

Tahoe Meadows Fire Safety Plan

The goal of the Tahoe Meadows (TM) Fire Safety Plan is to educate homeowners of fire safety, and ensure TM is protected as much as possible from fire.

Be Fire Safe

Tahoe Meadows fire safety regulations:

- There is no smoking on TM property, that includes roads, beaches, campfire area, and baseball field. **Fines will be imposed upon the homeowner.**
- **Owners are responsible for their guests and renters.**
- Fire Danger Periods: **During Red Flag warnings, all open flames are prohibited, including gas or propane appliances such as BBQs.** It is the responsibility of the property owner to convey red-flag warnings to guests.

City of So. Lake Tahoe fire regulations:

- Fireworks of any type are **NEVER** allowed within the Tahoe Basin.
- The City of South Lake Tahoe does not allow any open burning within the city limits. The exceptions to this are gas fireplaces and BBQ's that use either propane or natural gas (except during Red Flag Warnings). Pellet BBQ's, such as a Traeger are acceptable (they must comply with safety regulations and not create embers). Wood Fires/Fire Pits/Chimineas are generally not allowed as they are considered open fires.
- Charcoal is currently allowed. It is prohibited during fire restriction periods (often starting in late spring). **Check with the fire department before using charcoal.**
- There is **NO BURNING OF WOOD, LEAVES, PINE NEEDLES, YARD WASTE OR BRUSH in South Lake Tahoe.**
- If you have questions, contact the So. Lake Tahoe Fire Department at (530) 542-6160.

Defensible Space

This is the buffer around a structure where vegetation has been managed to reduce the fire hazard. Maintaining a defensible space increases the chance of structure survival and **provides a space for firefighters to safely defend the structure during a fire.**

Tahoe Meadows follows the Defensible Space regulations of the City of South Lake Tahoe and the State of California. For additional, detailed information:

- [Cal Fire Defensible Space](#)
- [City of South Lake Tahoe Fire Prevention](#)
- [VISUAL GUIDE: Living with Fire Defensible Space Guide, University of Nevada, Reno, College of Agriculture, Biotechnology & Natural Resources.](#)

South Lake Tahoe Fire Rescue Department provides free defensible space inspections. [Sign up here](#) for this excellent service.

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Summary of Defensible Space

Zone 0 - Ember-Resistant Zone - 0-5 feet from all structures

Maintaining Zone 0 is the single most important defensible space action homeowners can take, and is a requirement of the SLT Fire regulations

- In fire events, 60–90% of the structures ignite from embers. Zone 0 is the most vulnerable and should be aggressively maintained for fire resistance, including ignition from flying embers. **A noncombustible zone is critical.**
- Zone 0 includes the area under and around any attached deck, stairs, sleeping platforms, sheds, or outbuildings.
- **Eliminate all vegetation in Zone 0.** Gravel, concrete, brick, pavers, or dirt is recommended for this area. Well-irrigated, non-woody vegetation under 18" high is allowed.
- Remove all pine needles, pine cones, sticks, and leaves, etc. from Zone 0 - including from all roofs and gutters.
- Remove or relocate all combustible materials including garbage and recycling containers, lumber, trash, and patio accessories.

Zone 1 - Lean, Clean and Green Zone - 5-30 feet from all structures

Lean – Reduce the flammable vegetation to a small amount. Have discontinuous islands of vegetation. Mulch (under 2") may be used in a discontinuous manner.

Clean – Remove all dead vegetation, including the dead branches in willows and aspens.

Green – Keep plants healthy and irrigated (when possible). Remove all pine needles in this zone in the spring.

- Trim tree branches within 10 feet of the structure, chimney, deck or roof, and within 10 feet of other trees.
- Propane tanks used for heating are to be at least 10 feet from any structure and surrounded by 10 feet bare dirt.

Zone 2 - The Reduced Fuel Zone - 30-100 feet from a structure

The objective of this zone is to reduce fire spread and restrict fire movement into the crowns of trees or shrubs.

- Remove pinecones, dead leaves, and any dead, damaged or weakened wood from this area.
- Don't allow pine needles on the ground to exceed 3 inches in depth.
- Remove ladder fuels (low-growing vegetation or branches) that allow a fire to climb from the ground to structures, or the tree canopy.
- Keep firewood at least 30 feet from any structure and covered with a fire-resistance tarp.

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In addition to the 3 Zones of Defensible Space is the importance of **Access (by the Fire Department) and Egress (by the residents of Tahoe Meadows)**.

Combustible vegetation, and vegetation that has adapted to tolerate fire must be heavily cleared within 10 feet of roads and driveways to prevent fire from jumping onto evacuation routes, and allowing safe entry by the fire department. In addition when looking at your driveway, consider the clearance needed for a fire engine to be able to turn into it.

Fire-Harden Your Home

Fire-hardening your home involves protecting it against wind-blown embers, radiant heat, and direct flame contact. These are in addition to maintaining defensible space.

DO THESE FIRST

(Immediate, low-cost actions with the greatest impact)

- Move combustible materials away from the home.
- Replace combustible doormats.
- Install or replace spark arrestors on chimneys or flues.
- Replace the first five feet of attached fencing or railings with a noncombustible material.
- Replace foundation and eave vents or cover existing vents with 1/8-inch metal screening.
- Enclose the area between decks, stairs, and outbuildings and the ground with 1/8-inch metal screening to prevent debris from accumulating underneath.
- Irrigate and maintain plants.

IF YOU CAN

(More costly or longer-term improvements)

- Remove rain gutters
- Re-sand and re-stain decks or replace decking with fire-resistant materials.
- Replace windows and skylights when needed. Close window coverings when you leave TM for an extended period. If there is a fire, and the windows break, your place will have some protection from embers.
- Replace siding when needed. Replacement siding requires Tahoe Meadows approval. Contact the TM Building Committee.
- Replace roofing if the home has wood shingles. Replacement roofs require Tahoe Meadows approval. Contact the TM Building Committee.
- Enclose eaves where feasible. As this can be expensive, at a minimum, seal openings.

For greater detail on fire-hardening your home, [click here](#).

Thank you for keeping Tahoe Meadows safe!