

Wildland Urban Interface Vegetation Management

Rancho Cucamonga Fire District's 50/50/50 Alternative



The most widely accepted vegetation management plan for increased fire safety in the wildland urban interface fire areas across the nation is the 30/100 plan.

This fire safety and home ignition prevention plan includes a total of 100 feet of defensible space.

The first 30 feet from the home is commonly a well-irrigated area comprised of low growing and high moisture content plants, single trees, widely spaced shrubs, and non-combustible landscaping (compacted rock dust, stone or concrete walkways, masonry features, etc.).

The area that is 30-100 feet from the home is also generally irrigated landscaping that can be a little more dense with small groupings of trees, medium height plants, and more closely spaced shrubs.

This defensible space plan is based on forest fire research and has been proven to be effective for wildfires where the vegetation is brush or grasses.

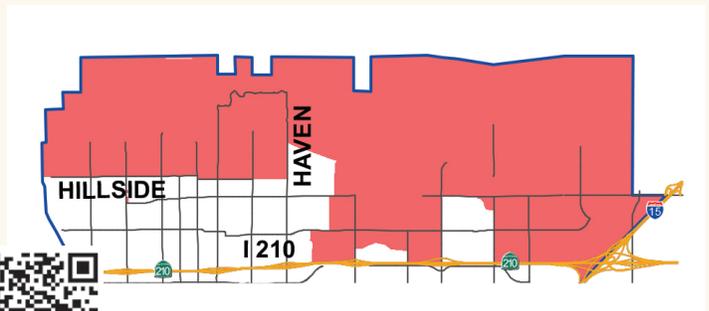


In consideration of and appreciation for the relatively rare chaparral ecosystem among which Rancho Cucamonga is situated, the Rancho Cucamonga Fire District, in consultation with chaparral experts, conservationists, and wildfire management and safety agencies has established the 50/50/50 plan as an acceptable alternative to the 30/100 plan.

The chaparral biome and ecosystem is the smallest of the world's differentiated plant and animal communities and is found in the United States only in limited places along the west coast.

The 50/50/50 fire safety and home ignition prevention plan also includes a total of 100 feet of defensible space. The difference is in the requirements for the zones that make that 100 feet.

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HOME IGNITION PREVENTION PLAN

The first 50 feet from the home is very similar to the first 30 feet in the 30/100 plan. It is the **Vegetation Modification Zone** - a well-irrigated area comprised of low growing and high moisture content plants, single trees, widely spaced shrubs, and non-combustible landscaping (compacted rock dust, stone or concrete walkways, masonry features, etc.) where fire prone and undesirable vegetation has been removed.



The big difference in the 50/50/50 plan is found in the area that is 50-100 feet from the home. Those desiring to maintain the chaparral biome and its unique diversity of plant species and wildlife as part of their landscaping can do so when the 50/50/50 plan is followed.

The area that is 50-100 feet from the home is the **Vegetation Reduction Zone** and can consist of the chaparral if it is thinned to 50% ground coverage. This zone must be maintained annually by removing the dead and dying material in the vegetation clusters and removing non-native and/or invasive weeds and grasses. Irrigation is not required in this zone. Naturally occurring trees and tree stands may be allowed to remain in this zone.

The 50/50/50 vegetation management plan provides a balance between fire safety, defensible space, and preservation of the chaparral ecosystem. The effectiveness of the plan is highly dependent on proper, frequent, and consistent maintenance of both the 0-50 feet and 50-100 feet zones. Homes, tracts, and neighborhoods that employ the 50/50/50 option are subject to routine inspection by the Fire District's Prevention Bureau.