

# Quick Guide to Firewise Shrubs

## How to incorporate Firewise shrubs into your landscape:

- Select the “right plant for the right place,” by choosing plants that are well adapted to the specific conditions where they are to be planted. Also consider the shrub’s flammability characteristics.
- **Highly flammable** shrubs should be planted beyond the defensible space, 30 feet or more from the house.
- **Moderately flammable** shrubs may be planted in isolated landscape beds within the defensible space, at least 15 feet from the house.
- **Low flammability** shrubs can be planted within the defensible space, 6 feet or more from the house.
- Conduct routine landscape maintenance, such as pruning shrubs, to maintain vertical and horizontal separation from other plants.
- Periodically remove dead or diseased plant material from plants within your home landscape.
- Remember, there are no “fireproof” plants. All plants and organic mulches burn in extreme weather or fire conditions.

### Did you know you can select shrubs based on their flammability?

Researchers at the USDA Forest Service, University of Florida, and the National Institute of Standards and Technology have developed flammability categories to indicate how easily and intensely a shrub will burn.

## Moderate Flammability

Use cautiously in isolated landscape beds within the defensible space, 15 feet or more from the house.

## High Flammability

Plant these shrubs 30 feet or more away from the house. Maintain them regularly.



**Chinese juniper**  
*Juniperus chinensis*



**Dwarf yaupon**  
*Ilex vomitoria*



**Gallberry**  
*Ilex glabra*



**Mountain laurel**  
*Kalmia latifolia*



**Ashe juniper**  
*Juniperus ashei*



**Boxwood**  
*Buxus microphylla*  
var. *koreana*



**Pipestem**  
*Agarista populifolia*



**Azalea**  
*Azalea obtusum*



**Glossy abelia**  
*Abelia x grandiflora*



**Rhododendron**  
*Rhododendron*  
*x chionoides*



**Blue holly**  
*Ilex x meservea*



**Leyland cypress**  
*Cupressocyparis leylandii*

# Low Flammability

Shrubs suitable for planting within the defensible space; plant 6 feet or more from the house.



**Adam's needle**  
*Yucca filamentosa*



**Anisetree**  
*Illicium floridanum*



**Arrowwood**  
*Viburnum dentatum*



**Bayberry**  
*Myrica pennsylvanica*



**Beautyberry**  
*Callicarpa dichotoma*



**Bigleaf hydrangea**  
*Hydrangea macrophylla*



**Butterfly bush**  
*Buddleia davidi*



**Camellia**  
*Camellia japonica*



**Coontie**  
*Zamia pumila*



**Foster holly**  
*Ilex x attenuata*



**Gardenia**  
*Gardenia jasminoides*



**Klein's forsythia**  
*Forsythia x intermedia*



**Oakleaf hydrangea**  
*Hydrangea quercifolia*



**Oleander**  
*Nerium oleander*



**Pittosporum**  
*Pittosporum tobira*



**Rosebay**  
*Rhododendron maximum*



**Scarlet firethorn**  
*Pyracantha coccinea*



**Shrubby cinquefoil**  
*Potentilla fruticosa*



**Sweet pepperbush**  
*Clethra alnifolia*



**Walter's viburnum**  
*Viburnum obovatum*



**Weigela**  
*Weigela florida*



**Winterberry**  
*Ilex verticillata*

For more information, contact Annie Hermansen-Baez of the USDA Forest Service, Southern Research Station at [ahermansen@fs.fed.us](mailto:ahermansen@fs.fed.us), (352) 376-3271.

Also visit: [www.interfacesouth.org/products/research.html](http://www.interfacesouth.org/products/research.html)

## Additional Resources

- For more information on Firewise shrubs, see “Selecting and Maintaining Firewise Plants for Landscaping” at [www.interfacesouth.org/products/fact\\_sheets/Selecting\\_Firewise\\_Shrubs.pdf](http://www.interfacesouth.org/products/fact_sheets/Selecting_Firewise_Shrubs.pdf)
- To estimate the flammability of shrub and other plant species not shown here, see “Preparing a Firewise Plant List for WUI Residents” at [www.interfacesouth.org/products/fact\\_sheets/Preparing\\_Firewise\\_Plant\\_List.pdf](http://www.interfacesouth.org/products/fact_sheets/Preparing_Firewise_Plant_List.pdf) or [www.interfacesouth.org/products/flammability\\_key.html](http://www.interfacesouth.org/products/flammability_key.html)
- For Firewise landscaping tips, see [www.interfacesouth.org/products/fact\\_sheets/Selecting\\_Maintaining\\_Firewise\\_Plants\\_Landscaping.pdf](http://www.interfacesouth.org/products/fact_sheets/Selecting_Maintaining_Firewise_Plants_Landscaping.pdf) and [www.interfacesouth.org/products/fact\\_sheets/Reducing\\_Wildfire\\_Risk.pdf](http://www.interfacesouth.org/products/fact_sheets/Reducing_Wildfire_Risk.pdf)



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