



FIRE BREAK AREA REQUIREMENTS

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

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This guide outlines the fire break standards for new dwellings, manufactured dwellings and structures in the Exclusive Forest and Conservation (EFC) District. This guide is for informational purposes only and is not to be considered a substitute for the language of state or local regulations. Specific language may be found in Section 428 of the Washington County Community Development Code.

Fire Breaks are part of Washington County's site standards for dwellings, structures and other uses in the EFC District. These standards are designed to make such uses compatible with forest operations and agriculture, to minimize wildfire hazards and risks and to conserve values found on forest lands. Landowners are required to maintain a primary safety zone and a secondary fuel break on land surrounding the dwelling or manufactured dwelling or other structure. This handout will provide guidance on how to construct these fuel break zones

PRIMARY SAFETY ZONE

The primary safety zone is a fire break extending a minimum of 30 feet in all directions around dwellings, manufactured dwellings and structures. The goal within the primary safety zone is to exclude fuels that will produce flame lengths in excess of one foot.

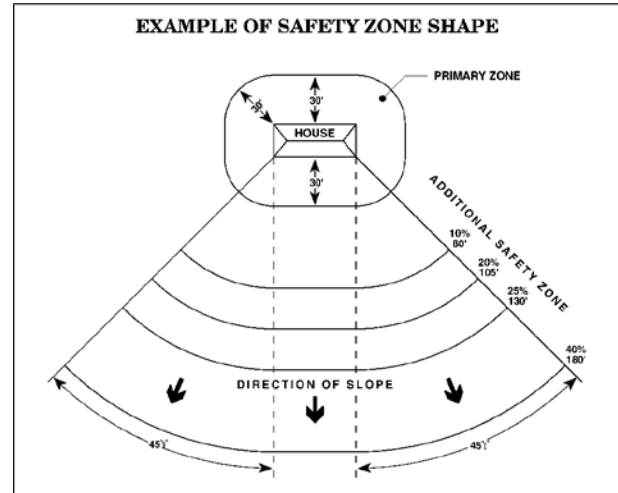
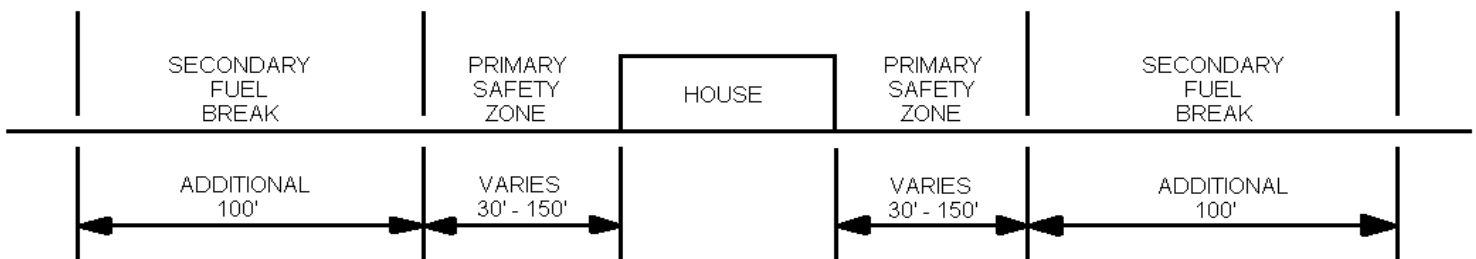
% Slope Downhill	Feet of Primary Safety Zone	Feet of Additional Safety Zone Down Slope
0	30	0
10	30	50
20	30	75
25	30	100
40	30	150

VEGETATION

The primary safety zone could include green lawns and low shrubs (less than 24 inches in height). Trees shall be spaced with greater than 15 feet between the crown and pruned to remove dead and low (less than eight feet) branches.

Accumulated leaves, needles, and other dead vegetation shall be removed from beneath trees. Nonflammable materials (i.e., rock) instead of flammable materials (i.e., bark mulch) shall be placed next to the house.

EXAMPLE OF PRIMARY SAFETY ZONE in addition to the 100' Secondary Fuel Break:



As downhill slope increases, the primary safety zone shall increase away from the house, parallel to the slope and down the slope, as shown in the table to the left:

Residences, dwellings or manufactured dwellings and structures shall not be sited on a slope greater than 40 percent.

SECONDARY FUEL BREAK

The secondary fuel break is a fuel break extending a minimum of 100 feet in all directions around the primary safety zone. The goal of the secondary fuel break is to reduce fuels so that the overall intensity of any wildfire would be lessened and the likelihood of crown fires and crowning is reduced. Vegetation within the secondary fuel break shall be pruned and spaced so that fire will not spread between crowns of trees. Small trees and brush growing underneath larger trees shall be removed to prevent spread of fire up into the crowns of the larger trees. Dead fuels shall be removed.