

NEWS RELEASE

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Select and Maintain Vegetation to Help Make Property FireWise

WESTERN COLORADO — Many plants native to Colorado are highly flammable during the summer and can fuel a wildfire, causing it to spread rapidly. Removing flammable native vegetation and replacing it with low-growing, fire-resistive plants is one of the easiest and most effective ways to create defensible space and make a property FireWise.

Selecting landscape vegetation that is fire-resistive and easy to maintain may also visually enhance your property and certainly will help make it less vulnerable to wildfire.

In general, fire-resistive plants grow close to the ground; have a low sap or resin content; grow without accumulating dead branches, needles, leaves or other debris; are easy to maintain and prune; and in some cases are drought-tolerant.

If fire-resistive plants are not available, vary the height of landscape plants and give them adequate spacing. The taller the plants, the more widely spaced they should be.

In addition to selecting plants that may help make property FireWise, there are other precautions you can take to help protect your property and community from wildfires. For example:

- Work with neighbors to clear common areas between homes and other structures and prune areas of heavy vegetation that may pose a threat to the community.
- Avoid planting trees under or near electrical lines.
- Thin trees to decrease fire hazard and improve forest health if your property extends outside the designated defensible space and is heavily forested.
- Remove dead, weak or diseased trees and trees that are obviously leaning, and leave a healthy mixture of older and younger trees.

Contact your local fire department, nursery, Colorado State University Extension or the Colorado State Forest Service to learn more about fire-resistive plants that are adapted to the climate in your area. A copy of fact sheet number 6.305, *FireWise Plant Materials*, contains an extensive list of plants suitable for various elevations and soil conditions, and is available on-line at http://csfs.colostate.edu/library/pdfs/fire/fire_fact_sheets/06305.pdf.

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ROCKY MOUNTAIN WILDLAND FIRE INFORMATION:

WORKING SIDE-BY-SIDE FROM THE GREAT PLAINS TO THE GREAT DIVIDE TO
PREVENT WILDLAND FIRES AND PROMOTE FOREST AND WATERSHED HEALTH.