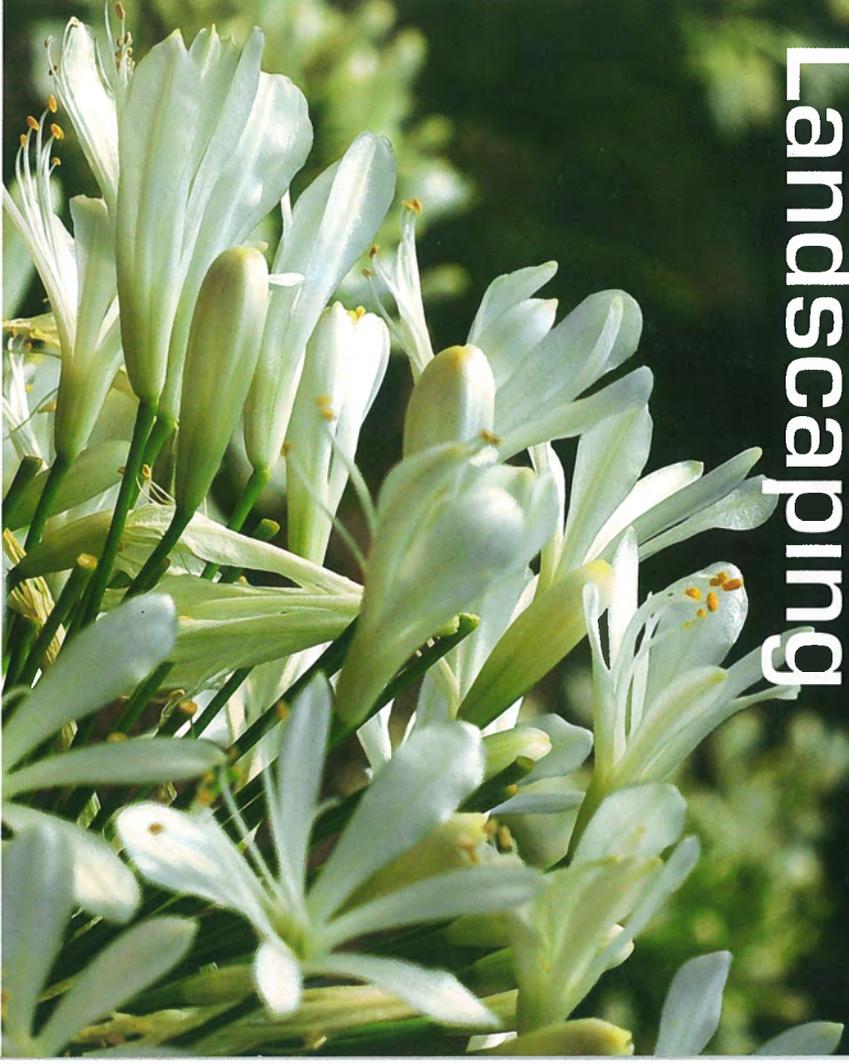


# Fire Wise & Water Wise Landscaping



City of Santa Barbara's  
Firescape Demonstration  
Garden





## Protect Your Home

Wildfires devastate many acres within Santa Barbara County and Southern California each year, resulting in millions of dollars of property loss to homes and the environment. Much of the damage caused to homes and property from wildfire can be significantly reduced or prevented through an integrated program of protective measures, including fire wise construction, fire protection systems and fire wise landscaping.



## Fire Wise Landscaping

Fire wise landscaping can protect your life as well as your property during a wildfire by creating defensible space around your home. Fire wise landscaping is the selective removal of existing flammable plants and replacing them with fire wise plants with appropriate spacing (vertically and horizontally) around your home to resist the spread of wildfire. In addition, fire wise landscaping must be maintained on a year round basis to be effective. For more information on defensible space go to: [SantaBarbaraCA.gov/Wildland](http://SantaBarbaraCA.gov/Wildland).

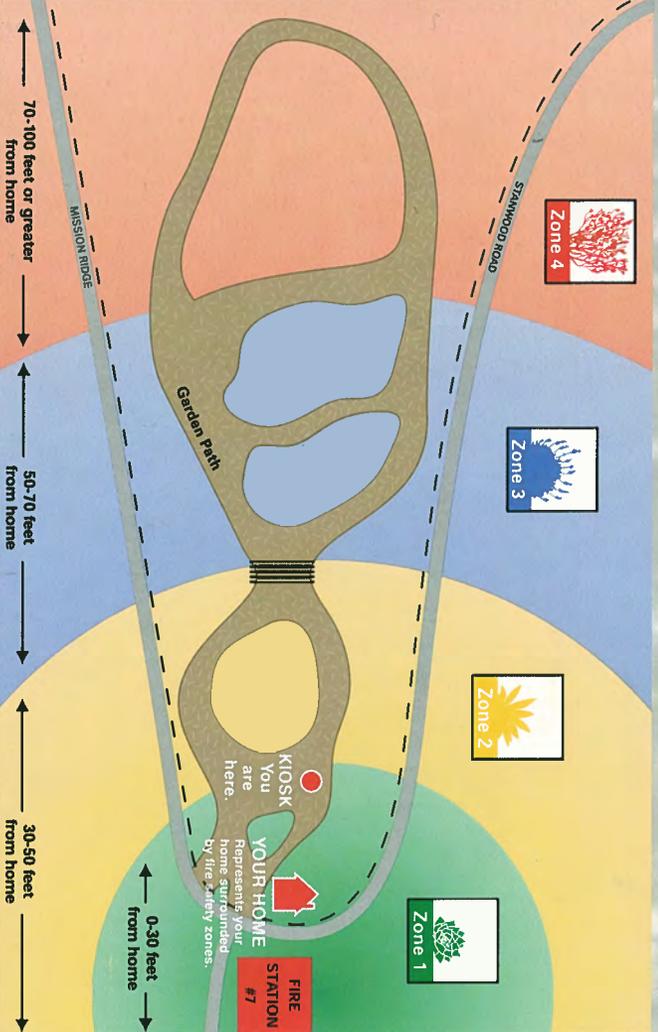


## Firescape Demonstration Garden

This garden uses fire wise landscaping techniques, as well as water wise plants to visually demonstrate to homeowners fire wise landscaping concepts. The garden presents these concepts by defining four different plant zones for a successful landscape scheme designed for fire safety, water conservation, cost efficiency, maintenance and aesthetics. Homeowners who live in wildfire prone areas should use these concepts to create a fire wise area around their home and property.



# Landscaping in Zones



The four zones represent different types of vegetation, each planted with a specific purpose in mind.





## Zone 1

**Zone 1 (0 to 30 feet from the home)** is the area directly adjacent to your home. This is the most important zone. Plants should be low growing, well spaced, and irrigated. Plant trees at least 15 feet from structures and space them so that canopies do not touch when they are fully grown.



## Zone 2

**Zone 2 (30 to 50 feet from the home)** is often referred to as the “greenbelt”. Maintain a relatively open character in this zone and provide irrigation to plants. Plant low-growing groundcover resistant to fire and intermix them with medium sized shrubs. Succulents are an excellent choice in this zone. Trees should be planted so that their canopies are not touching when fully grown.



## Zone 3

**Zone 3 (50 to 70 feet from the home)** should consist of plants that are low growing and woody. This area should have native and Mediterranean plantings that require only periodic irrigation. Shrubs should be planted to maintain some spacing in between individual plants or clusters of plants.



## Zone 4

**Zone 4 (70 to 100 feet or more from the home)** is the area furthest from your home and is a transitional area between natives and the plants around your home. Focus should be on planting or maintaining native vegetation that has been thinned to reduce the plant’s volume, remove any dead material, and provide spacing between plants. Any new plants once established should not require irrigation. During a wildfire this zone may burn, but with less fuel it will slow a fire’s path towards the home.







## Fire and Water Wise Plants

No plant is fire proof, given enough heat, all vegetation will burn. However, plants differ in how fast they actually burn, the flame height they produce, how they transmit fire to your home and their ability to survive a fire. Fire wise plants are considered fire resistant. Fire resistant plants are less likely to burn as easily or rapidly as other flammable plants. Another important consideration is selecting water wise plants appropriate for our climate.



In general, fire resistant plants have the ability to store water in their leaves and stems, produce limited amounts of dead and fine material, have upright growing characteristics, and stems and leaves that are not resinous, oily or waxy. Deciduous trees are more fire resistant than evergreens. They have higher moisture content when in leaf, but lower fuel volume when dormant.





## Efficient Irrigation

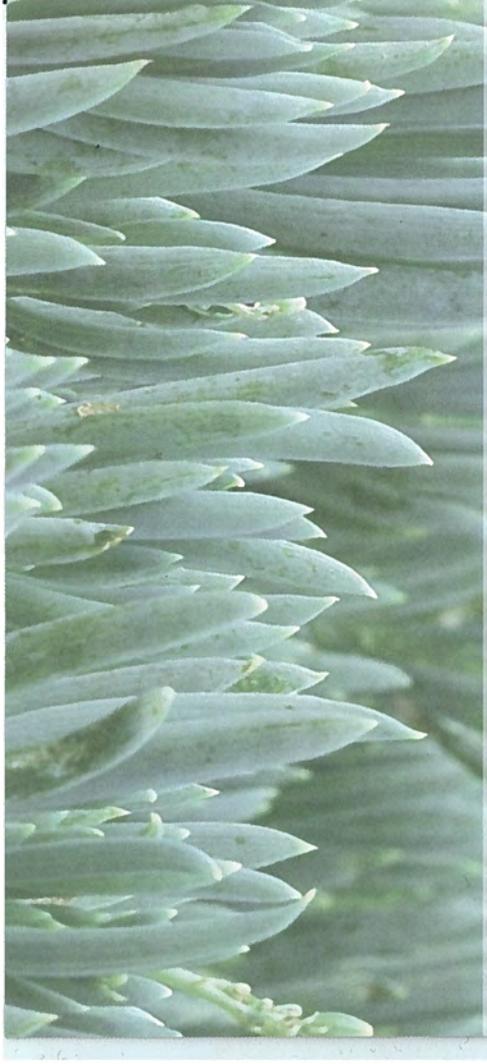
Efficient irrigation is critical in maintaining your fire wise landscape. Irrigation reduces the flammability of plants by keeping plant tissues filled with water. Efficient watering also encourages deep plant root growth that will help control erosion. For advice on designing, installing, and maintaining an irrigation system that has maximum water efficiency go to: [SantaBarbaraCA.gov/WaterWise](http://SantaBarbaraCA.gov/WaterWise).



## Mulch and Hardscape Features

Mulch covers and cools the soil. It minimizes water evaporation, eliminates weed growth, slows erosion, and adds nutrients to the soil. Mulching 3” deep will allow you to use less water. Use stone rather than wood chip mulches in Zone 1. Wood chips can catch fire and be blown into eaves and areas directly around your home.

Hardscape features such as walkways, rock patios, water features, non-flammable walls, and large boulders should be used throughout your landscape to help reduce the amount of plant material around your home and break up the continuity of the landscape.



***Garden address:***

Mission Ridge Road and Stanwood Drive, across from  
2411 Stanwood Drive, Fire Station 7

***Contact:***

City of Santa Barbara Fire Department

***Phone:***

805-965-5254

***Mail address:***

City of Santa Barbara Fire Department  
925 Chapala Street.  
Santa Barbara, CA 93101

***For more information:***

[SantaBarbaraCA.gov/Wildland](http://SantaBarbaraCA.gov/Wildland)  
[Santa BarbaraCA.gov/WaterWise](http://SantaBarbaraCA.gov/WaterWise)

***Hours:***

Daily from 8 am to sunset

The Firescape Demonstration Garden is provided  
by the City of Santa Barbara Fire and Public Works  
Departments. Thanks to the many landscape professional  
and volunteers who helped to make this garden a reality.



*Let's Save Together*  
**waterwise**  
City of Santa Barbara



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