



TOWN OF HILLSBOROUGH WILDLAND-URBAN INTERFACE (WUI) PROGRAM

Your property is located within the Town of Hillsborough's Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI) Area

All properties within the WUI area are required to meet defensible space and fuel reduction requirements. Program compliance is confirmed through an annual WUI fire inspection. The WUI program is a partnership between Central County Fire Department (CCFD) and the Town of Hillsborough. CCFD is committed to assisting residents and reducing wildfire risk in Hillsborough.

FUEL (VEGETATION) MODIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

There are two levels of fuel modification in Hillsborough's WUI Code (Hillsborough Municipal Code 15.21). If a parcel is:

- A) Less than 5 acres – fuel modification is required for the entire property.
- B) More than 5 acres – fuel modification is required to create a 100-foot defensible space area around structures in addition to a 100-foot clearance area around the perimeter of your property lines.

Why fuel (vegetation) modification? Fuel modification creates defensible space that may stop the spread of a fire or can provide a fuel free area for firefighters when they need to defend your home.

What is fuel modification? Fuel modification on a property requires removing dead, dying and/or overgrown vegetation and thinning dense living vegetation where needed. It also involves thinning "fire ladder" vegetation to create space between plants, shrubs, trees and tree canopies to reducing the risk of a fire moving along closely spaced vegetation.

What can I do now?

- a) Remove dry leaves and pine needles from yard, roof and rain gutters.
- b) Trim tree branches up to 6 feet from the ground or 1/3 of the tree height for trees under 18 feet.
- c) Trim tree limbs back 10 feet from chimneys and stove pipes; remove dead limbs that overhang rooftops.
- d) Remove fallen leaves, branches and other debris within 10 feet of each side of driveway and private roads.
- e) Cover chimney outlets or flues with 1/2" fire resistive spark arrester.
- f) Store combustible materials such as woodpiles or building materials etc. at least 20 feet from any structure.
- g) Maintain 30 feet between ignition sources such as a permanent barbecue, portable barbecue, outdoor fireplace or grills.

PLANNING AHEAD

We understand each property is unique. Some necessary tasks may be simple, while others may be much larger and require additional time and planning. It may also involve hiring vegetation/tree contractors to perform the fuel modification work. CCFD understands scheduling and securing contractors may take an extended amount of time and we encourage you to arrange for a contractor as soon as you have your project defined. With this in mind, please note that we will take into account a scheduled contractor when looking at property inspections and a compliance deadline.

If you have questions or want assistance in determining your tasks or projects, please consider a free evaluation and consultation by CCFD before your compliance inspection. CCFD staff will meet with you at your home to determine if any fuel modification needs to be completed and provide you with best practices and options for meeting the WUI requirements. Please contact CCFD at 650-558-7600 to schedule a free consultation or evaluation appointment.

WUI INSPECTION PROGRAM

The Hillsborough WUI Code authorizes the Fire Department to inspect, enforce and collect a fee for exterior/hazard inspections of properties located in the WUI area. The CCFD Fire Board, which has two Councilmembers from Hillsborough, has established a fee of \$200 for each property inspected for WUI compliance. However, if your property complies with fuel modification requirements at the first inspection, the fee will be reduced to \$100. The inspection fees provide the necessary revenue for the WUI program services which include the WUI fire inspection staff, WUI inspections, fire inspection notices, WUI records management and ongoing community education and outreach.

Inspection scheduling notices will be mailed as we approach the end of our rainy season with instructions on how to schedule an appointment that is convenient for you. Inspections will begin after late rains and prior to warmer weather. This provides you with time to review the Wildland Protection Checklist in the booklet, schedule a free property evaluation or consultation and finally, prepare your property for the inspection.

On the day of your inspection, a uniformed CCFD staff member will meet with you to inspect your property and confirm that fuel modification requirements have been met. Staff will also discuss best practices for wildland fire safety and, if needed, provide you with a notice of items which need to be corrected.

Central County Fire Department needs your help to reduce our wildfire risk and increase our capabilities in the event of a wildfire in our area. By performing necessary fuel modifications, you are providing essential defensible space, the buffer created around a structure when combustible vegetation is reduced, replaced or removed on your property. A defensible space increases the chance of your home and other structures surviving a wildfire. It may also slow or stop the spread of wildfire, provide space for firefighters to protect your home from a fire and improve Hillsborough's fire resiliency.