

NEWS RELEASE

Safeguarding Your Home from Wildfire -It's the Simple Things

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We don't think of wildfires as being in our backyards. The truth is, in the Great Lakes area, thousands of fires occur every year. 2004 marks the 60th year Smokey Bear has been delivering his famous wildfire prevention message "Only You Can Prevent Wildfires". As more homes appear in forested areas, Smokey's message is more important than ever. Not only can individuals prevent wildfires, but they can also safeguard their home from the potential risk of wildfire.

Our ability to live more safely in this fire environment greatly depends on actions taken before a wildfire occurs to improve the survivability of people and homes. To increase the chances of your home surviving a wildfire, there are several simple things that require a little time and effort, but could save your home:

- ?? Always consider alternatives to burning like recycling or composting
- ?? Keep your roof and gutters free from leaves and pine needles
- ?? Prune your trees at least 10 feet (3 metres) up the trunk
- ?? Keep your grass mowed and watered
- ?? Stack firewood at least 30 feet (10 metres) from all structures

A fire safe home starts with Smokey's traditional message- Prevent Wildfires. Without a fire, there is no risk. Unfortunately, wildfires do occur. We can prevent most, because nine out of ten are caused by careless acts of people.

Remember, if Smokey Bear can be vigilant for 60 years, so can you! For more information on making your home fire safe, visit www.firewise.org/ www.partnersinprotection.ab.ca or contact your local fire protection agency.