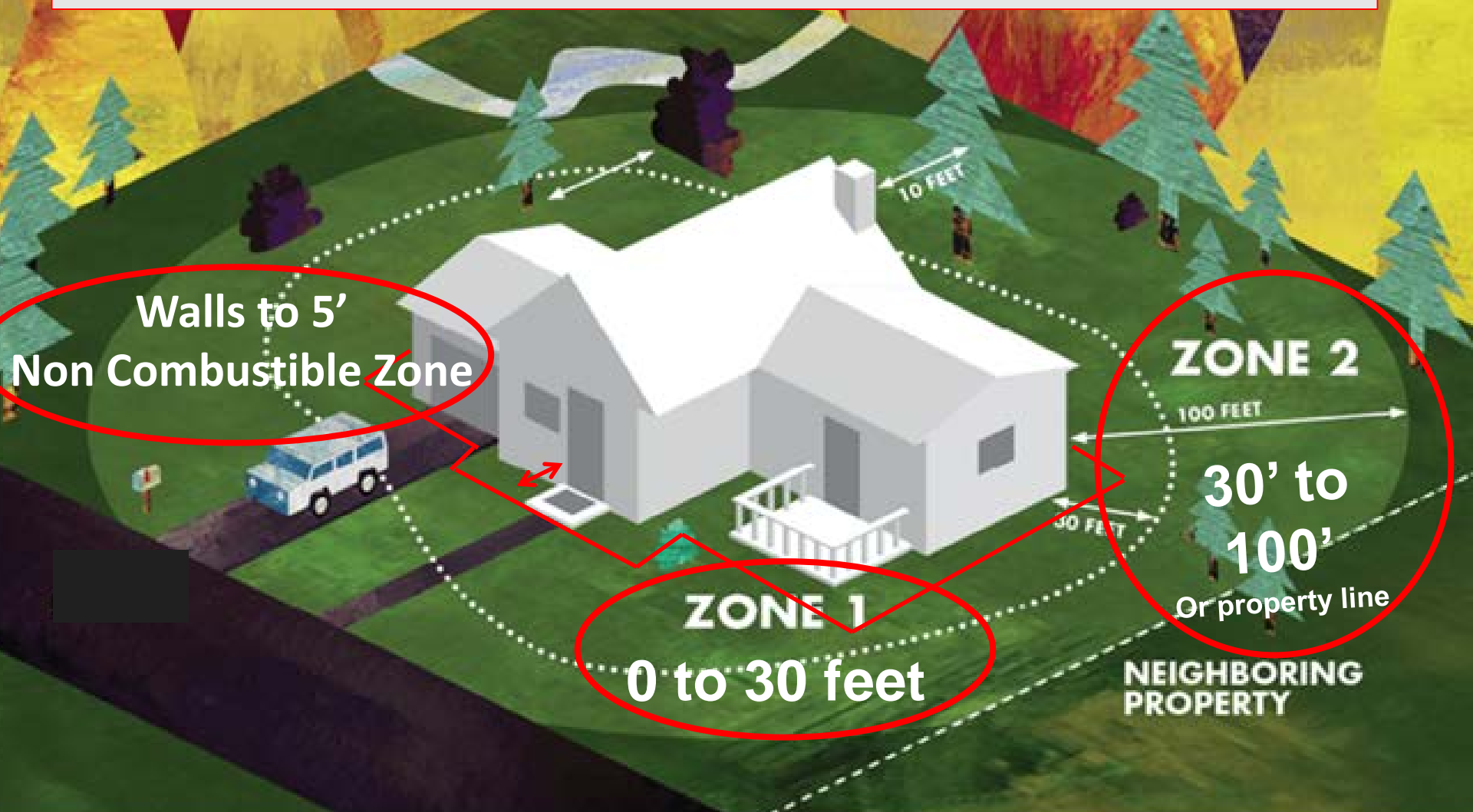


Defensible Space

- Does help save homes
- Should improve forest health and habitat
- Can be expensive, is never-ending
- *Is the responsibility of the homeowner*



PRC 4291 in SRA “Defensible Space”



Scale and Time...



Start at the houses and work out to improve conditions in our wildlands.



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