

# PROTECT YOUR HOME FROM WILDFIRE!

By Jim Gillam

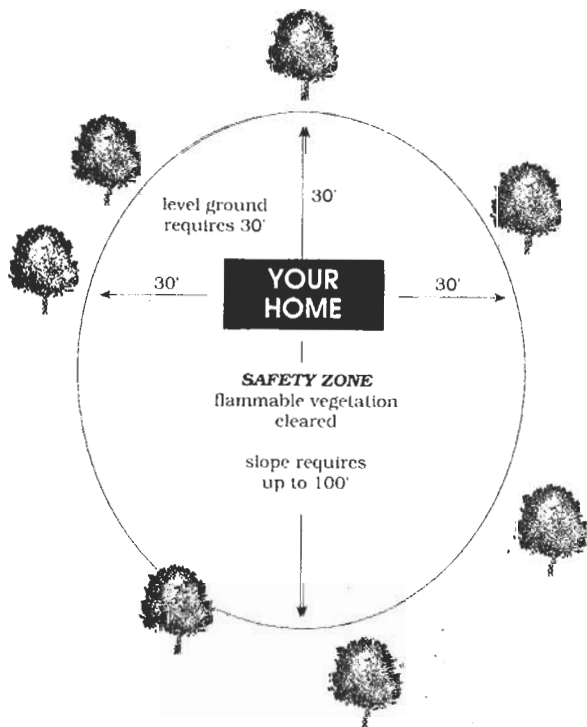
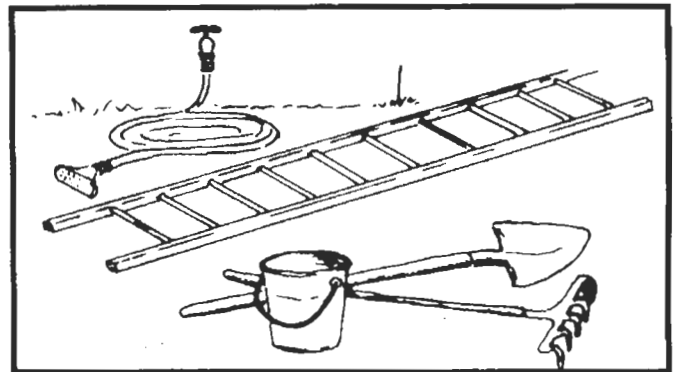
You treasure your home in its beautiful natural setting. Please be careful! Each year many people lose their homes and possessions to the ravages of wildfire.

Many of these homes could have been saved had homeowners taken precautions to make their home and property "survivable."

"If your home is in the wildlands, there is some consistent maintenance that you have to do to give your home a chance to survive," says Mindy Sherrieb, Fire Prevention Officer for the Oregon Department of Forestry. "It's like a yard. If you're living in the woods, take responsibility for being there. Help provide fuel breaks so that fire will not easily travel through your property."

Ask yourself, "What can I do to make my place survivable?" Then do it!

- Cut limbs 15 feet away from roof and chimney.
- Prune trees up to 10-15 feet above the ground to eliminate "fuel ladders." You can vary the pruning height so your trees are more natural looking.
- Thin trees so crowns are 15 feet apart.
- Plant and maintain fire-resistant shrubs.
- Have a shovel, rake, ax, saw, bucket and operational water-hose ready for use. Get a ladder and hose that reach to the roof.



## What can YOU do to improve your defenses against wildland fire?

- Remove flammable vegetation on the ground for 30 feet around the house on all sides. If the lot is on a slope, additional clearance as far as 100 feet may be necessary.

- Clear roof and gutters of all debris.
- Install a chimney cap with a spark arrestor. Ask your chimney sweep about the best model for your situation.
- Keep your chimney clean. Make regular appointments with your chimney sweep.
- Stack woodpiles at least 30 feet from structures and clear away flammable vegetation within 10 feet of woodpiles.
- Locate LPG tanks (butane and propane) at least 30 feet from any structure and surround them with 10 feet of clearance.
- Maintain an emergency water supply that won't be affected by electrical outage.
- Plan adequate access and escape. Each home should have at least two different entrance and exit routes. Display your address clearly at the end of your driveway. All roads leading to your property should be at least 16 feet wide to allow for the passage of fire trucks.

For more information, please contact your local fire protection district.