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## NEWS RELEASE

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### **Do your part to protect your home from wildfire! Make sure your summer doesn't go up in smoke**

EAST IDAHO, Idaho— May is Wildfire Awareness Month in Idaho, begging the question, are you prepared? Wildfires threaten lives, property and precious resources every year. Firefighters and emergency responders are needed more than ever to keep Idahoans safe, so please do your part to protect your home from wildfire. Steps taken now can reduce risk to first responders and your private property should a wildfire ignite.

Now, is a great time to tackle home improvement projects as many of us have additional time on our hands. Consider making your property more resistant to wildfire. “Take individual responsibility to reduce flammable material around homes and communities before a fire occurs to keep your families, property, pets, livestock and firefighters safe,” said Fire Management Officer Joel Gosswiller.

To mitigate the impact of wildfire, maintain a low-ignition landscape around your home. This *firewise* principle can dramatically reduce fire risk, while still offering a beautifully landscaped yard. Achieving a low-ignition landscape does require some manual labor but doesn't have to be expensive. Get started by working on the following tips:

- Keep plants low to the ground, green and healthy near your home.
- Move firewood away from structures.
- Remove all leaves and debris from roofs and gutters, as well as under decks, stairways, and overhangs.
- Keep grass cut and watered.
- Keep trees pruned, limbed and away from structures.

Fires need fuel, oxygen, and heat to burn. A low-ignition landscape reduces the fuel load both in amount of vegetation and height, which keeps fire at bay and reduces the risk of embers igniting the home. Taking the time to keep your yard clean and green can greatly increase a home's chances of survival if a wildfire occurs. Discover how you can make your home and landscape less vulnerable to ignition from a wildfire at [www.idahofirewise.org](http://www.idahofirewise.org).

Adhere to your state's outdoor burning guidance. Before burning, contact your local fire agency as smoke from open burning can cause unnecessary public health and safety concerns.

In case of wildfire develop an evacuation plan to ensure the safety of you, your family and your pets and livestock. Learn more at <https://tinyurl.com/2m4kd3ah>. Most counties have an emergency alert system to notify residents of emergencies and actions they need to take. Please check with your County to see how to sign up.