CSFD Wildfire Risk Evaluation

515 AUTUMN CREST CIR

DISCLAIMER: This map is intended for display purposes only and is not intended for any legal representations.

Wildfire Risk Evaluation	
Address	515 AUTUMN CREST CIR
Address/Lot Identification	Address plate displayed and visible
Adjacency to Dangerous Topography	Greater than or equal to 30 feet, but less than 100 feet
Roofing Material	Class A/Non-Combustible Roof
Siding Material	Masonry, concrete, stucco
Defensible Space Around Structure	20 to 30 feet
Vegetation Density	Light density of conifers and/or brush within 30 feet the structure
Overall Weighted Rating	3.53
Risk Category	HIGH
Last Rating Date	October 27, 2006
Parcel Number	7324100000

Wildfire Rating Legend

- No Assessment Available
- Low Risk
- Moderate Risk
- High Risk
- Very High Risk
- Extreme Risk

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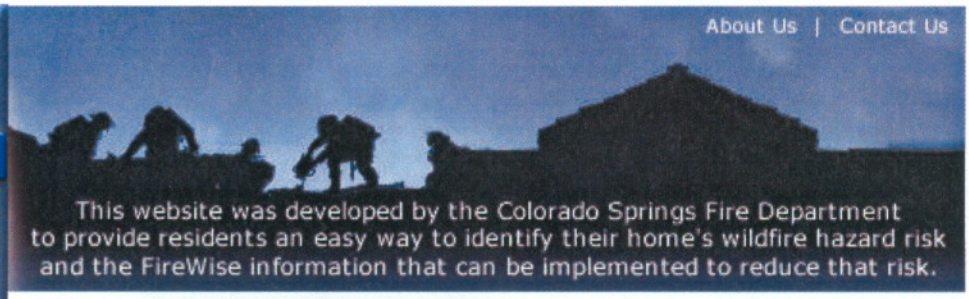

What Is My Wildfire Hazard Rating?

How Was I Rated?

Improve Your Hazard Rating

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How Was I Rated?

Wildfire is a dynamic event influenced by fuel, weather and topography. Wildfire risk modeling represents a "best knowledge and science" application, but does not provide any guarantees. Lower risk ratings combined with maximum wildfire mitigation efforts, provide a structure with (at best) a 50/50 chance of survival.

As new information and technology become available, model updates could have an affect on individual wildfire hazard ratings without the homeowner initiating any type of change.

Parcel ratings: Each rating was derived by evaluating a number of risk factors. There were 25 inputs into the model. They include things like construction features, topography, and adjacent vegetation. Your overall hazard rating is a combination of contributing factors, some you can influence and some you can't. You are encouraged to read this section and to take action on your roof type, defensible space, address visibility, and siding material.

Map Legend: Each rating is the relative probability as a result of individual site visits and a Geographic Information System (GIS) analysis. A green parcel represents a lower hazard rating, but it does not denote that your home will be unaffected by wildfire. Some properties have higher risk ratings than others. All properties and structures in the Wildland-Urban Interface are inherently at risk from a wildfire. A parcel that has an overall lower risk rating should still be improved if possible.

No Evaluation Available

Lower Risk

Moderate Risk

Higher Risk

Very High Risk

Extreme Risk

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Improving Your Hazard Rating.

- What Can You Do?
- What Is Defensible Space?
- Wildland-Urban Interface Vegetation
- Photos of Managed and Unmanaged Vegetation
- Ladder Fuels

Topography, fuel and weather are the three factors that influence the spread of wildfire. **Fuels in a wildfire setting are classified as vegetation and structural elements such as the roof, siding, deck, etc.**

Statistics show efforts to modify these fuels can have a profound effect on a home's ability to survive a wildfire!

It's impossible to guarantee a home will survive a wildfire, but by incorporating fuel management techniques, hardening the structure and performing annual maintenance, a home's chances of survival are increased.

Preventive measures are the key to protecting a home during the crucial minutes it takes wildfire to pass.

Homes built adjacent to vegetated areas in steep terrain **are susceptible to wildland fire.** Colorado Springs is considered a **high hazard wildland environment.**

What Can You Do?

The following steps accompanied by regular maintenance will create a safer wildland environment and could save your home in the event of a wildfire.

1. **Roofs are an extremely vulnerable part of a house during a wildfire.** The city's Class A roofing ordinance 02-174 dated January 1, 2003, outlines the types of roofing products that can be used. The ordinance states that after January 1, 2003, a Class A roof covering (excluding solid wood roofing products) shall be installed on all **residential occupancies** for **new construction, re-roofing, and repairs greater than 25% of the total roof area**. A minimum Class B roof covering shall be installed on all remaining occupancies (not to

replace Class A where already required by Table 15-A; 1997 UBC) at the time a permitted roofing or re-roofing application is made within the limits of the City of Colorado Springs, Colorado.

Complete details of the ordinance can be obtained through the Office of the City Clerk or at www.springsgov.com.

2. Create defensible space around your home. This area should extend 30' feet from the structure, **but not exceed beyond the property line.** Defensible space incorporates vegetation management as detailed in the following steps.

3. Multiple large trees within the defensible space area should be trimmed so the tops are not touching. Tree clusters may be allowed if significant clear area is provided. Tree branches shall not extend over or under roof eaves and shall not be within fifteen (15) feet of a wood burning appliance chimney. Remove dead, diseased and weakened trees. Lower tree branches should be pruned to three times the height of any underlying shrubs or grass.

4. Remove pine needles, leaves and debris from the ground and in-between brush and trees. Roofs and gutters must also be kept clean from these materials.

5. Keep grass and weeds mowed to a maximum height of 4 inches. Fire spreads rapidly in dry grass and weeds. Promptly dispose of leaves, branches and other debris.

6. Do not use the area under decks for storage. Store firewood at least 15' away from the house and decks.

7. Ensure your address is clearly marked and visible from the street.

8. Install spark arresters over chimneys.

9. Incorporate fire/fuel breaks in your landscaping. These include stone or concrete patios, ponds, rock paths and sidewalks.

10. **Plan and rehearse an escape plan.** Be prepared to evacuate your home when directed by fire or police officials.

Special attention needs to be taken when making improvements and changing roof types to **ensure adherence to local zoning codes, ordinances and community covenants.** Normal maintenance and treatment of your yard's landscape cover may be conducted without any city approvals, vegetation within 10' of the home may be removed without City review if necessary to comply with fire safety procedures.

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What Is Defensible Space?

As the number of people living in and adjacent to the wildland urban interface grows, the likelihood of homes being threatened by wildfire also grows. A critical factor in determining whether or not a home will survive a wildfire is the type, amount, and maintenance of vegetation surrounding the house. In the 1980's the term "defensible space" was coined to describe vegetation management practices aimed at reducing the wildfire threat to homes.

Defensible space refers to that area between a house and an oncoming wildfire where the vegetation has been modified to reduce the wildfire threat and to provide an opportunity for firefighters to effectively defend the house. Sometimes, defensible space is simply a homeowner's properly maintained yard.

What is the relationship between vegetation and wildfire threat?
Many people do not view the plants growing on their property as a threat. In terms of wildfire, what is growing adjacent to a home can have considerable influence upon its survivability. All vegetation including naturally occurring native plants and ornamental plants are potential wildfire fuel. If vegetation is properly modified and maintained, a wildfire can be slowed, the length of flames shortened, and the amount of heat reduced. All of which assist firefighters in defending the home.

The Fire Department is supposed to protect my house, so why bother with defensible space?
Some individuals incorrectly assume that a fire engine will be parked in their driveway and firefighters will be actively defending their homes if a wildfire approaches. During a major wildfire, it is unlikely there will be enough firefighting resources available to defend every home. In these instances, firefighters, will face a difficult task of selecting homes they can safely and effectively protect. Even with adequate resources, some wildfires may be so intense that there may be little firefighters can do. The key is to proactively reduce fuel (vegetation) long before a wildfire occurs. By performing regular vegetation maintenance you are increasing your home's ability to survive a wildfire.

Does defensible space mean clear cutting?
No, Unfortunately, many people have a misconception that vegetation management involves clear cutting. Many homes have attractive, well-vegetated properties that also serve as effective defensible space.

Does creating defensible space require any special skills or equipment?
No. For the most part, common gardening and yard tools are all that is needed. A chipper, compost bin, or large trash dumpster may be useful in disposing of tree limbs.

How big is an effective defensible space?
Defensible space size is usually expressed as the distance from the house in which vegetation is managed to reduce the wildfire threat. The necessary distance for an effective defensible space is not the same for everyone, but varies by slope and type of wildland vegetation growing near the house.

Does defensible space make a difference?
Yes. Visits to the recent wildland fires in Colorado and New Mexico confirm that homes that have incorporated FireWise concepts are more likely to survive a wildfire. Structure survivability features work hand in glove with defensible space to enhance the homes "stand alone" potential. Construction materials that help "harden the structure" include stucco, brick and fire resistant siding, double pane windows and non-combustible roofing materials. These conditions give firefighters the opportunity to effectively and safely defend the home.

Does having a defensible space guarantee my home will survive a wildfire?
No. Under extreme conditions, all homes have the potential to burn. Having defensible space will significantly improve the odds of your home surviving a wildfire.

Why doesn't everyone living in a high hazard wildfire area create defensible space?
Specific reasons for not creating defensible space are varied. Some individuals believe "it won't happen to me." Others think costs, time, effort and loss of privacy outweigh the benefits. Some have failed to implement defensible space practices because of lack of knowledge or misconceptions.

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Wildland-Urban Interface Vegetation

The following examples provide a visual representation of vegetation found in the Colorado Springs wildland-urban interface.

Homeowners increase their chances of surviving a wildfire by reducing the amount of vegetation on their parcel. FireWise landscaping does not mean clear cutting! It simply means, some extreme gardening needs to be performed and dead leaves, pine needles, and other dead debris and ground litter removed from the residence. Lawns and weeds need to be kept mowed; vegetation thinned and branches of trees raised off the ground.

Once FireWise landscaping techniques are performed they need to be maintained on a regular basis.

Good Vegetation Management:

Unmanaged Vegetation:

Ladder fuels (material on or near the ground that carry fire to the surface and crowns) have been reduced and vegetation properly thinned

Dense and unmaintained vegetation

Maintained scrub oak will have a canopy (similar to a treetop) and resemble more of a tree than a shrub

Scrub oak and ladder fuels on a slope leading to a residence

Pruned scrub oak continues their importance to area wildlife

Thick stands of scrub oak

Appropriately trimmed and thinned ponderosa pine and young stands of scrub oak

Ladder fuels and thick vegetation in a chimney behind area homes

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Ladder Fuels

Vegetation is often present at varying heights, similar to the rungs of a ladder. Under these conditions, flames from fuels burning at ground level, such as a thick layer of pine needles, can be carried to shrubs which can ignite still higher fuel like tree branches. Vegetation that allows a fire to move from lower growing plants to taller ones is referred to as "ladder fuel". The ladder fuel problem can be corrected by providing a separation between the vegetation layers.

Within the defensible space area, a vertical separation of three times the height of the lower fuel layer is recommended.

For example, if a shrub growing adjacent to a large pine tree is three feet tall, the recommended separation distance would be 9 feet (3 ft. shrub height x 3 = 9 feet). This could be accomplished be removing the lower tree branches, reducing the height of the shrub, or both.

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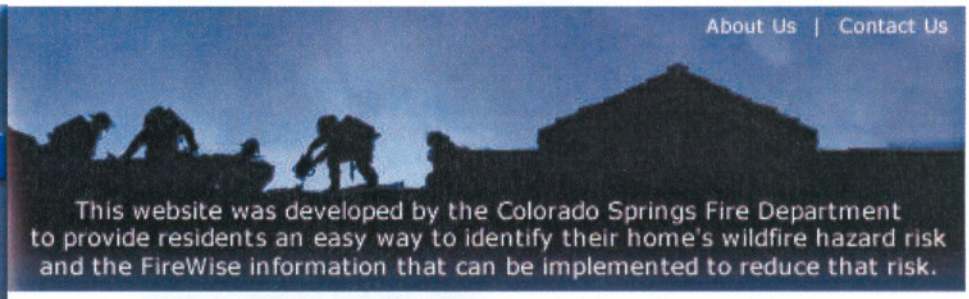

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Where am I on the map?
Click on the "What Is My Rating?" icon. Click the search button and enter your street number and the street name in capital letters. If unsure of abbreviations, use only the street number followed by a space and the first letter of the street name. From the list of matching records select your address.

You may also enter by clicking directly on the city map in the area close to your neighborhood. Then use the zoom in feature until your specific parcel is located.

2. What do the colors mean?
Green indicates the lowest risk evaluation and the colors progressively change into red, which indicates an extreme risk rating.

3. How do I reduce my risk?
From any page click the "Improve Hazard Rating" icon and you will find information that will assist in reducing your wildfire risk. Once changes/improvements have been made, please call the FireWise office at 385-7281 to schedule a no charge reassessment. A new assessment may improve your rating and will be reflected in a color change on the map.

4. Why was my home not included in the Area of Study?
The Colorado Springs Fire Department evaluated only addresses that are part of the currently defined wildland-urban interface within the city limits.

5. I live within the city limits and my home was not included in the current evaluations?
There are two reasons your home may not have been evaluated:
• Your home must be within the wildland-urban interface area of study.
• Homes built after August 2000 have not been evaluated. Please call 385-7281 to schedule an evaluation.

6. What is the wildland-urban interface?
The term wildland-urban interface describes locations where homes are built adjacent to vegetated areas in terrain susceptible to wildland fire.

7. How many homes are within the Colorado Springs wildland-urban interface?
More than 44,000 addresses have been currently identified within our wildland-urban interface.

8. Can defensible space make a difference?
Yes, visits to recent wildfires confirm homes with effective defensible space are much more likely to survive a wildfire.

9. Does defensible space guarantee my home will survive a wildfire?
It's impossible to guarantee a home will survive a wildfire, but by incorporating fuel management techniques, hardening the structure and performing annual maintenance, a home's chances of survival are significantly increased.

10. How can my neighborhood receive more information on reducing their wildfire risk?
FireWise group presentations are available at no cost to homeowner's associations, neighborhood groups, etc. Please call the Colorado Springs Fire Department's Wildland Risk Management Office at 385-7281 to schedule a FireWise presentation.

11. What causes wildland fires?
There are two causes of wildland fires:
• Lightning

• Humans - This category includes intentional and unintentional acts. Possible sources include fireworks, smoking, model rockets, campfires, outdoor cooking grills and other related activities.

12. Who can access the parcel ratings?
By entering an address within the wildland-urban interface anyone can access the information. The site is public record and the information is not password protected.

13. Will my insurance company raise my rate based on the evaluations?
Through communication with the insurance industry, it was found that rates are currently based on loss and Colorado Springs has not lost a home to wildfire in many years. However, homeowners may find future rates affected by the recent major wildfires throughout the State of Colorado.

14. Where did the Colorado Springs Fire Department get the information to determine my hazard rating?
The Fire Department did individual on-site assessments of each property identified in the area of study.

15. If I make FireWise improvements to my home how can I get a new rating?
Following improvements, homeowner's can contact the Fire Department's FireWise office by calling 385-7281.

16. What influences the spread of wildfire?
The three factors that influence wildfire are topography, fuel and weather. In a wildfire environment only fuels can be modified or improved. Fuels in a wildfire setting are classified as vegetation and structural elements such as the roof, siding, deck, etc.

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