



Anatomy of a Firewise Home

Minnesota Firewise Project Briefing

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This home is living proof of Firewise. It survived a wildfire near Brainerd in May 2002 because it was well landscaped and maintained in a Firewise manner.

The fire burned the woods all around the house. These homeowners went home that night. Not every one in the neighborhood was as lucky.



It had a brick patio rather than wood. Wood decks that can catch both dry leaves and sparks. Many homes burn down because the wood deck catches fire which, in turn, spreads fire to the home.



The zone nearest the house was mulched with a non-burning material. In addition, this zone was kept free from accumulations of leaves. Shrubs near the house are broadleaved, deciduous types. No ignitions possible here. Wood mulch should not be used in the zone immediately adjacent to the house in areas with a high risk of wildfire.

Out back, there was no accumulation of grass or leaves around the propane tank. Even though this tank was only a few feet from the house, it posed no risk because there no fuel around it and it was inside the homes defensible space.



This house was surrounded by an excellent, well maintained Defensible Space. Firewise Minnesota recommends at least 30 feet of well irrigated, regularly mowed grass. Even better, this house had 100 feet of Defensible Space. The roof was clear of leaves and the shrubs near the house were deciduous.

Homes can still be surrounded by trees. This one was well shaded by oak and other hardwoods. It still is. In addition, the open space surrounding this home provided firefighters a good working space.



Minnesota Department of Natural Resources
Division of Forestry, Fire Management Section
Wildland Urban Interface Project

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