

# FIRESCAPING



FIRE-RESISTANT PLANTS



# BASIC CONCEPTS

- All vegetation is potential fuel for a fire.
  - There are no “fireproof” plants.
  - The type, amount, and placement of vegetation can have a dramatic effect on fire behavior.
- Survivable space is the area extending outward from your home.
  - The first 5-10 should be free of vegetation.
  - Survivable space extends out 100 feet from structure.
  - Steeper slopes could have a survivable space as far out as 200 feet.



## PLANT CHOICE

- Select plants with a low flammability rating for the areas closest to your home.
  - Grow without accumulating large amounts of combustible dead branches, needles, or leaves.
  - Open, loose branches with a low volume of total vegetation.
  - Low sap or resin content.
  - High moisture content.
  - Grow slowly and need little maintenance, such as pruning.
  - For grasses, short and grow close to the ground.
  - Ability to resprout following fire.
- Plant a wide variety of plants to reduce insect and disease issues.



# Plant Flammability

- Ignitability - the length of time it takes a plant to ignite once it's exposed to a flame or heat source.
- Sustainability - the length of time that a plant will continue to burn once it has caught fire.
- Combustibility - how rapidly or intensely a plant burns; the amount of heat given off during burning.
- Consumability - how completely the plant burns, or the quantity of the plant material that is consumed by the fire.



# Tall trees with Low Flammability Rating

- Hickory
- Persimmon
- Blackgum
- Black cherry
- White Oak
- Sourwood
- Red Maple
- Green Ash
- Yellow Poplar





# Small trees and shrubs with Low Flammability Rating

- Alder
- Devil's walking stick
- Pawpaw
- Ironwood
- Flowering dogwood
- Witch hazel
- Red mulberry
- Sumac
- Elderberry





## Small shrubs with Low Flammability Rating

- New Jersey tea
- Buttonbush
- Strawberrybush
- Spicebush
- Red chokeberry
- Deerberry
- Lowbush blueberry
- Arrowwood
- Wild Raisin





## Herbs & flowers with Low Flammability Rating

- Jack-in-the-pulpit
- Mistflower
- Jewelweed
- Carolina phlox
- Fire pink
- Bird-foot violet
- Bluets
- Joe-pye-weed
- Christmas fern







## What not to plant - High Flammability Rating

- American holly
- Cedar
- Pine
- Wax myrtle
- Mtn. laurel
- Rhododendron
- Doghobble



Many of these have thick, waxy leaves, or highly combustible needles. Heavy amounts of accumulating debris, with tight branches and high volumes.



# WANTED

★ DEAD OR ALIVE ★



Trumpet vine

REWARD \$1,000,000

# WANTED

★ DEAD OR ALIVE ★



Grape vine

REWARD \$1,000,000

# WANTED

★ DEAD OR ALIVE ★



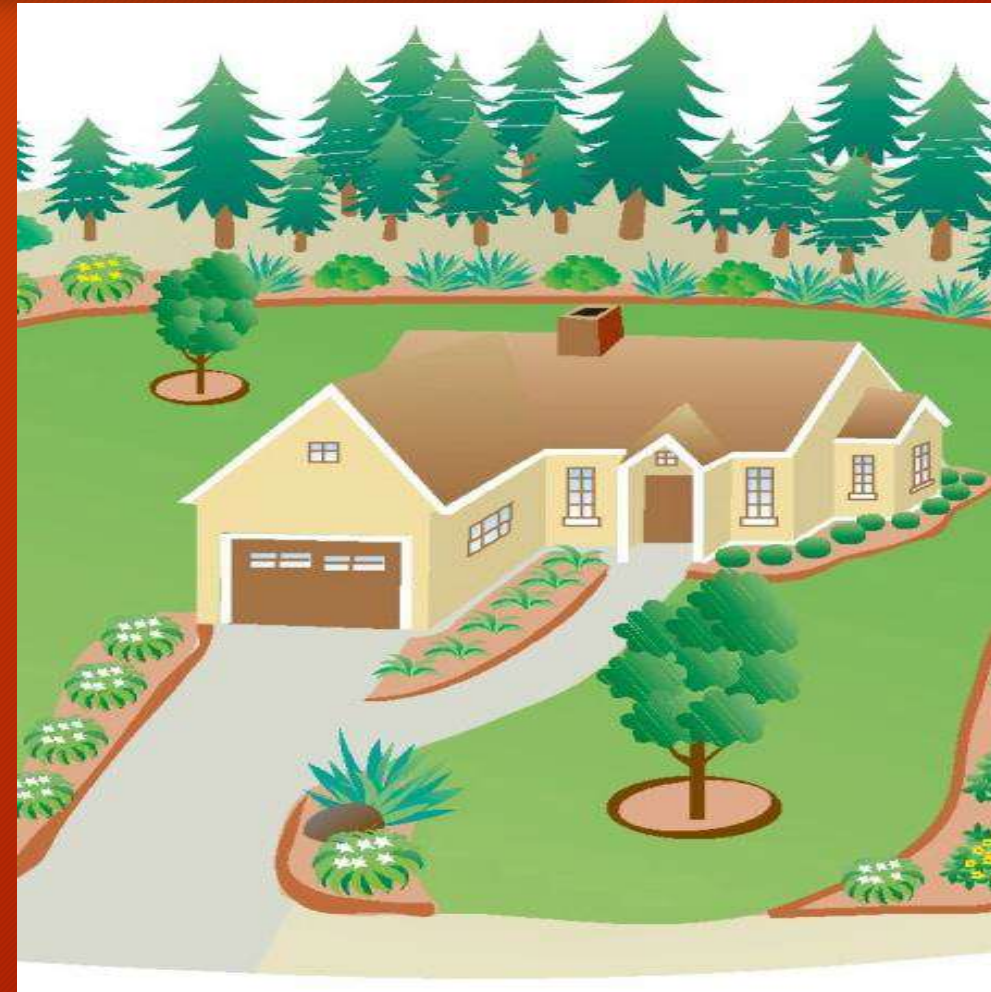
Bluestem

REWARD \$1,000,000



## Plant Health & Maintenance

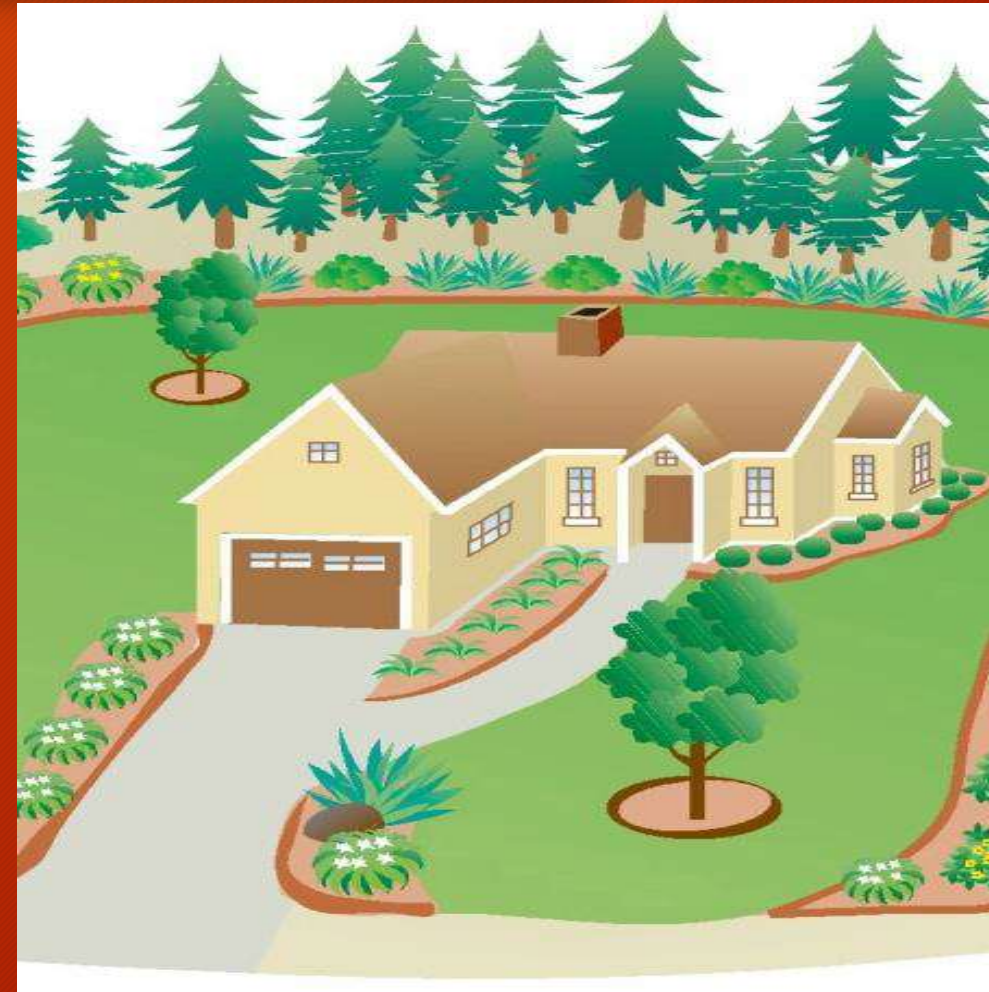
- Your landscape can lose its low flammability properties over time, if not properly maintained.
- You must conduct seasonal maintenance activities to keep your firescape functioning as intended.





## Plant Health & Maintenance

- Cut and remove dead/dried foliage.
- Dispose of plant litter as it builds up seasonally.
  - Especially around home/buildings, under/on decks, gutters/roofs, etc.
- Trim grass regularly to a low height.
- Prune trees to 10 feet above the ground.
  - But maintaining a minimum 2:1 canopy to trunk ratio.
- Keep vegetation from encroaching on powerlines, chimneys, or the home itself.





# Plant Health & Maintenance

- Monitor plants for stress, pests, or diseases.
- Be familiar with common plant health issues for your area/species.





# Questions???

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