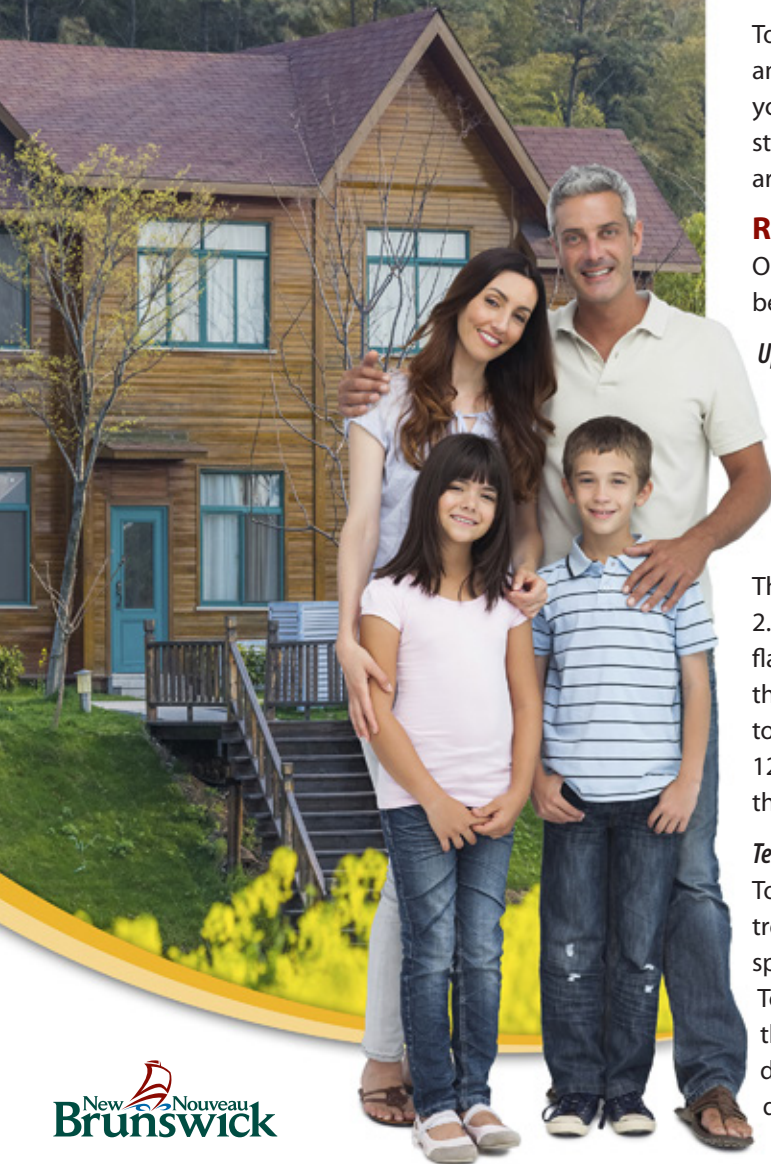


Is your home safe from wildfires?

# Making your home FIRESMART



The perfect house nestled in the woods against a hillside is a dream for many of us. More and more New Brunswickers are living the country lifestyle, leading to increasing numbers of housing developments in our rural forested lands.

The fire service at the Department of Natural Resources is concerned about this trend, as narrow private lanes and winding driveways often restrict the movement of firefighters and firefighting equipment.

To properly protect your home and family in the event of any emergency, preparing the area immediately around your house is critical. Protect your home and other structures from wildfires by creating a fuel-free space around them.

## Reduce the risk...

Only ten metres of clear space around your home may be all it takes to protect it from a wildfire!

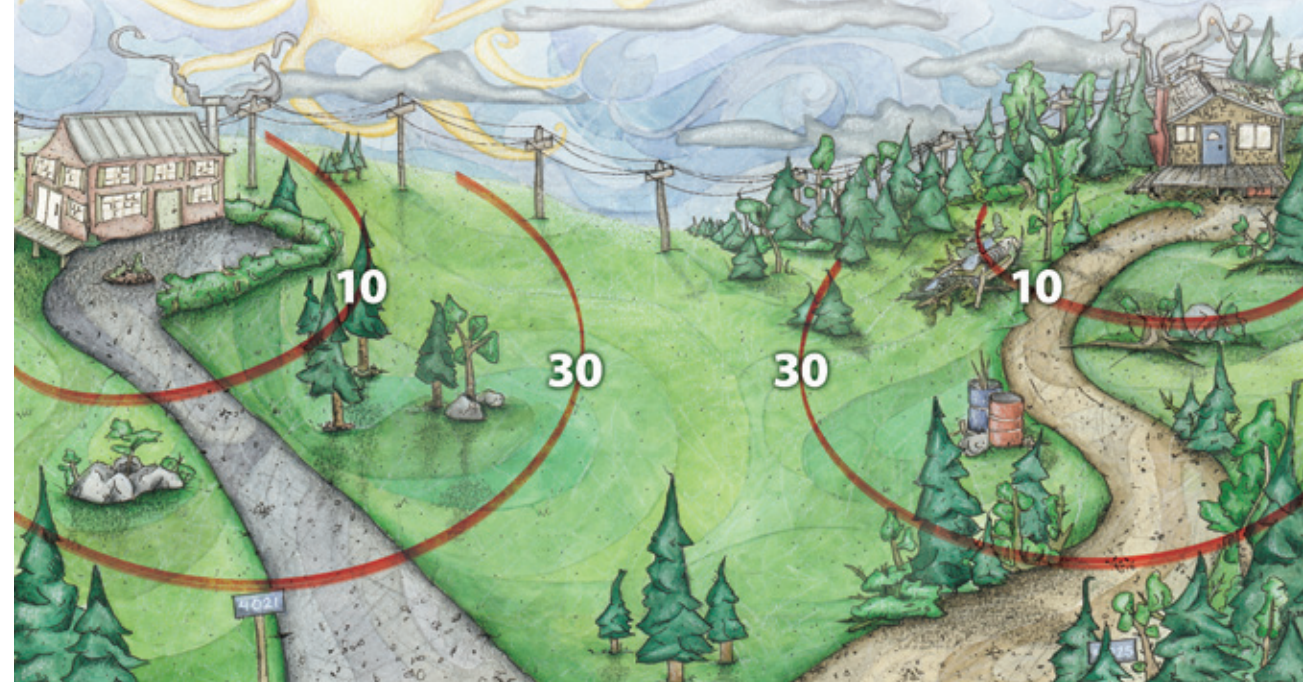
### Up to 10 metres from your house and other structures

Do a general yard clean-up. Remove combustibles such as dead grass, needles and dried leaves. Mow the grass. Move woodpiles, propane tanks and gas tanks beyond 10 metres. Clear the roof and eaves troughs of debris and overhanging trees.

Thin shrubs and low-hanging branches. Prune trees 2.5 metres from the ground. Remove all dead, highly-flammable trees. On level ground, thin trees to leave three metres of separation. On gentle slopes, thin trees to six metres of separation. On steep slopes, thin them to 12 metres of separation. Remove all undergrowth from the thinned areas.

### Ten to 30 metres from your house and other structures

To slow a fire's spread, thin and prune vegetation and trees. To prevent fire from jumping from tree to tree, space them so their crowns are three to six metres apart. To prevent a fire from spreading from the ground to the forest canopy, remove any "ladder fuels" such as deadfall and thick shrubs. If planting new trees, consider deciduous species such as maple, birch, oak and poplar as they do not catch on fire readily.



### More than 30 metres from your house and other structures

Take steps to reduce the intensity and rate of spread of a wildfire. Look for opportunities to create space between trees and other potentially flammable vegetation. Keep fire-resistant deciduous trees. Thinning and pruning are effective in this area.

## Making your house and structures safe

Untreated wood shingles are the leading cause of home loss due to wildfires. Use fire-resistant roofing materials such as metal, clay or concrete tiles, asphalt shingles or treated wood shingles.

Roof eaves and overhangs trap heat and embers, increasing the risk of damage and loss of structures. Replace the underside of overhangs with non-combustible material or plywood sheathing.

Use fire-resistant siding materials such as stucco, brick, concrete block, poured concrete, rock or manufactured fire-resistant siding.

### If a wildfire starts

- Call 911.
- Close all windows and doors.
- Turn off all gas and propane tanks.
- Prepare to evacuate if necessary— you, your family and pets.

Remove accumulated debris from between and below slotted decking. Screen vent openings with ¼-inch mesh to keep out embers.

Clear branches within three metres of your chimney. Have your chimney checked regularly by a WETT-certified inspector.

Maintain a three-metre clearance between branches and power lines. Contact NB Power to remove dead trees that may come in contact with power lines.

If your house is set back from the road or if you share a driveway with a neighbour, be sure to locate your civic address number so it is visible on the roadway from both directions.

### Did you know?

- Most wildfires in New Brunswick break out in the spring, just after the snow melts.
- Dead grass becomes flammable within only hours of snow melting, especially if there are drying winds.
- Grass fires burn hot and fast. They spread quickly.
- Human activity causes 95 per cent of wildfires in New Brunswick— only five per cent are caused by lightning.

## Wildfire risk assessment

Use this table to determine your home's vulnerability. Circle the number that best corresponds to your situation. Add the circled numbers together and refer to the risk totals at the bottom.

House location		
Level or < 5% upslope toward building <b>1</b>	5 – 20% upslope toward building <b>3</b>	Top of hill with slope of >20% <b>6</b>
Softwoods near house		
None within 0 – 10m <b>0</b>	Within 3 – 10m <b>9</b>	<3m from building <b>15</b>
Piles of wood, debris or other flammable material		
None or > 15m from building <b>0</b>	Within 3 – 15m from building <b>3</b>	Within 3m of building <b>6</b>
Softwood forest		
Thinned, pruned and cleared within 10 – 30m of building <b>1</b>	Unmanaged forest within 10 – 30m <b>12</b>	
Roofing material		
Metal, asphalt shingles, tiles – closed eaves <b>0</b>	Treated wood shingles – closed eaves <b>3</b>	Untreated wood shingles with open or closed eaves <b>24</b>
– open eaves <b>3</b>	– open eaves <b>15</b>	
Cleanliness of roof		
No leaves, twigs, etc. <b>0</b>	Accumulation less than 1 cm thick <b>3</b>	Accumulation more than 1 cm thick <b>6</b>
Siding		
Stucco, brick, stone, metal, aluminum <b>0</b>	Logs <b>1</b>	Vinyl, wood <b>6</b>
Veranda or patio		
None, or built entirely of non-flammable materials <b>0</b>	Wood, underside enclosed <b>3</b>	Wood, underside open <b>6</b>
Protective equipment		
Garden hose with water pressure and sprinklers <b>-3</b>	Barrels of water, buckets, shovels, axe <b>3</b>	No hose, water or tools <b>9</b>
<b>&lt;15: low    16 – 24: medium    25 – 34: high    &gt;35: too high!</b>		

## Planning to burn?

Call the Burn Information Line 1-866-458-8080 (toll-free) or visit our Forest Fire Watch website: [http://www2.gnb.ca/content/gnb/en/news/public\\_alerts/forest\\_fire\\_watch.html](http://www2.gnb.ca/content/gnb/en/news/public_alerts/forest_fire_watch.html)