

WE'LL KEEP YOU OUT OF THE WOODS.

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Being Faced with Urban Wildfire

In today's urban growth and decreased forest management surrounding certain portions of the country, we are seeing more and more devastation from wildfire's in the urban areas. With a basic understanding of steps you can take to protect your property, it may just save your business.

Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) is defined by the US Forest Service as the place where homes and wildlands meet or intermingle. To be more specific, where humans and their development meet or intermix with wildland fuel. There are code requirements for new construction and buildings located in the WUI, but what about other areas, or already constructed properties.

What can you do to protect your investment? What if the dry grass field next door, or a block away catches fire. Embers can travel in the air for miles finding their way to another fuel source creating a catastrophe away from the original source. This is why it is so important to take certain steps to help keep your business safe and protected as much as possible regardless of your location.

To help you become more aware of how to protect your business from Urban Wildfire, we have outlined some topics below:

Identify the Problem: Where and what hazards do I have on my property and where are they located? **Structure Survivability:** How is my building or roof constructed? Is it made of combustible materials?

Defensive Area: What fire hazards do I have on my property? Is there dry vegetation surrounding my buildings and property? Is their vegetation below or around my electrical transformers?

Public Access Restriction: Do I have areas that are open to the public? If so, these areas should be secured with limited access.

Property Accessibility: Would the Fire Department and my employees have the ability to get around your site in the case of a fire?

Fire Protection: Is my firefighting equipment readily available, accessible and in working condition? This does not just include Fire Hoses and Extinguishers. This also may be Water Storage Facilities, Fire Sprinkler Systems, Fire Hydrants and Fire Pumps.

Reduce Fuel Loading/Ignition Sources: Do I have stored flammable materials placed around my property? Keep in mind this is not just fuel tanks and propane. Wood waste, paper and garbage are all flammable materials.

Planning and Management: Do I have a plan in place? This is not just referring to a Fire Fighting Plan. What about a Fire Watch Plan or Evacuation Plan? Keep in mind that the way you plan and manage a Urban Wildfire may differ from your normal programs.

One thing that should be understood is that Fire Fighting efforts may already be taking place on a fire near your property but miles away and there may not be enough man power to protect your facility....the prevention measures that you take may be the only chance your home or business has.