

PROTECT YOUR HOUSE AGAINST RURAL FIRES

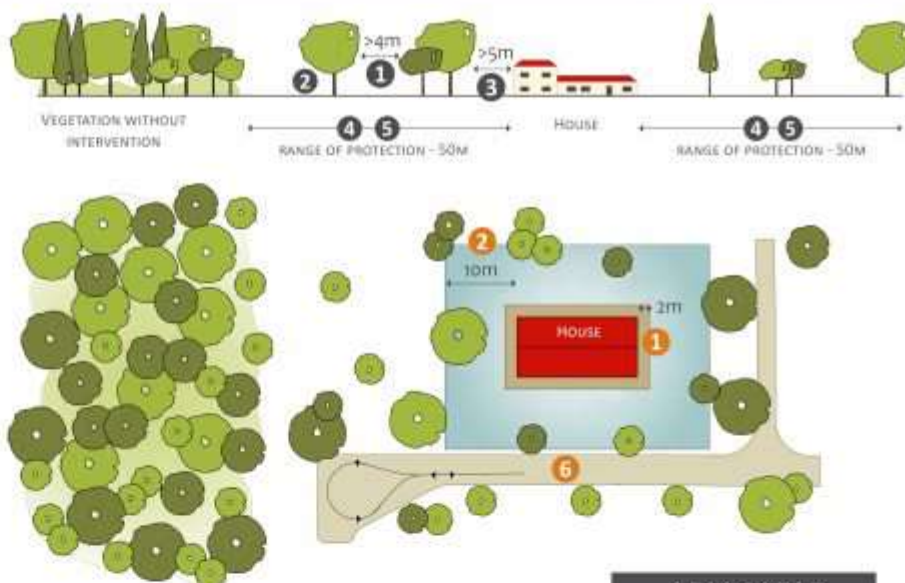
MANDATORY



By **15th March** it is mandatory to manage the vegetation measured from the exterior wall of the house:

- within a minimum range of **50m** around the buildings, whenever these lands are occupied by forest, shrubs or natural pastures;
- With a minimum range of no less than **10m** on land in rural areas with other types of use.

- 1** The space between treetops should be, at least, **4m**. In maritime pine and eucalyptus stands, the minimum distance between tree-crowns must be, at least, of **10m**.
- 2** **Prune** trees **4m** above the ground. For trees with a height of less than 8m, prune the **lower half** (50%) of the tree.
- 3** Trees and bushes must be **5m** away from the **buildings** and treetops must not extend over the roof.
- 4** Shrubs must not be higher than **50 centimeters**.
- 5** Do not keep **firewood, debris** or any type of inflammable material within this area.



ADVISABLE

- 1** Have a **strip of non-inflammable paving**, between one and two metres in width, around the building.
- 2** Avoid having very inflammable vegetation or plants that dry easily within **10 metres** of your house. Avoid having **hedges** made of species that accumulate lots of dry woody material inside, or which contain oils or resins, and avoid enclosures made of cane or dry heather.
- 3** Check that the **watering system** and hoses are in working order.
- 4** The **roof** is one of the most vulnerable parts of the house. Remove grass, leaves, branches and moss from rooftops, gutters and drain pipes. Fit a spark screen in the chimneys.
- 5** Protect **doors and windows** with blinds or shutters. Use **double-glazing** and tempered glass and choose sliding windows.
- 6** Keep the **access** to your house unobstructed and create a space that will permit U-turns.
- 7** Keep an up-to-date list of **emergency contacts** to hand.

IN CASE OF A FIRE NEAR YOUR HOUSE

- 1** **Wear loose cotton clothing** (avoid synthetic fabrics) in order to cover your arms and legs, and wear closed footwear. Avoid **exposure to smoke** and fumes and cover your mouth and nose with a damp cloth.
- 2** Close all doors leading to the exterior and all interior doors too, as well as all windows and any other openings (ventilation grids, for example). Switch off automatic door- and gate-opening mechanisms. Put wet, rolled-up towels along the bottom of doors and windows. **Any open crack could prove fatal** by allowing the fire into your home.
- 3** Close gas valves. **Move combustible materials away** from windows (e.g. curtains, sofas, etc.) and remove garden furniture and any wood that may be on the porches or next to the house.
- 4** **Water the area around the house.** If you have a watering system, turn it on. Gather **buckets of water** indoors and outdoors. If a fire breaks out, put it out immediately with water, earth or branches.
- 5** Keep a vehicle in a state of constant readiness for emergency evacuation. Stay indoors and **follow the instructions given to you by the authorities**.
- 6** After the fire has passed, check to see if there are any small areas still alight; look for smoke and/or flames next to doors, windows, roofs, chimneys and gutters. **Remain alert over the followings days.**