

State Fire Marshal encourages citizens to protect against wildfire

by Bend_Weekly_News_Sources

In support of Wildfire Awareness Week, May 3-9, Oregon State Fire Marshal Randy Simpson encourages home and building owners to protect themselves and their property from the risk of wildfires through safe debris removal, fire prevention, and structural risk reduction.

"Make sure you do all you can to make your home and property a survivable space from wildfire," advises Simpson. "Oregon has experienced significant damage from past wildfires caused by escaped debris burns and that's why we recommend to safely remove debris by composting or taking your yard debris to a collection or recycling center."

In addition to safe debris removal, state fire marshal officials recommend residents in or near wildland areas take steps to decrease the structural ignitability of their home including:

- Maintaining a survivable space of at least 100 feet for a home on level ground and 200 feet for a home on sloped terrain.
- Remove all dead plants, trees, branches, and other debris.
- Plant native, fire-resistant plants within 30 feet of your home.
- Remove branches extending over the roof or within 6 feet of the home.
- Screen all vent openings with 1/8 inch or smaller non-corrosive metal mesh.
- Clean out gutters and boxes in eaves.
- Enclose areas under raised decks to prevent embers from blowing underneath.
- Use fire resistant roofing such as tile, composition shingles or metal.

For more information on safe debris removal and reducing your wildfire risk, visit the Office of State Fire Marshal web site or the Keep Oregon Green web site.

For information on the 2009 Oregon fire season and weather outlook, visit the Oregon Department of Forestry web site.

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