

# Low or No Cost Ways to Harden Your Home

1. Regularly clean your roof, gutters, decks, and the base of walls to avoid the accumulation of fallen leaves, needles and other flammable materials (see Defensible Space for more details).
2. Ensure that all combustible materials are removed from underneath, on top of, or within five feet of a deck.
3. Remove vegetation or other combustible materials that are within five feet of windows and glass doors.
4. Replace wood mulch products within five feet of all structures with noncombustible products such as dirt, stone, or gravel.
5. Remove all dead or dying grass, plants, shrubs, trees, branches, leaves, weeds, and pine needles within 30 feet of all structures or to the property line.
6. Block any spaces between your roof covering and sheathing (bird stops).
7. Install noncombustible corrosion resistant metal gutter covers on gutters to prevent the accumulation of leaves and debris in the gutter.
8. Cover your chimney and stovepipe outlets with a noncombustible corrosion resistant metal mesh screen ([spark arrestor](#)), with 3/8-inch to 1/2-inch openings.\*\*
9. Cover all vent openings with 1/16-inch to 1/8-inch noncombustible corrosion resistant metal mesh screens.\*\*
10. Caulk and plug gaps greater than 1/16-inch around exposed rafters and blocking to prevent ember intrusion.
11. Inspect exterior siding for dry rot, gaps, cracks and warping. Caulk or plug gaps greater than 1/16-inch in siding and replace any damaged boards, including those with dry rot.
12. Install weather stripping to gaps greater than 1/16-inch in garage doors to prevent ember intrusion. The stripping must be compliant with UL Standard 10C.

\*This list was developed as a best practices guide and to assist homeowners to ensure their home is more ignition-resistant from wildfires. Low cost can be subjective. Some of these items are based on upgrading to more stringent materials when that feature is up for replacement due to normal maintenance or lifespan, i.e. roofs.

\*\* Do not use fiberglass or plastic mesh as they can melt or burn.

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