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Home Hardening vs. Defensible Space: What's the Difference?



Two Key Strategies To Safeguard Your Home and Property

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two essential concepts, but they serve different purposes.

Here's what you need to know:

Home Hardening

This focuses on making your home more resistant to embers and flames. It's about upgrading materials and sealing vulnerabilities. Key actions include:

- **Install Ember-Resistant Vents:** Prevent embers from entering your home.
- **Seal Gaps:** Use caulk to close gaps larger than 1/8 inch around siding and eaves.
- **Upgrade Weather Stripping:** Replace worn weather stripping around doors and windows to block ember entry.

Defensible Space

This involves creating a buffer zone around your home to slow or stop the spread of fire. Key steps include:

- **Clear Dead Vegetation:** Remove dry leaves, pine needles, and dead plants within 30 feet of your home.
- **Trim Trees:** Keep branches at least 10 feet away from your roof and chimney.
- **Space Out Plants:** Avoid dense plantings that can act as fire ladders.

By doing both, you can significantly reduce your wildfire risk. Home hardening fortifies your structure, while defensible space reduces the fire's intensity before it reaches your home.

It's always a good time to [stay alert](#), [prepare your home](#), and know your [evacuation zone](#).

Upcoming Events: Save the Dates

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Here's What's Happening at SCFSC

- **Wednesday, January 28: Public Outreach & Firewise Leaders Meeting**
 - Join us for an engaging morning of updates, insights, and strategies to enhance wildfire preparedness in our community. From Shasta County Fire Safe Council accomplishments to Firewise leader discussions, this meeting is packed with valuable information to help you stay informed and proactive. Doors open at 8:30 AM—come early for coffee and informal networking!
 - **Location:** KIXE PBS, 603 N Market St, Redding, CA 96003

Want to keep up-to-date with all our events?

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The Chipping Corner

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Defensible Space Chipping Program Activities

Happening Now: Anderson, Cottonwood, Igo, Platina — if you missed the January 1st deadline, **please call our office at 530-360-0120**. We can manually enroll you and will coordinate with our contractor to determine if it can fit into their schedule.

Next Up: Redding, Old Shasta, French Gulch, Whiskeytown — [sign up today](#) for chipping services starting February 1st.

LEARN MORE & SIGN UP HERE

The Shasta County Fire Safe Council's chipping program is more than just a convenient way to clear vegetation. It's a step toward a safer, more fire-resilient community — get involved today!



Fire Safe Task of the Month



FIRE SAFE

TASK
OF THE
MONTH

CLEAN YOUR ROOF
AND GUTTERS

Clean Your Roof and Gutters

Start the new year with a clean slate — literally! Clearing your roof and gutters of debris is a simple yet crucial step in reducing fire risk and safeguarding your home.

Steps To Follow:

- **Remove Debris from Your Roof:** Check your roof for leaves, branches, and other debris that could act as fuel for a fire. Use a broom or blower to safely clear the area.
- **Clean Out Gutters:** Clear out leaves, twigs, and dirt from your gutters to prevent blockages and reduce fire hazards. Consider installing gutter guards to minimize future buildup.
- **Trim Overhanging Branches:** Cut back any tree branches that hang over your roof or are too close to your home. This helps prevent debris accumulation and reduces fire risk.

By taking the time to clean your roof and gutters, you're making an important investment in your home's safety. Let's kick off the year with a proactive approach to fire prevention and peace of mind!

State and Local News



Fire Updates & Prevention News: What You Need To Know

Here's what's happening in California and Shasta County regarding fire prevention, wildfire management, and insurance updates:

'Zone Zero' Early Adopters See Better Outcomes in L.A. County Fires

A December 10, 2025, report highlights that homes with a cleared "zone zero" (the area within 5 feet of a structure) fared significantly better during recent fires in L.A. County. Only 9% of these homes were destroyed, compared to 27% of properties with significant vegetation and flammable materials.

[Read more here](#)

Prescribed Burns Continue in Shasta Lake Ranger District

The U.S. Forest Service announced ongoing prescribed burns in the Shasta Lake Ranger District. These efforts aim to manage forest health and reduce wildfire risks in areas west of Lakehead and south of O'Brien Mountain.

[Learn more here](#)

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miles of undergrounding and 57 miles of overhead system upgrades as part of PG&E's Community Wildfire Safety Program. These efforts aim to reduce fire risks and enhance the region's resilience.

[Get the details here](#)

You Can Make an Impact



Partner With the Shasta County Fire Safe Council

The Shasta County Fire Safe Council is on a mission to reduce wildfire risks and promote fire safety across our community. From free chipping programs to wildfire protection plans, we're empowering residents with the tools and resources they need to safeguard their homes and neighborhoods.

If you believe in creating a safer, more resilient Shasta County, **we need your support**. Your donation helps us continue these vital programs and expand our impact. Together, we can make a difference. Partner with us today!

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Funding for this project was provided by a grant from the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection as part of the California Climate Investments Program, through the California Fire Safe Council.



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