

Defensible Space

Presented by

Texas Forest Service



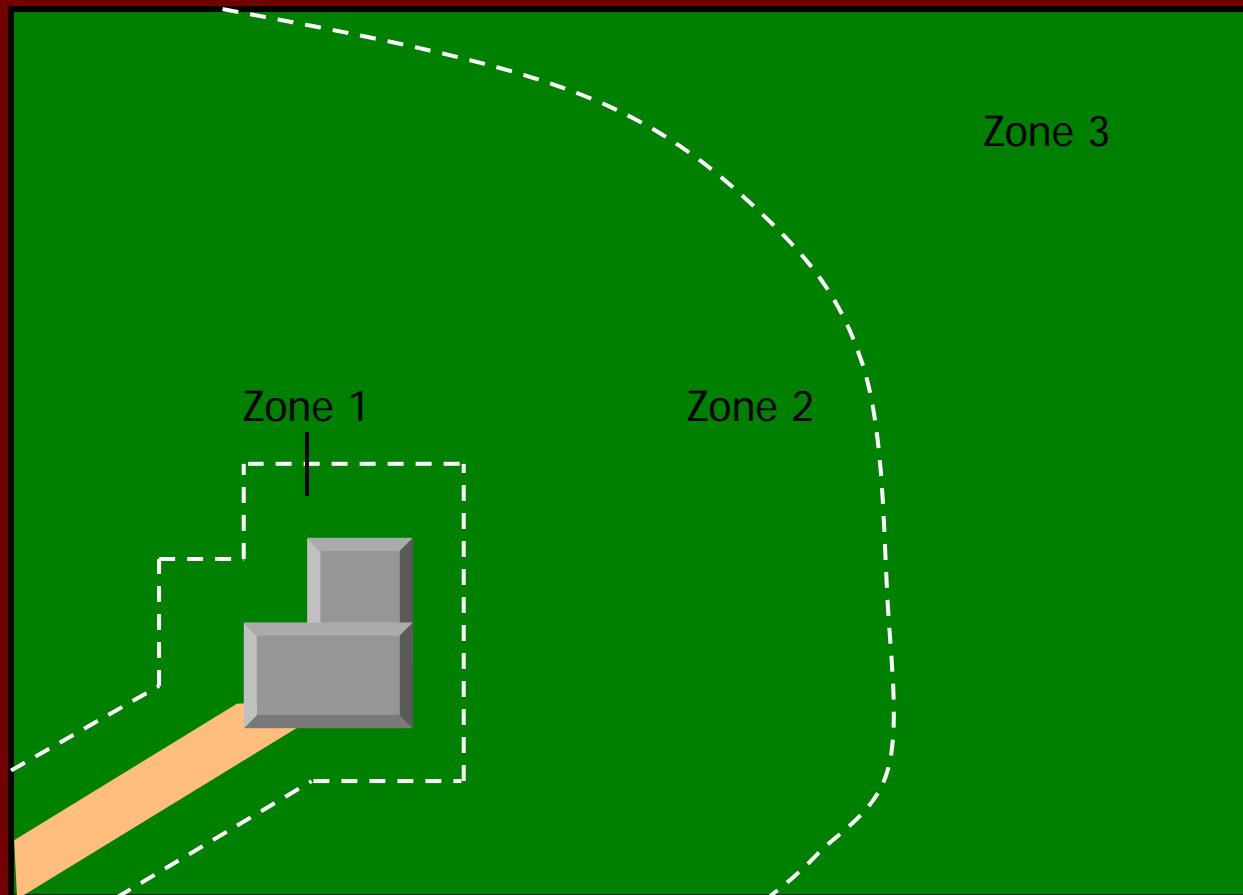
Defensible Space can be described as:

- An area around a structure where fuels and vegetation are treated, cleared or reduced in order to slow the spread of wildfire towards the structure.
- D-space provides room for firefighters to safely defend your home during a wildfire.
- Your home is more likely to withstand a wildfire if the vegetative fuels are managed to reduce a fire's intensity.

When creating defensible space around your home, consider the following:

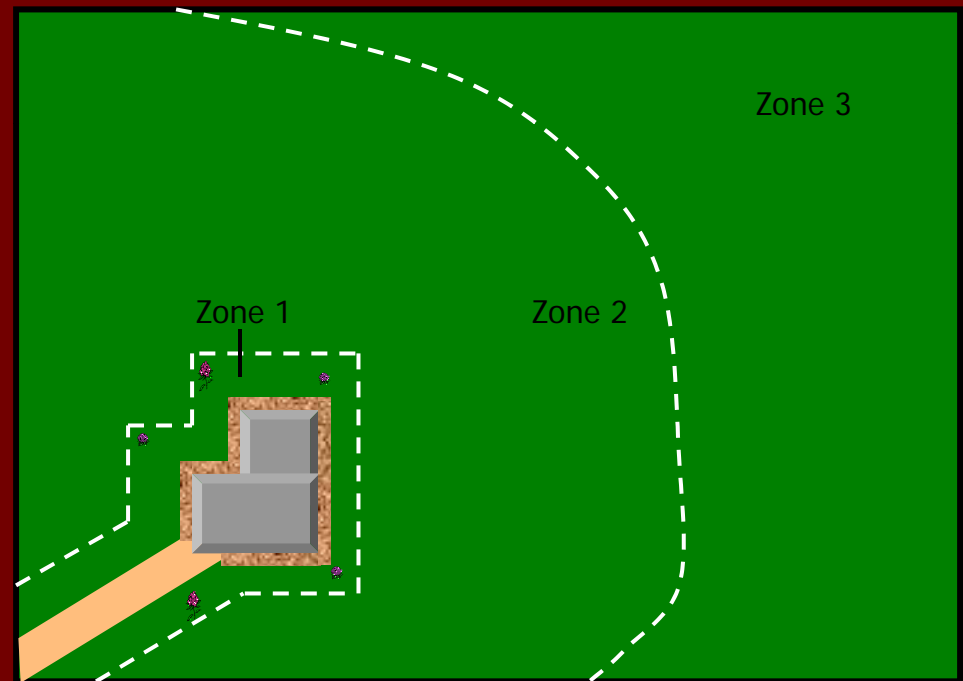
- Fire is sneaky and unpredictable.
- Fire will find the weakest link into your home.
- Begin with the easiest and least expensive actions.
- Begin your work closest to your home and move outward.
- Keep working on the more difficult items until you have completed the entire defensible space project.

Creating an effective defensible space involves developing a series of management zones in which different treatment techniques are used.



Zone 1

- Well-irrigated area
- Encircles structure at least 30' on all sides
- Provides space for fire suppression equipment in the event of an emergency
- Plantings should be limited to carefully spaced low flammability species



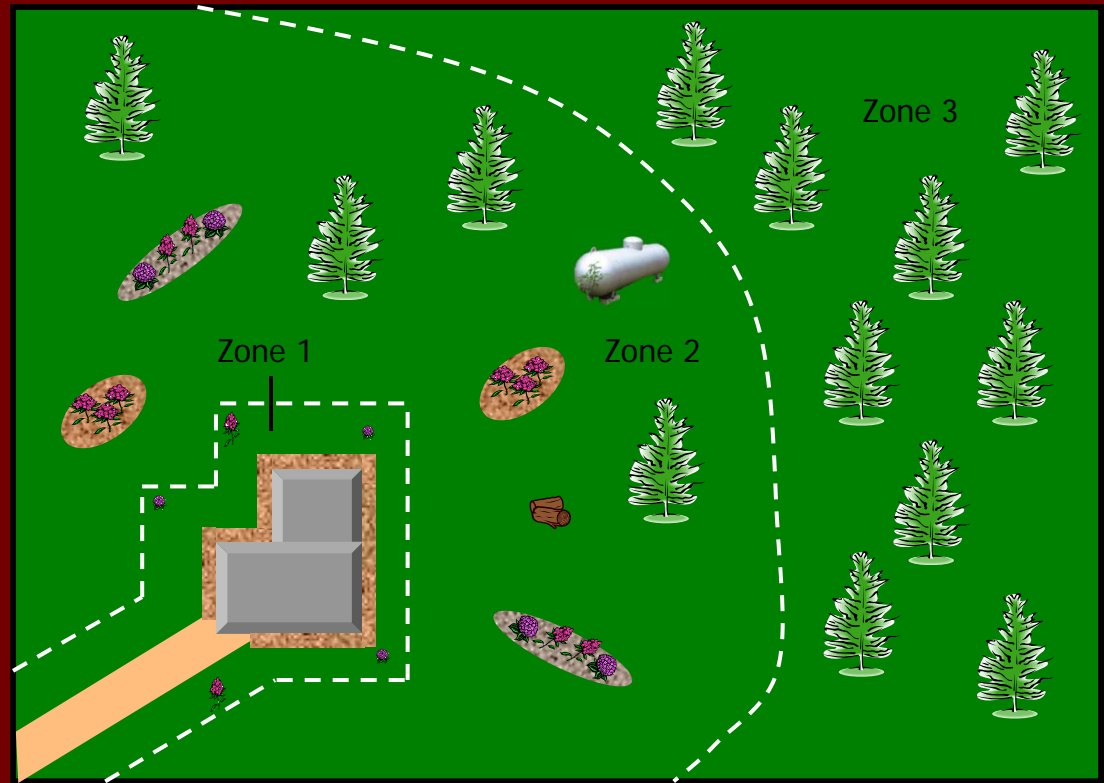
Zone 2

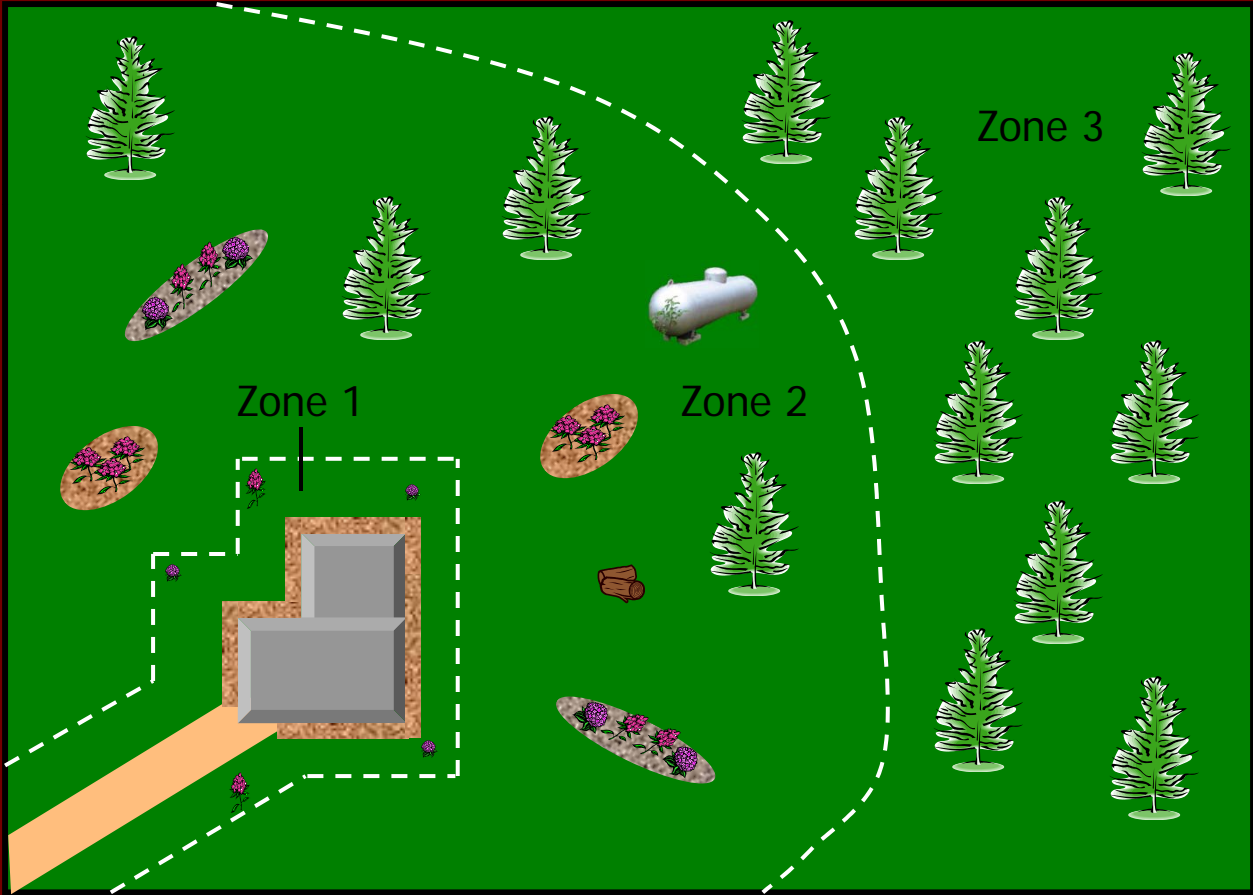
- Use low flammability plant materials.
- Plants should be low-growing.
- Extend irrigation system to this area.
- Well spaced trees.



Zone 3

- Furthest area from the structure is a natural area.
- Selectively prune and thin all plants.
- Remove all highly flammable vegetation.





Remember:

- Leave a minimum of 30 feet around the house to accommodate fire equipment.
- Widely space and carefully situate the trees you plant.
- Remove “ladder fuels” – vegetation that serves a link between grass and tree tops.
- Give yourself added protection with “fuel breaks” – driveways, gravel walkways, lawns.

Maintaining defensible space:

- Keep trees and shrubs properly pruned.
- Remove leaf clutter and dead and overhanging branches.
- Mow the lawn regularly.
- Dispose of cutting and debris promptly.
- Store firewood away from the house.
- Be sure the irrigation system is well maintained.
- Use care when refueling garden equipment and maintain it regularly.
- Store and use flammable liquids properly.
- Dispose of smoking materials carefully.
- Become familiar with local regulations – vegetation clearances, disposal of debris, and fire safety requirements for equipment.
- Follow manufacturers' instruction when using fertilizers and pesticides.

For more information:

- Texas Forest Service
 - www.texasfirewise.com
- Firewise
 - www.firewise.org