

Homeowners Checklist



How To Make Your Home Fire Safe

1 Design/Construction

- Use fire resistant materials
- Build your home at least 30-100 feet from your property line
- Build your home away from ridge tops, canyons and areas between high points on a ridge
- Consider installing residential sprinklers
- Enclose the underside of eaves, balconies and above ground decks with fire resistant materials
- Try to limit the size and number of windows in your home that face large areas of vegetation
- Install only dual-paned or triple-paned windows
- Make sure that electric service lines, fuse boxes and circuit breaker panels are installed and main tained as prescribed by code
- Contact qualified individuals to perform electrical maintenance and repairs

2 Access

- Make sure that your street name sign is visibly posted at each street intersection
- Post your house address so it is easily visible from the street, especially at night
- Address numbers should be at least 3 inches tall and on a contrasting background
- Identify at least two exit routes from your neighborhood
- Clear flammable vegetation at least 10 feet from roads and five feet from driveways
- Cut back overhanging tree branches above access roads
- Construct roads that allow two-way traffic
- Make sure dead-end roads, and long drive ways have turn-around areas wide enough for emergency vehicles
- Design bridges to carry heavy emergency vehicles
- Post clear road signs to show traffic restrictions such as dead-end roads, and weight and height limitations

3 Roof

- Install a fire resistant roof. Contact your local fire department for current roofing requirements
- Remove dead leaves and needles from your roof and gutters
- Remove dead branches overhanging your roof and keep branches 10 feet from your chimney
- Cover your chimney outlet and stovepipe with a nonflammable screen of 1/2 inch or smaller mesh

4 Landscape

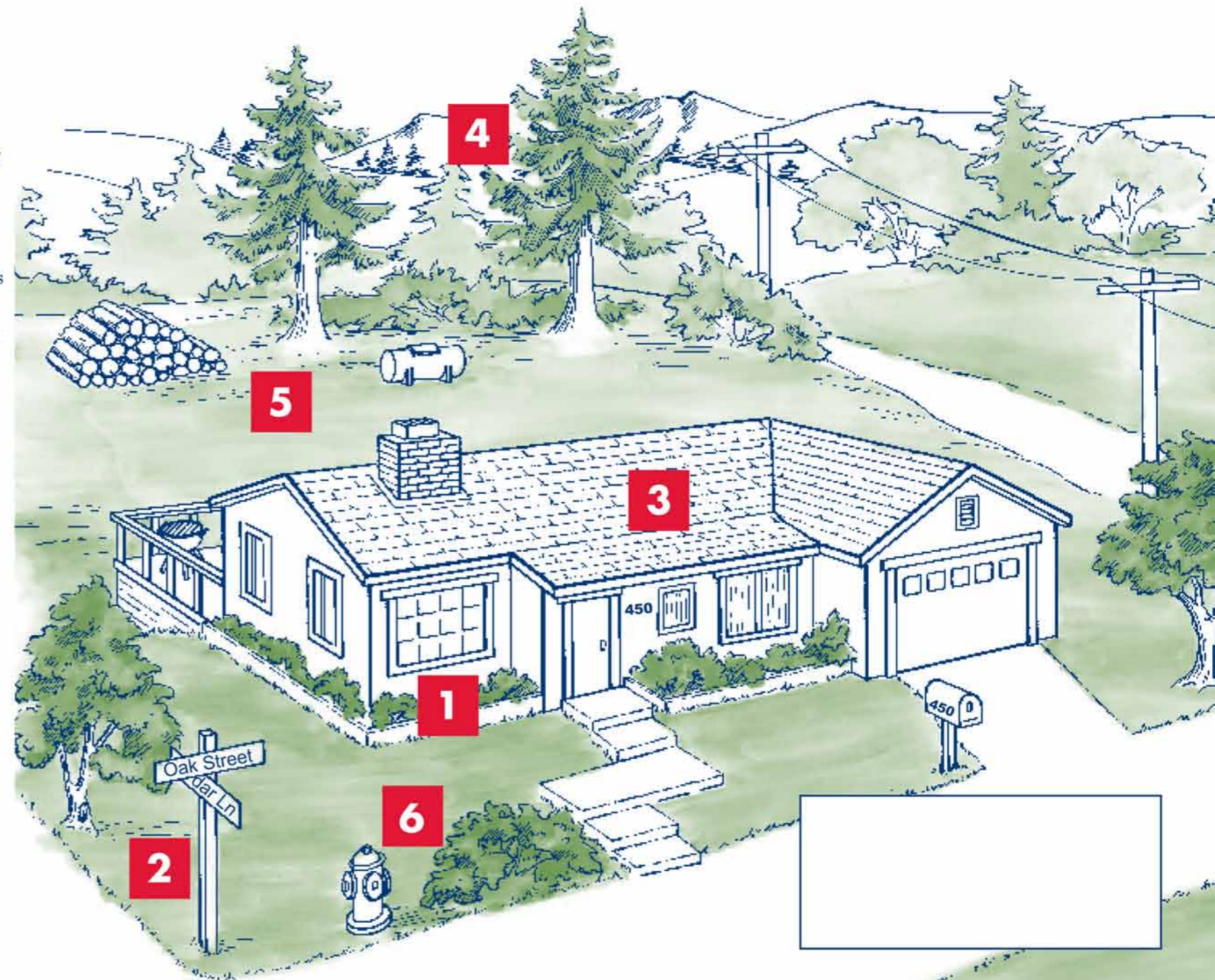
- Create a **Defensible Space** of 100 feet around your home.
- Create a **"LEAN, CLEAN and GREEN ZONE"** by removing all flammable vegetation within 30 feet immediately surrounding your home
- Then create a **"REDUCED FUEL ZONE"** in the remaining 70 feet or to your property line.
You have two options in this area:
 - A. Create horizontal and vertical spacing between plants. The amount of space will depend on how steep your property is and the size of your plants.**
 - B. Large trees do not have to be removed as long as all of the plants beneath them are removed.**
- Remove lower tree branches at least six feet from the ground
- Landscape with fire resistant plants
- Maintain all plants with regular water, and keep dead braches, leaves and needles removed.
- When clearing vegetation, use care when operating equipment such as lawnmowers. One small spark may start a fire; a string trimmer is much safer.

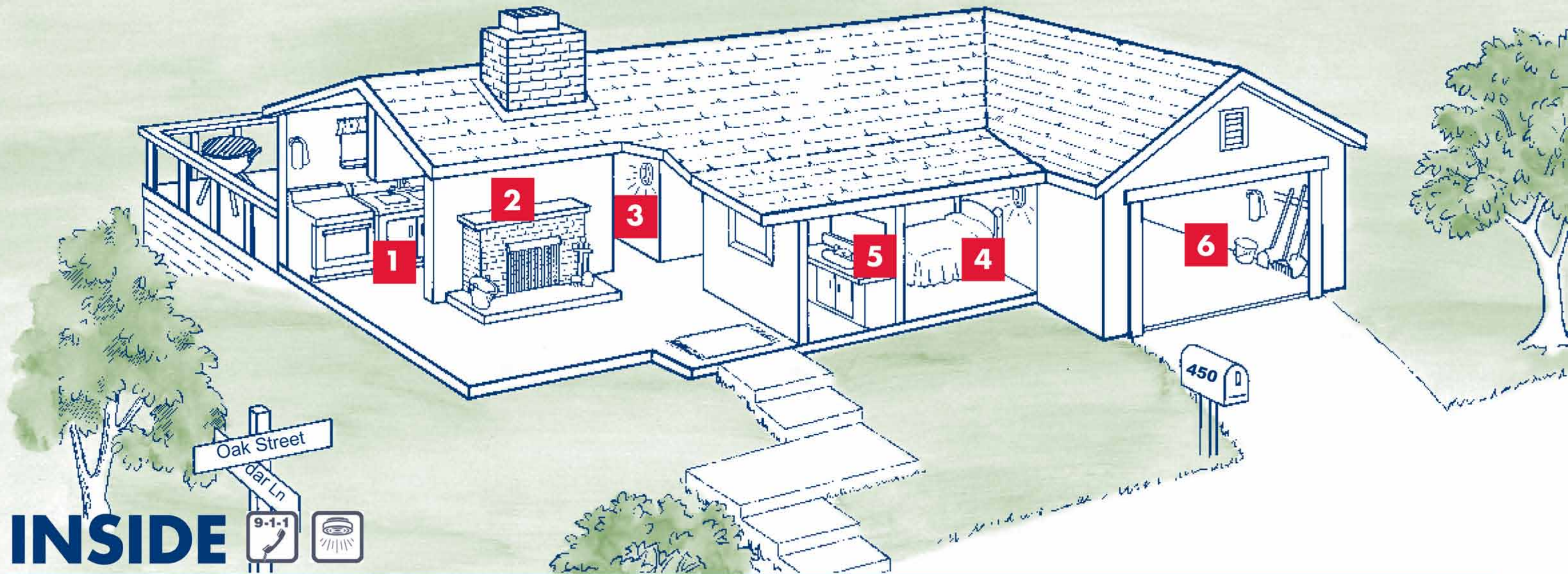
5 Yard

- Stack woodpiles at least 30 feet from all structures and remove vegetation within 10 feet of woodpiles
- Locate LPG tanks (butane and propane) at least 30 feet from any structure and maintain 10 feet of clearance
- Remove all stacks of construction materials, pine needles, leaves and other debris from your yard
- Contact your local fire department to see if debris burning is allowed in your area; if so, obtain a burning permit and follow all local air quality restrictions

6 Emergency Water Supply

- Maintain an emergency water supply that meets fire department standards through one of the following:
 - a community water/hydrant system
 - a cooperative emergency storage tank with neighbors
 - a minimum storage supply of 2,500 gallons on your property (like a pond or pool)
- Clearly mark all emergency water sources
- Create easy firefighter access to your closest emergency water source
- If your water comes from a well, consider an emergency generator to operate the pump during a power failure





INSIDE



1 Kitchen

- Keep a working fire extinguisher in the kitchen
- Maintain electric and gas stoves in good operating condition
- Keep baking soda on hand to extinguish stove-top grease fires
- Turn the handles of pots and pans away from the front of the stove
- Install curtains and towel holders away from stoveburners
- Store matches and lighters out of reach of children
- Make sure that electrical outlets are designed to handle appliance loads

2 Living Room

- Install a screen in front of fireplace or wood stove
- Store the ashes from your fireplace (and barbecue) in a metal container and dispose of only when cold
- Clean fireplace chimneys and flues at least once a year

3 Hallway

- Install smoke detectors between living and sleeping areas
- Test smoke detectors monthly and replace batteries twice a year, when clocks are changed in the spring and fall
- Replace electrical cords that do not work properly, have loose connections, or are frayed


4 Bedroom

- If you sleep with the door closed, install a smoke detector in the bedroom
- Turn off electric blankets and other electrical appliances when not in use
- Do not smoke in bed
- If you have security bars on your windows or doors, be sure they have an approved quick release mechanism so you and your family can get out in the event of a fire

5 Bathroom

- Disconnect appliances such as curling irons and hair dryers when done; store in a safe location until cool
- Keep items such as towels away from wall and floor heaters

6 Garage

- Mount a working fire extinguisher in the garage
- Have tools such as a shovel, hoe, rake and bucket available for use in a wildfire emergency
- Install a solid door with self-closing hinges between living areas and the garage
- Dispose of oily rags in  Underwriters Laboratories approved metal containers
- Store all combustibles away from ignition sources such as water heaters
- Disconnect electrical tools and appliances when not in use
- Allow hot tools such as glue guns and soldering irons to cool before storing
- Properly store flammable liquids in approved containers and away from ignition sources such as pilot lights

* Disaster Preparedness

- Maintain at least a three-day supply of drinking water, and food that does not require refrigeration and generally does not need cooking
- Maintain a portable radio, flashlight, emergency cooking equipment, lanterns and batteries
- Outdoor cooking appliances such as barbecues should never be taken indoors for use as heaters
- Maintain first aid supplies to treat the injured until help arrives
- Keep a list of valuables to take with you in an emergency; if possible, store these valuables together
- For safety, securely attach all water heaters and furniture such as cabinets and bookshelves to walls
- Have a contingency plan to enable family members to contact each other. Establish a family/friend phone tree
- Designate an emergency meeting place outside your home
- Practice *emergency exit drills in the house* (EDITH) regularly
- Make sure that all family members understand how to STOP, DROP AND ROLL if their clothes should catch fire.