

On this special bonus episode of "Seven Saturdays to a More Fire-Resistant Home," we will be showing you how to develop and execute a ready, set, go game plan so that you're ready, set and able to go when an emergency happens. We'll show you seven simple ways to do this, most of which can be done in a day or a weekend.

Ready refers to the actions that we should take before the fire season. A good target date would be to complete those tasks by June. Set are the steps that we can do to protect our property and ourselves when there's a threat of wildfires occurring in our area. Go, that's self-explanatory. It means taking the initiative on our own to evacuate when we feel unsafe because of developing wildfire in our area, or when we've been instructed by firefighters and law enforcement to evacuate.

David, let's start with developing a plan to get ready for wildfire season. Where do we start? You may remember the goal within the first 30 feet of the home is that your landscaping be lean, clean, and green. Replace fire-prone plants with fire-resistive landscaping. In the area from 30 to 100 feet, we should be looking to reduce vegetation by creating horizontal and vertical spacing between plants and trees to reduce fire spread. We covered this last year. We suggest customers head to the Safety Action Center to watch and learn more.

And we shouldn't forget about the little things. I remember you stressing how the little things like dry grass, pine needles, and leaves can accumulate around your home and in gutters, causing your home to catch fire, and how we need to maintain these areas throughout the year. But I'm curious, are there other things that I can do immediately around my home?

Yes. Let me show you. Let's start with the simple things like looking around our home for things that can catch fire from embers during a wildland fire. Like this doormat. It's made of jute or natural fibers and can catch fire from embers during a wildland fire. It's best to replace this with a fire-resistive, heavy rubber doormat or with a metal grated doormat.

That's really good to know, David. I didn't think something as simple as a doormat could be a hazard for my home. What other things should I be aware of around my house?

Well, Alicia, I'm glad you asked. Let's look at this wicker furniture right here. This wicker furniture is beautiful, but it's made of wood, and these cushions are combustible during a wildland fire from embers. It's good to replace this with metal, non-combustible patio furniture or patio furniture that is treated with fire-resistive material. If you can't do that, the next best option is to move this out from the immediate area around your home.

And that's the zero to five feet that extends from your home and that's the most vulnerable, correct?

Yes, that's the most vulnerable areas from embers during a wildland fire.

Okay, well, let's get this outta here.

All right. And now that we've moved the patio furniture, let's not forget about other things around our home. Propane tanks for our barbecue, firewood, garbage and green waste containers, lumber, trash, and patio accessories.

This was super simple. Thanks, David. What's next?

Well, if no plant is fireproof, it's important that we do all we can to slow the spread of wildfire on our property. For the second tip, we will speak about ways that we can reduce fuel continuity in our property through a process called hardscaping.

What is hardscaping and how do we do it?

Hardscaping is when we use non-combustible products such as sand, decomposed granite, rock, pavers, or concrete to help slow or even stop the spread of fire.

So it's building stronger defensible space by the way we design and landscape our property.

Yes, the more that we create fuel breaks on our property, the harder will be for fire to progress towards our home.

Well, what's one simple thing I can do to start hardscaping, in addition to the plants I have in my yard?

DAVID: Think about things that you can do immediately around your home within the first 30 feet to reduce ember ignition and break up the continuity of vegetation. Adding areas of hardscaping, for instance walking paths, borders, decorative rocks, patios, amongst the areas of landscaped plants will reduce the potential for ember ignition and fire spread.

I like the idea of redesigning my outdoor space while making it safe. I can go to a local outdoor supply store and make sure the outside of my home is safer while also making sure it looks nice.

Anything you do in your yard should have a purpose and protect your home against ember ignition and fire spread.

I like that. What are some other ways I can hardscape my home?

DAVID: For larger projects, consider constructing retaining walls or terraces made of non-combustible materials in sloped areas or stone walls to separate plant groupings.

ALICIA: Thanks again for joining us on "Seven Saturdays to a More Fire-Resistant Home."