

HOW TO HELP

UNDER FIRE, PAGE 116 **Don't Fan the Flames** Each year more Americans move into what is called the wildland-urban interface: zones where human habitation meets forests or grasslands. Many wildfires start in such places; under the right conditions, flames or embers can easily spread to nearby homes. Fortunately, there are ways (below) to make a house in those zones less vulnerable to fire, from the choice of building materials to the landscaping decisions. More information is available at firewise.org.

1 Improve the Roof

Fire-resistant ceramic tiles, slate or composition shingles, and metal sheets provide better protection than wood.

2 Seal Off Openings

Put metal screens over vents and other openings to block embers.

3 Prune Branches

Flames can jump from branches hanging over the roof of the house.

4 Mow the Lawn

Keep grass short and well watered to hinder the spread of flames.

5 Pick Up Debris

Remove leaf litter and pine needles from gutters, dead limbs from around the house.

6 Lighten Landscaping

Spacing out trees and shrubs makes it harder for flames to travel and easier for firefighters to work.

