

## Defensible Space Requirements by City

*Updated 2022*

The following lists cities in the San Gabriel Valley that contain “Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones”. Please click on your city’s name to see its defensible space requirements.

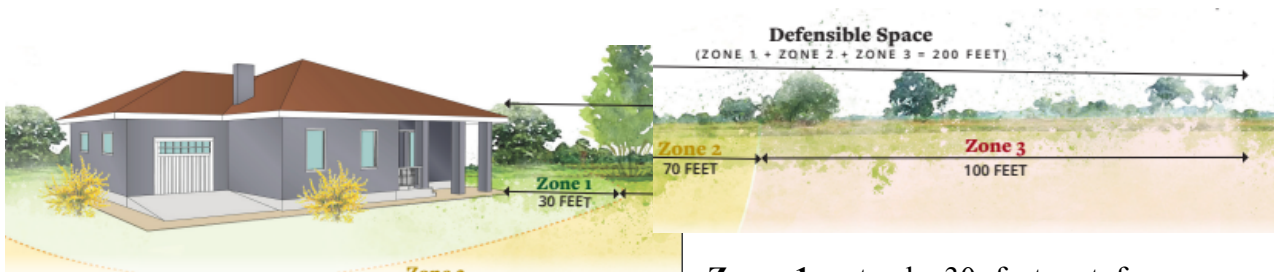
- [Azusa](#)
- [Arcadia](#)
- [Bradbury](#)
- [Claremont](#)
- [Covina](#)
- [Diamond Bar](#)
- [Duarte](#)
- [Glendora](#)
- [Irwindale](#)
- [La Cañada Flintridge](#)
- [La Verne](#)
- [Monrovia](#)
- [Pasadena](#)
- [Pomona](#)
- [San Dimas](#)
- [Sierra Madre](#)
- [Walnut](#)
- [West Covina](#)

### Cities served by the LACoFD:

In the San Gabriel Valley, homeowners in cities served by the LA County Fire Department are required to maintain a 200 foot defensible space buffer. This includes the following cities with VHFHSZs:

- Azusa
- Bradbury
- Claremont
- Covina
- Diamond Bar
- Duarte
- Glendora
- Irwindale
- La Cañada Flintridge
- Pomona
- San Dimas
- Walnut

Homeowners in these cities must create and maintain a defensible space area of 200 ft, made up of three zones:



**Zone 1** extends 30 feet out from a structure. In this zone:

- Remove all dead or dying vegetation.
- Remove dead or dry leaves and pine needles from your yard, roof, and rain gutters.
- Trim trees regularly to keep branches a minimum of 10 feet from other trees.
- Remove dead branches hanging over your roof. Keep branches 10 feet away from your chimney.
- Relocate exposed wood piles outside of Zone 1 unless they are completely contained in a fire-resistant enclosure.
- Remove vines and climbing plants from combustible structures (e.g., bougainvillea, wisteria).
- Remove or prune vegetation near windows (you should be able to see out the windows).
- Remove vegetation and items around and under decks that could catch fire.
- Create separations between trees, shrubs, and items that could catch fire, such as patio furniture, swing sets, etc.
- Irrigation is recommended to maintain vegetation moisture content.

**Zone 2** includes the area 30 to 100 feet from the structure. In Zone 2, you should:

- Cut or mow annual grass down to a maximum height of three inches.
- Create vertical and horizontal spacing between trees and shrubs (the distance between trees should be three times the height).
- Remove fallen leaves, needles, twigs, bark, cones, and small branches. However, a mulch layer may be permitted to a depth of four inches, if erosion control is an issue.
- Irrigation is recommended to maintain vegetation moisture content

**Zone 3** encompasses the last 100 feet, extending from 100 ft to 200 ft from the structure. In this zone:

- Irrigation systems are not required.
- Vegetation consists of modified existing native vegetation.
- Additional ornamental shrubs and trees are generally not recommended due to water conservation goals.
- Existing native vegetation is modified by thinning and removing plants constituting a high fire risk, including, but not limited to, laurel sumac, chamise, ceanothus, sage, sage brush, buckwheat, and California juniper.
- Remove the lower  $\frac{1}{3}$  of large shrubs and all dead wood to reduce fuel loads.
- Trees should be limbed up to at least six feet above grade and a minimum of three times the height of underlying plants.
- As the distance from structures increases, native plants may be removed in reduced amounts.
- Spacing for large native shrubs or groups of native shrubs is 15 feet between the edge of their canopies.
- Spacing for existing native trees or small groups of trees is 30 feet between the edge of canopies. This depends on the species, topography, and orientation on the site.

**The following information applies to these cities in the San Gabriel Valley:**

- Arcadia
- La Verne
- Monrovia\*
- Pasadena
- Sierra Madre
- West Covina

Under California law, you are required to create and maintain a defensible space area that extends **100 feet** out from your home or to the property line, whichever comes first. This applies to buildings and structures in the State Responsibility Area (SRA) and in Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones within a Local Responsibility Area (LRA).

*\* Please note that the City of Monrovia requires 200 ft of defensible space. See the section on “Zone 2” for more information.*

Currently, the defensible space buffer area is divided into two zones, Zone 1 and 2, each with specific vegetation management requirements. Regulation for a third zone, Zone 0, is currently in development.

The following information provides some easy ways to start creating defensible space to protect your home. Annual maintenance of defensible space is fairly inexpensive and gives homes a better chance at survival from a wildfire. Every little bit of defensible space creation and maintenance can help your home and your neighborhood!



**Zone 0**, sometimes called the immediate zone, consists of the area zero to five feet from buildings, decks, and other structures. While this zone is not yet a legal requirement, the Board of Forestry and Fire Protection will develop regulation for Zone 0 by January 2023 (as determined by AB 3074). General guidance for this zone includes the following:

- Use hardscape like gravel, pavers, concrete and other noncombustible mulch materials. No combustible bark or mulch
- Remove all dead and dying weeds, grass, plants, shrubs, trees, branches and vegetative debris (leaves, needles, cones, bark, etc.); Check your roofs, gutters, decks, porches, stairways, etc.
- Remove all branches within 10 feet of any chimney or stovepipe outlet
- Limit plants in this area to low growing, nonwoody, properly watered and maintained plants
- Limit combustible items (outdoor furniture, planters, etc.) on top of decks
- Relocate firewood and lumber to Zone 2
- Replace combustible fencing, gates, and arbors attach to the home with noncombustible alternatives
- Consider relocating garbage and recycling containers outside this zone
- Consider relocating boats, RVs, vehicles and other combustible items outside this zone

**Zone 1**, sometimes referred to as “Zone A” or “the intermediate zone”, consists of the area zero to 30 feet from buildings, decks, and other structures. In Zone 1, you must:

- Remove all dead plants, grass and weeds (vegetation).
- Remove dead or dry leaves and pine needles from your yard, roof and rain gutters.
- Remove branches that hang over your roof and keep dead branches 10 feet away from your chimney.
- Trim trees regularly to keep branches a minimum of 10 feet from other trees.
- Relocate wood piles to Zone 2.
- Remove or prune flammable plants and shrubs near windows.
- Remove vegetation and items that could catch fire from around and under decks, balconies and stairs.
- Create a separation between trees, shrubs and items that could catch fire, such as patio furniture, wood piles, swing sets, etc.

**Zone 2**, sometimes referred to as “Zone B” or “the extended zone”, consists of the area 30 to 100 feet from buildings, decks, and other structures. In Zone 2, you must:

- Cut or mow annual grass down to a maximum height of 4 inches
- Create horizontal space between shrubs and trees.
- Create vertical space between grass, shrubs and trees. (See diagram)
- Remove fallen leaves, needles, twigs, bark, cones, and small branches. However, they may be permitted to a depth of 3 inches.
- All exposed wood piles must have a minimum of 10 feet of clearance, down to bare mineral soil, in all directions.

\*In the **City of Monrovia**, Zone 2 consists of the area 30 to 200 feet from a structure (City Ordinance - 814.030.050). If your home is located in a VHFHSZ, the following stipulations are required in Zone 2:

- Natural vegetation and grass shall be maintained at a maximum height of eighteen inches and a minimum height of three inches in Zone 2 at all times.
- Natural vegetation consisting of shrub-like plants shall have a separation distance between each such plant that is equal to three times the diameter of the largest shrub.