

# PREVENTING WILDFIRE

Most wildfires in Oregon are caused by people. While fire can often benefit forests, unnaturally severe wildfires – particularly near homes and communities – are a serious problem. In addition to destroying buildings and threatening lives, wildfires reduce air and water quality, damage fish and wildlife habitat, and are costly to put out.

**Directions:** There are many ways people can prevent wildfire. Check the things you already do.

- I never shoot off **fireworks** in or near the forest.
- I only use **all-terrain vehicles** on roads and trails, and park them only on gravel surfaces.
- I avoid shooting **firearms** on hot, dry days, and keep a fire extinguisher or water hose nearby.
- I take care when building a **campfire**. I check that the area around it is clear, keep the fire small and watch it at all times.
- I take care when using a **gas lawnmower**. I only use it early in the day when moisture is higher and temperatures are lower.
- I help keep a 30-foot **defensible space** around my home that is free of anything that can burn.

**Question:**

What else can you do to help prevent wildfire?

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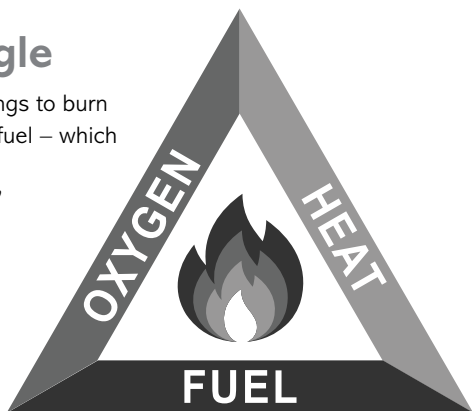
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## Fire Triangle

Fires need three things to burn – heat, oxygen and fuel – which together are known as the “fire triangle.”



## Managing for Fire

Forest managers in Oregon work to decrease the severity of wildfires in a number of ways. They use “prescribed burns” – controlled, low-intensity fires – to reduce needles, branches and other fuel for fires. They also remove small trees that are growing too close together, which makes it harder for wildfires to quickly spread across the forest by jumping from tree to tree.