Hazard Description

Wildland fires are uncontrolled fires in forests, woodlands, brush or grasslands. Most are caused by human error.

Wildland fires pose threats to people, pets, and livestock in areas where human development intermixes with, and is adjacent to wildland vegetation. This area is termed the Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI) – Map 1 below is the draft WUI map for Skagit County (2019).

Wildland fires also destroy valuable resource lands, wildlife habitat, powerlines, pipelines, communication and transportation infrastructure. Impacts of a major fire can be amplified by subsequent effects of landslides and flooding during heavy rains.

Map 1

Factors Contributing to Wildfires

Fuel: Lighter fuels such as grass, leaves, and needles (sometimes called litter) quickly expel moisture and burn rapidly. Heavier fuels such as branches, logs, and tree trunks take longer to heat up and ignite.

Weather: West of the Cascades, summer and early fall produce winds that can last 48 hours with winds generally reach peak early morning hours.

Topography: Topography amount and moisture of the land uphill than surficial, such as in affect the embers to build fuel and increases fuel load.

Fire Behavior Triangle

What can you do to reduce wildfire risk around your property?

Wildfire Risk Reduction

10 Safety Tips

Action Items to Improve Your Home’s Survivability:

- Remove debris, grass, dead trees, and other flammable materials from the roof, gutters, and under decks to help prevent embers from igniting your home.
- Screen aoke below decks and porches with 1/8” mesh to help prevent material from accumulating under decks.
- Cover exterior attic and soffit vents with 1/8” wire mesh to help prevent sparks from entering your home.
- Enclose awnings to help prevent ember entry.
- Inspect shingled or tile roofs. Replace missing shingles or tiles. Cover cracks of tile with kindo or cement to help prevent ember penetration during a wildfire.

Tips for Landscaping Around Your Home:

- Remove dead vegetation and other flammable materials, especially within the first 10 feet of the home.
- Keep your yard finished and maintained. If it is brown, cut it down to help reduce fire intensity.
- Prune tree limbs to the lowest branches and at least 10 feet above the ground to help reduce the chance of fire getting into the crown of the trees.
- Move construction materials, trash, and woodpiles at least 100 feet away from the home and other outbuildings.
- Dispose of branches, leaves, lawn, pine needles, and grass clippings that you have cut to reduce fuel for fire.