



## Yuba Foothills Defensible Space Cost Share Program Program Guidelines

### PROGRAM SUMMARY

**Defensible space** around homes is critical to improving the structure's resistance to wildfire. This program provides financial support to residents of Yuba County's five Foothill Fire Districts to make specific defensible space improvements within the first 100 feet around residences, including pruning of trees, removal of ladder fuel vegetation, maintaining grass, and relocation of other flammables. By prioritizing the zones closest to the residence first, we can significantly reduce risk of the structure igniting and enhance safety for firefighters.

**Defensible space** is the buffer you create between a building on your property and the grass, trees, shrubs, or any wildland area that surrounds it.. – [Cal Fire](#)

Creating **defensible space** involves the careful selection, location and maintenance of vegetation and other combustible materials around a residence. According to the [University of California Cooperative Extension \(link\)](#), the purpose of defensible space is to:

1. **Minimize the pathways** for wildfire to burn directly to the home
2. **Reduce the radiant heat exposure** to the home and structures
3. Reduce the potential for **embers to ignite vegetation** adjacent to the home
4. Provide a **safe place for fire personnel** to defend the home and allow for safe routes for evacuation.

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### HOW TO PARTICIPATE

1. **Obtain a *free* Wildfire Mitigation Review (WMR)** from YWPFSC's trained volunteers to become eligible for the cost share program.
2. Based on the information obtained in your WMR, make as many eligible defensible space upgrades as possible, working outwards from the front door to the forest, **prioritizing zones 0 and 1 first**. If you mitigate zone 2 before zones 0 & 1 are mitigated, your application may not receive approval. Remember to take before and after photos of the work – **photos and receipts are required for reimbursement eligibility**.
3. **Submit an online application** along with copies of receipts or invoices, and before/after photos.

\*Awards will be distributed first come, first served - until funds run out\*

\*Work must be performed in 2024 or 2025\*

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### REIMBURSEMENT PROCESS

This program provides 50% reimbursement of eligible expenses to residents of any of the five Yuba foothill fire districts, up to a maximum of \$2,000 reimbursement per residence per year.

- Example 1: You pay a crew to cut and chip ladder fuels in zone 1, costing \$1,000. YWPFSC will reimburse \$500 once the work is complete and application submitted.
- Example 2: You hire a company to reduce fuels to a 100' radius around your home, with a total cost of \$8,000. YWPFSC will reimburse \$2,000 once the work is complete and application submitted.

Note: This program is intended to help our communities prepare for wildfire and is operating on limited funds. Please do not take advantage by buying tools for other purposes or reselling materials. Remember we must all work together to make our communities safe.

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**ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES** (prioritize activities such that you work from the front door to the forest):

**Zone 0 (Immediate): Non-combustible area 0-5' from structure**

- Remove all fuels & shrubs susceptible to ignition within 5' of structure
- Install nonflammable landscaping/hardscaping material

**Zone 1 (Intermediate): Lean, clean, and green within 5-30'**

- Remove branches overhanging buildings and within 10' of chimney or stovepipe outlets
- Create discontinuous fuels using wide spacing and landscaping features
- Relocate wood piles and other flammable residential items away from homes
- Chipping of removed fuels
- Remove seedlings and saplings (not large/ mature trees) in order to create/ maintain appropriate spacing of tree crowns
- Prune/ limb-up trees
- Remove ladder fuels such as shrubs
- Remove dead biomass material
- Expose bare mineral soil 10' around outbuildings, wood piles, and liquid propane tanks

**Zone 2 (Extended): Reduced fuels 30-100' once you've addressed areas closer to your residence**

- Chipping of removed fuels
- Remove seedlings and saplings (not large/ mature trees) in order to create/ maintain appropriate spacing of tree crowns
- Prune/ limb-up trees
- Remove ladder fuels such as shrubs
- Remove dead biomass material
- Expose bare mineral soil 10' around outbuildings, wood piles, and liquid propane tanks
- Mow grasses and annual plants to 4" tall
- Reduce ground litter and debris to less than 3" depth

This program is focused on helping residents address priority activities that provide the most risk reduction.

It will **not** cover the cost of large tree removal.

Contact us by emailing **[programs@yubafiresafe.org](mailto:programs@yubafiresafe.org)** if you are unsure whether specific work will be eligible or have other questions.

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Submission of an application does not guarantee reimbursement, which will occur based on determination of project eligibility and fund availability.

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**For more information, refer to your Wildfire Mitigation Review and read:**

*Cal Fire's page on Defensible Space here:*

<https://www.fire.ca.gov/programs/communications/defensible-space-prc-4291/>

*Maintenance Guidelines for specific Landscape Upgrades in each Zone here:*

<https://defensiblespace.org/landscape/landscape-upgrade/>

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