



SANTA BARBARA COUNTY FIRE DEPARTMENT

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FIRE CHIEF

4410 Cathedral Oaks Road, Santa Barbara, CA 93110

PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

- Fire Safe Landscaping -

SANTA BARBARA, Ca. January 31, 2011 –This is a good time of the year to apply organic mulches around your plants to help retain water and feed the soil. Applying mulch now will also smother last year's insect eggs, spores and weed seeds and allows rain to soak in. Be sure to keep mulches at least 30 feet away from structures.

The Santa Barbara County Fire Department recommends that a fire safe landscape should reduce the chance of ignition during a wildfire. If ignited, they should minimize the heat generated, and the ability to transmit fire to structures. Fire safe landscapes are created by designing and maintaining a landscape where there is horizontal and vertical separation between plants to minimize the transmission of fire from plant to plant to your home. Choose plants that do not encourage ignition. It is important to understand, though, that there are no fire safe plants: all plants will burn given the right conditions. Ensure plants are properly irrigated. Dead leaves, branches and other flammable debris should be regularly removed. Fire safe landscapes should also include hardscape materials that add to the fire resistance of the landscape. This could include brick or stone retaining walls and garden borders, swimming pools, decomposed granite paths, noncombustible deck material, stone patios and paving, etc. These can act as a fuel break and help to slow down or change the path of an approaching fire.

The Santa Barbara County Fire Department reminds people that providing a **Defensible Space** can reduce the risk of structural damage caused by the now year round threat of a wildfire.

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