



Fire-Resistant and Fire-Prone Plants Common to Yavapai County

Defensible space landscape reduces the threat from wildfire and requires careful plant selection, placement, spacing and maintenance to help resist the spread of fire to your home. **Fire-resistant** plants are usually easier to maintain and more naturally resistant to igniting from flames and embers. These plants are NOT “fireproof” and all require irrigation and frequent maintenance to resist ignition. Some plants are particularly susceptible to fire. These **fire-prone plants** may ignite readily and burn intensely, and should be removed or aggressively maintained if present near a home, road or driveway. It’s important to remember that ALL PLANTS can burn if poorly maintained. Following are some common Yavapai County fire-resistant plants (pg 1-2) and fire-prone plants (pg 3).

Fire-Resistant Plant Characteristics

- * Tend to have leaves, not needles
- * Trees tend to be clean, not bushy and have little deadwood
- * Shrubs are low-growing (2’ or lower), minimal buildup of dead material
- * Taller shrubs are clean, not bushy or twiggy
- * Sap is water-like and typically does not have a strong odor
- * Most fire-resistant trees are broad-leaf deciduous (lose leaves)
- * Some thick-leaf evergreens may be fire-resistant

Fire-Resistant Plants

Form: C - Cover (groundcover) G - Grass P - Perennial S - Shrub T - Tree V - Vine

COMMON NAME	SPECIES	FORM	COMMON NAME	SPECIES	FORM
4 o'clock	<i>Mirabilis jalapa</i>	P	Chuparosa	<i>Justicia californica</i>	S
Abelia	<i>Abelia</i> sp.	S	Citrus		T
African bush daisy	<i>Euryops pectinatus</i>	P	Clematis	<i>Clematis</i> sp.	V
Agapanthus	<i>Agapanthus</i> sp.	P	Coffee berry (CA buckthorn)	<i>Frangula californica</i>	S
Agave	<i>Agave</i> sp.	P	Columbine	<i>Aquilegia</i> sp.	P
Alder	<i>Alnus</i> sp.	T	Comfrey	<i>Symphytum officinale</i>	P
Apache Plume	<i>Fallugia</i>	S	Coral Bells	<i>Heuchera</i> sp.	P
Apples, Crabapple	<i>Malus</i> sp.	T	Cotoneaster	<i>Cotoneaster</i> sp.	S
Ash	<i>Fraxinus</i> sp.	T	Cottonwood	<i>Populus</i> sp.	T
Aspen, Quaking	<i>Populus tremuloides</i>	T	Crape myrtle	<i>Lagerstroemia indica</i>	S, T
Azalea, Rhododendron	<i>Rhododendron</i> sp.	S	Currant, Gooseberry	<i>Ribes</i> sp.	P
Bear Grass	<i>Nolina microcarpa</i>	P	Cyclamen	<i>Cyclamen</i> sp.	P
Birch	<i>Betula</i> sp.	T	Daylily	<i>Hemerocallis</i> sp.	P
Blue Fescue	<i>Festuca</i> sp.	G	Desert spoon	<i>Dasylyrion wheeleri</i>	S
Blue Mist Shrub	<i>Caryopteris clandonensis</i>	S	Desert willow	<i>Chilopsis linearis</i>	T
Boston Ivy, Virginia creeper	<i>Parthenocissus</i> sp.	V	Dogwood	<i>Cornus</i> sp.	S
Boxelder	<i>Acer negundo</i>	T	Dusty Miller	<i>Senecio cineraria</i>	P
Boxwood	<i>Buxus</i> sp.	S	Elderberry	<i>Sambucus</i> sp.	S
Buffalograss	<i>Bouteloua dactyloides</i>	G	Euonymus, Burning Bush	<i>Euonymus</i> sp.	S
Butterfly Bush	<i>Buddleia</i> sp.	S	Fairy Duster	<i>Calliandra</i> sp.	P
Cactus	<i>Cactaceae</i> sp.	P	False Spirea	<i>Astilbe</i> sp.	P
Carpet Bugle, Bugleweed	<i>Ajuga</i> sp.	C	Ferns	Many species	P
Catalpa	<i>Catalpa speciosa</i>	T	Fig	<i>Fig</i>	T
Catnip, Catmint	<i>Nepeta</i> sp.	P	Flax, Blue Flax	<i>Linum</i> sp.	P
Chaste Tree	<i>Vitex</i>	T	Forsythia	<i>Forsythia</i>	S
Chinese pistache	<i>Pistachia chinensis</i>	T	Fruit (apples, pears, peaches, cherry)		T
Chitalpa	<i>X Chitalpa tashkentensis</i>	T	Germander	<i>Teucrium</i> sp.	P,C
Chocolate vine	<i>Akebia</i> sp.	V	Goldenrain tree	<i>Koelreuteria paniculata</i>	T
Choke cherry	<i>Prunus virginiana</i>	S	Grape	<i>Vitis</i> sp.	P
Cholla	<i>Opuntia</i>	P	Graythorn	<i>Ziziphus obtusifolia</i>	S

Fire-Resistant Plants continued

Form: C - Cover (groundcover) G - Grass P - Perennial S - Shrub T - Tree V - Vine

COMMON NAME	SPECIES	FORM	COMMON NAME	SPECIES	FORM
Hackberry	<i>Celtis</i> sp.	T	Pear (ornamental)	<i>Prunus</i> sp.	T
Hawthorn	<i>Crataegus</i> sp.	T	Penstemon, Beard tongue	<i>Penstemon</i> sp.	P
Heath	<i>Erica</i> sp.	S	Peony	<i>Paeonia</i> sp.	P
Heather	<i>Calliuna</i> sp.	S	Photinia	<i>Photinia</i>	S
Heavenly Bamboo	<i>Nandina</i> sp.	S	Plumbago	<i>Ceratostigma plumbaginoides</i>	C
Hens & Chicks	<i>Echeveria</i> sp.	P	Potentilla, Cinquefoil	<i>Potentilla</i> sp.	S, C
Herbs	Many species	P	Privet	<i>Ligustrum</i> sp.	S
Holly	<i>Ilex</i> sp.	T, S	Purple leaf plum	<i>Prunus</i> sp.	S
Honey Locust	<i>Gleditsia triacanthos</i>	T	Quince	<i>Chaenomeles</i> sp.	T
Honeysuckle	<i>Lonicera</i>	P, V	Red chokeberry	<i>Aronia arbutifolia</i>	S
Hosta	<i>Hostas</i> sp.	P	Red yucca	<i>Hesperaloe</i>	P
Hummingbird Mint, Hyssop	<i>Agastache</i> sp.	P	Redbud	<i>Cercis</i> sp.	T
Hydrangea	<i>Hydrangea</i> sp.	P	Red-hot-poker	<i>Kniphofia uvaria</i>	P
Hyssop	<i>Hyssopus officinalis</i>	P	Rose of Sharon, Hibiscus	<i>Hibiscus</i> sp.	S
Ice plant	<i>Mesembryanthemum</i> sp.	P	Roses	<i>Rosa</i> sp.	S
Indian Hawthorn	<i>Raphiolepis indica</i>	S	Russian olive	<i>Elaeagnus angustifolia</i>	S
Indigo Bush	<i>Dalea</i> sp.	P	Sage	<i>Salvia</i> sp.	P
Iris	<i>Iris</i> sp.	P	Sago palm	<i>Cycas revoluta</i>	T
Japanese Spurge	<i>Pachysandra terminalis</i>	C	Sedum (stonecrop)	<i>Sedum</i>	P, C
Joe Pye Weed	<i>Eupatorium</i>	C	Serviceberry	<i>Amelancier</i> sp.	S
Jojoba	<i>Simmondsia chinensis</i>	T	Shasta daisy	<i>Leucanthemum x superbum</i>	P
Jujube	<i>Ziziphus jujuba</i>	T	Silktassel	<i>Garrya wrightii</i>	S
Lamb's ear	<i>Stachys byzantina</i>	P	Silver lace vine	<i>Polygonum aubertii</i>	V
Lavender	<i>Lavandula</i> sp.	P, S	Silverberry	<i>Elaeagnus</i>	S
Lavender Cotton	<i>Santolina</i> sp.	P, S	Smoke tree	<i>Cotinus coggygria</i>	S
Lawn grasses - typical turf type		G	Snowberry	<i>Symphoricarpos albus</i>	S
Lemonade berry, 3-leaf sumac	<i>Rhus</i> sp.	S	Snow-in-summer	<i>Cerastium tomentosum</i>	C
Lenten rose	<i>Helleborus</i> sp.	P	Spirea	<i>Spiraea</i> sp.	S
Lilac	<i>Syringa</i> sp.	S	Spotted deadnettle	<i>Lamiun</i> sp.	C
Lilyturf	<i>Liriope</i> sp.	C	Spurge, Gopher Plant	<i>Euphorbia</i> sp.	P
Littleleaf Cordia	<i>Cordia parvifolia</i>	S	Sugar bush	<i>Rhus ovata</i>	S
Locust trees	<i>Robinia</i> sp.	T	Sweet acacia	<i>Vachellia farnesiana</i>	T
London Plane	<i>Platanus acerifolia</i>	T	Sweet Woodruff	<i>Galium odoratum</i>	C
Magnolia	<i>Magnolia</i> sp.	T	Sycamore, American	<i>Platanus occidentalis</i>	T
Maidenhair tree	<i>Gingko biloba</i>	T	Texas ebony	<i>Pithecellobium flexiculae</i>	T
Maple, Boxelder	<i>Acer</i> sp.	T	Texas mountain laurel	<i>Sophora secuniflora</i>	T
Mesquite	<i>Prosopis</i> sp.	T	Trumpet vine	<i>Campsis radicans</i>	V
Mexican evening primrose	<i>Oenothera</i>	P	Viburnum	<i>Viburnum</i> sp.	S
Milkweed, Butterfly weed	<i>Asclepias</i> sp.	P	Vinca, Periwinkle	<i>Vinca</i> sp.	C
Mimosa	<i>Albizia</i> sp.	T	Walnut, black	<i>Juglans nigra</i>	T
Mock orange	<i>Philadelphus</i> sp.	S	Western soapberry	<i>Sapindus saponaria</i>	T
Mormon tea	<i>Ephedra</i> sp.	S	Willow	<i>Salix</i> sp.	T
Mouintain mahogany	<i>Cercocarpus</i> sp.	S	Winter jasmine	<i>Jasminum nudiflorum</i>	P
Mulberry	<i>Morus</i> sp.	T	Winterfat	<i>Eurotia lanata</i>	S
New Mexico privet	<i>Forestiera neomexicana</i>	T	Wisteria	<i>Wisteria</i> sp.	V
Oak	<i>Quercus</i> sp.	T	Wormwood, Powis castle	<i>Artemisia</i> sp.	P
Ocotillo	<i>Foqueria splenduns</i>	S	Yarrow	<i>Achillea</i> sp.	P
Oleander	<i>Nerium oleander</i>	S	Yellow bird of paradise	<i>Caesalpinia gilliesii</i>	S
Oregon Grape, Mahonia, Barberry	<i>Berberis</i> sp.	S	Yucca	<i>Yucca</i>	P, S

Deciduous trees are generally more fire-resistant than evergreens because they have higher moisture content when in leaf and a lower fuel volume when dormant, and typically do not contain flammable oils.

Fire-Prone Plant Characteristics

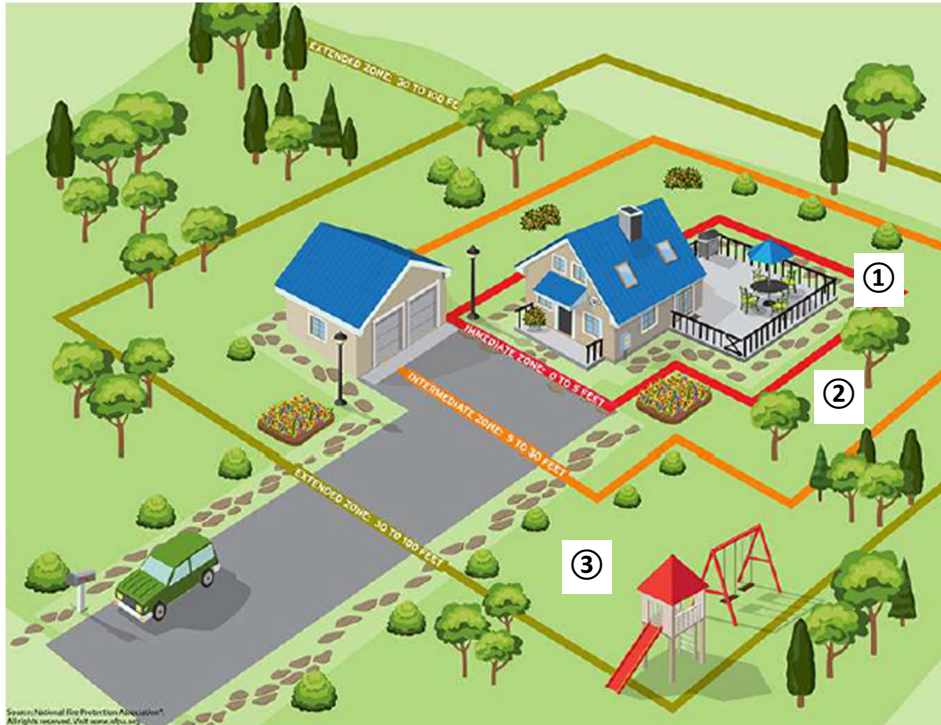
- * Often blade-leaf or needle-leaf evergreens or grasses
- * Often have stiff, woody small or fine, lacy leaves
- * Leaves and wood often contain volatile waxes, fats, terpenes or oils (crushed leaves will have strong odors)
- * Sap is usually gummy, resinous and may have a strong odor
- * Usually contain plentiful fine, twiggy, dry or dead materials
- * May have pubescent (hair covered) leaves
- * May have loose or papery bark
- * Usually flame (not smolder) when ignited with a match

Fire-Prone Plants

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COMMON NAME	SPECIES	FORM	COMMON NAME	SPECIES	FORM
Arborvitae	<i>Thuja, Platycladus</i>	T, S	Palo Verde	<i>Parkinsonia aculeata</i>	T
Arizona Cypress	<i>Cupressus arizonica</i>	T	Pampus grass	<i>Cortaderia selloana</i>	G
Bamboo	<i>Bambusa sp.</i>	G	Pine	<i>Pinus sp.</i>	S, T
Brittlebush	<i>Encelia farinosa</i>	P	Pinion	<i>Pinion</i>	T
Broom	<i>Cytisus sp.</i>	S	Rabbit brush	<i>Chrysothamnus sp.</i>	S
Buckwheat	<i>Eriogonum sp.</i>	P	Red brome	<i>Bromus rubens</i>	G
Catclaw acacia	<i>Acacia greggii</i>	S	Rosemary	<i>Rosmarinus officialis</i>	P
Cedar	<i>Cedrus sp.</i>	T	Rubber rabbitbrush	<i>Ericameria nauseosa</i>	S
Cheatgrass	<i>Bromus tectorum</i>	G	Russian sage	<i>Perovskia</i>	S
Creosote Bush	<i>Larrea tridentata</i>	S	Salt cedar	<i>Tamarix chinensis</i>	T
Cypress	<i>Cupressus sp.</i>	T	Saltbush	<i>Atriplex</i>	S
Deerbrush	<i>Ceanothus sp.</i>	S	Shrub live oak	<i>Quercus turbinella</i>	S
Deergrass	<i>Muhlenbergia rigens</i>	G	Siberian Elm	<i>Ulmus pumila</i>	T
Desert broom	<i>Baccharis sathroides</i>	S	Snakeweed	<i>Gutierrezia sarothrae</i>	S
Douglas Fir	<i>Pseudotsuga menziesii</i>	T	Spanish broom	<i>Spartium</i>	P
Eucalyptus	<i>Eucalyptus sp.</i>	T	Spruce	<i>Picea sp.</i>	T
Feather Reed Grass	<i>Calamagrostis sp.</i>	G	Squirreltail grass	<i>Elymus elymoides</i>	G
Fir	<i>Abies sp.</i>	T	Star Thistle	<i>Centaurea solstitialis</i>	P
Firethorn	<i>Pyracantha sp.</i>	S	Sweetgum	<i>Liquidambar styraciflua</i>	T
Fountain grass	<i>Pennisetum alopecuroides</i>	G	Switch grass	<i>Panicum virgatum</i>	G
Globe Thistle	<i>Echinops ritro</i>	P	Texas sage	<i>Leucophyllum sp.</i>	P
Juniper	<i>Juniperus sp.</i>	S	Turpentine bush	<i>Ericarmeria laricifolia</i>	S
Little bluestem	<i>Schizachyrium scoparium</i>	G	Weeping love grass	<i>Eragrostus curvula</i>	G
Maiden grass	<i>Miscanthus sinensis</i>	G	Yellow bluestem	<i>Bothriochloa ischaemum</i>	G
Manzanita	<i>Archostaphylos sp.</i>	S	Yew	<i>Taxus sp.</i>	S
Ornamental grasses - most		G	Yew pine	<i>Podocarpus macrophyllus</i>	T

Many natives are fire-prone, and some depend on fire to reproduce. Native trees should be maintained free of dead material, with no limbs within 6'-10' of the ground, and clear of shrubs beneath the canopy. Other fire-prone natives should be maintained in isolated stands more than 30' from structures.



- ① **Immediate zone** within 0 to 5 feet from the furthest attached exterior point of the home, defined as a non-combustible area of a structure. Choose high moisture, non coniferous ground covers or fire-resistant perennials, annual flowers or lawn type grasses.
- ② **Intermediate zone** from 5 to 30 feet from the furthest exterior point of the home. Choose fire-resistant shrubs & trees. Plant with spacing between (18 ft between crowns), not large masses, and maintain them with adequate water and trimming to avoid dead buildup.
- ③ **Extended zone** from 30 to 100 feet of a structure, OK to use fire-prone plants in small, irregular clusters, breaking up continuity with decorative rock or stepping stones. Tree canopies should be spaced at least 6 feet apart.

Note:

Fire-resistant plants are not necessarily drought tolerant and drought tolerant plants may not be firewise. For example, drought tolerant plants may not be appropriate for the immediate (0 - 5ft).

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<https://extension.arizona.edu/local-offices/yavapai-county>

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