FIRE WISE LANDSCAPING

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Horticulture Dayz!
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Front Royal, VA
PRESENTATION OVERVIEW

- Historical natural fire regimes
- Effects of fire suppression, demographics, and climate change on wildfire risk
- Concept of “defensible space” for protecting woodland homes from wildfire
- Landscape plant selection and maintenance
- Feedback from you about Fire Wise
WILDFIRE RISKS

Structures Lost to Wildfire 1999-2011

Number of Structures Burned Per Wildfire

- 0
- 1
- 2 - 5
- 6 - 10
- 11 - 25
- 26 - 100
- 101 - 2820

Over the past 15 years, the number of woodland homes developments in Virginia has increased from 524 to 2,914 (source: dof.virginia.gov/fire/intro-forest-prot.htm)

The number of dwellings in those developments increased from 18,203 to 138,111 (source: dof.virginia.gov/fire/intro-forest-prot.htm)

2010 population: 8.00 million
2020 population: 8.81 million
2030 population: 9.64 million (source: www.coopercenter.org/demographics/virginia-population-projections)
A visualization of cumulative fires from Jan. 1 through Oct. 31, 2012, detected by the MODIS instrument on board the Terra and Aqua satellites. Bright yellow shows areas that are more intense and have a larger area that is actively burning, flaming and/or smoldering. Credit: NASA
Scientists using NASA satellite data and climate models have projected drier conditions likely will cause increased fire activity across the United States in coming decades. Other findings about U.S. wildfires, including their amount of carbon emissions and how the length and strength of fire seasons are expected to change under future climate conditions, were also presented Tuesday at the annual meeting of the American Geophysical Union in San Francisco.

Doug Morton of NASA’s Goddard Space Flight Center in Greenbelt, Md., presented the new analysis of future U.S. fire activity. The analysis was based on current fire trends and predicted greenhouse gas emissions.

"Climate models project an increase in fire risk across the U.S. by 2050, based on a trend toward drier conditions that favor fire activity and an increase in the frequency of extreme events," Morton said.
Climate Models Project Increase in U.S. Wildfire Risk

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The researchers calculated results for low and high greenhouse gas emissions scenarios. In both cases, results suggest more fire seasons that are longer and stronger across all regions of the U.S. in the next 30-50 years. Specifically, high fire years like 2012 would likely occur two to four times per decade by mid-century, instead of once per decade under current climate conditions.
DEFENSIBLE SPACE AGAINST WILDFIRE

OVERVIEW

RISK

DEFENSE

LANDSCAPE

TAKE HOME

www.napafirewise.org
DEFENSIBLE SPACE AGAINST WILDFIRE

THE THREE ZONES OF DEFENSIBLE SPACE

ZONE 1
STRUCTURE IGNITION ZONE

ZONE 2
FIREBREAK ZONE

ZONE 3
REDUCED FUEL ZONE
Fire “climbs” neighboring trees—don’t give it a ladder that reaches from the low to the high. Limb live trees up 10 feet as measured from the uphill side.
DEFENSIBLE SPACE AGAINST WILDFIRE

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Recommended Separation Distances for Shrubs
For areas with dense brush, the recommended separation distance is dependant upon shrub height and steepness of slope. Specific recommendations are presented below.

Recommended Separation Distances Between Tree Canopies
For forested areas, the recommended amount of separation between tree canopies is determined by steepness of slope. The specific recommendations are presented here. Note: Separations are measured between canopies (outermost branches), not between trunks.

If your house is situated on a 30% slope, the separation of tree canopies within your defensible space should be 20 feet. Creating separation between tree canopies can be accomplished through tree removal.
While clearing a defensible space zone is a lot like work, a single individual with basic hand tools can accomplish a lot.
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Action steps for homeowners

Wildfires don't have to burn everything in their path. Learn 7 tips that can help keep homes from igniting in a wildfire.

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Saving lives and property from wildfire

FROM OUR BLOG

Annual NFPA conference to feature wildland fire education sessions
Nevada, here I come! I'm heading out to Reno in the morning to participate in the annual IAFC WUI Conference, a great event geared toward the fire service and focused on wildland/urban interface fire safety. Pretty soon, I'll be back in the Silver State, a bit further south, in Las...

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Complete school community service requirements with risk reduction projects
As the school year starts to wind down and edges closer to semester's end, students, parents and school administrators everywhere, are stepping into that frenzied time zone where they're scrambling to wrap-up those required community service credit hours. If your middle and high school students are like my kids...

HEADLINES

Fight Brews Over Federal Wildfire Funding After Devastating Year
Air Force Academy is Firewise
Was 2015 a record year for wildfires?
Alaska sees most of acres burned in record year for US wildfires
Colorado's new wildfire prediction system ready for 2016

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www.firewise.org/wildfire-preparedness.aspx
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WILDFIRE COMMUNITY PREPAREDNESS DAY WINNERS

FIREWISE COMMUNITIES

www.firewise.org/wildfire-preparedness.aspx
2016 Wildfire Community Preparedness Day

Join the National Fire Protection Association and communities on Saturday, May 7, 2016 for Wildfire Community Preparedness Day!

Commit a couple of hours, or the entire day, and watch as your actions positively contribute to reducing your community’s wildfire risk. Challenge your friends, your family, relatives, faith-based group or youth organization to develop a project and join others throughout the nation in making big changes. Your efforts will help raise wildfire awareness, promote collaboration and bring neighbors together to work on projects that can help protect homes, neighborhoods and entire communities from future wildfire risk or current post-fire impacts.

To learn more about 2016 Wildfire Community Preparedness Day, visit WildfirePrepDay.org.
Virginia’s native forests are adapted to frequent, low-intensity fires.

Fire suppression, invasive pests/plants, demographic shifts, and climate change have altered the fire risk equation.

Individual property owners should employ the practice of defensible and space and use fire wise landscaping.

Fire Wise Communities is a national program for safeguarding landscapes holistically at larger geographic scale.
QUESTIONS & COMMENTS

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