**The Lean, Clean and Green Checklist**

- use low growing herbaceous (non-woody) plants that keep green during the fire season. Herbaceous plants include lawns, clover, ground covers, bedding plants, bulbs, perennial flowers and conservation grasses. Irrigate regularly.
- use mulches, rock and non-combustible hard surfaces (concrete paths, brick patios and asphalt driveways).
- deciduous ornamental trees and shrubs are OK if they are kept green and free of dead plant material.
- minimise the use of ornamental coniferous shrubs and trees (and tall grasses such as toi toi and pampas).

On farms, or other larger properties have additional water supplies (streams, feeding troughs etc). That are easily located and accessible.

**Fire-resistant plants for fire-prone areas**

**Buffer zone plants**
The following plants have relatively low flammability. They can be used to create a buffer zone between scrubland and your house.

**Native Plants**
- *Carpodetus serratus* (Putaputaweta)
- *Coprosma australis* (Raurekau/Kanono)
- *Coprosma grandifolia* (Kanono)
- *Coprosma repens* (Tawoioio)
- *Coprosma robusta* (Karamu)
- *Corynocarpus laevigatus* (Karaka)
- *Fuchsia excorticata* (Kotukutuku, Tree Fuchsia)
- *Geniostoma liqustrifolium* (Hangehange)
- *Griselinia littoralis* (Poroporo/Broadleaf)
- *Griselinia lucida* (Puka)
- *Macropiper excelsum* (Kawakawa/Peppertree)
- *Pittosporum crassifolium* (Karo)
- *Pseudopanax arboreus* (Five Finger)
- *Solanum aviculare* (Poroporo)

**Exotic Plants**
- *Agapanthus orientalis* (agapanthus)

Most nurseries stock these plants. Check your local supplier for details.

**More Information**

If you would like to know more about vegetation fires, protecting your property or the current fire ban status we recommend the following sites:

- National Rural Fire Authority: www.nrafa.fire.org.nz
- Wellington Rural Fire Service: www.wcfr.govt.nz
- Wellington City Council: www.wcc.govt.nz
- Kapiti Coast District Council: www.kcdd.govt.nz
- Hutt City Council: www.huttcity.govt.nz/services/emo
- Porirua City Council: www.porirua.govt.nz
- Upper Hutt City Council: www.uhcc.govt.nz
- Wellington City Council: www.wc.govt.nz
- Upper Hutt Rural Fire Force: www.uhrff.tripod.com

Those who do not have a fire permit are liable for any costs involved in extinguishing the fire if it gets out of control.

**Fire Permits**

In the Wellington region a fire permit is required for lighting any fire in the open (e.g. incinerator, garden waste). Permits can be obtained from your local territorial authority:

- Hutt City Council: 570 6666
- Kapiti Coast District Council: 9045 700
- Porirua City Council: 257-5099
- Upper Hutt City Council: 527 2169
- Wellington City Council: 499 4444

Therefore the chance of fire in areas bordering urban properties this summer is extremely high.

The Wellington Region is particularly at risk from vegetation fires. Apart from the fact that we are surrounded by huge areas of gorse and regenerating bush, the region is also being planted in thousands of hectares of pine trees.

On top of that, the region has two characteristics that fuel big vegetation fires – steep hillsides and strong winds.

On the next three pages we aim to show you some simple preventative actions can help save your home if it does end up threatened by a scrub fire.
HOW TO DEFEND YOUR HOME AGAINST SCRUB FIRES

The best way to protect your home is to “starve” a vegetation fire as it approaches. That means removing as much flammable material as possible in a “defensible area” of up to 20 metres around your house. The defensible space will not only reduce the possibility of flames reaching your house – but it’ll also provide a safe space to allow firefighters the access to defend the property.

**Key:**

1. Make sure your property is easily identified from the road. Use the rural numbering system if you are in a rural area.
2. Only use approved incinerators and obtain a fire permit before burning anything.
3. Consider establishing a static water supply that can be accessed by fire fighters.
4. Leave hoses connected to the taps so they can reach all areas of your property.
5. Identify at least two suitable exit routes from your neighborhood.
6. Have valuable personal documents, papers and momentos within easy reach so you can take them to safety.
7. Make sure all family members are aware of a prearranged meeting place.
8. Close all doors and windows.
9. Leave exterior doors unlocked – this will help firefighters to gain easy access to your house (if they need to enter to fight a fire).
10. Leave a light on in each room.
11. Remove curtains and other combustible materials from around windows.
12. Follow instructions of emergency personnel.
13. Tune into the local radio station.

**How Fast Can Fire Travel?**

On a typical Wellington summer’s day, with a wind of 50kmh blowing, a scrub fire can burn at speeds that are alarming – and highly dangerous. Flames can leap roads and travel faster than a person can run, surrounding people trying to make their escape. The best advice is to evacuate well before the danger becomes imminent. Leave the fire fighting to the trained professionals.

**If a Fire is Heading Your Way**

- Make sure that all garden hoses are connected to taps and reach all areas of your property.
- Identify at least two suitable exit routes from your neighborhood.
- Have valuable personal documents, papers and momentos within easy reach so you can take them to safety.
- Make sure all family members are aware of a prearranged meeting place.
- Close all doors and windows.
- Leave exterior doors unlocked – this will help firefighters to gain easy access to your house (if they need to enter to fight a fire).
- Leave a light on in each room.
- Remove curtains and other combustible materials from around windows.
- Follow instructions of emergency personnel.
- Tune into the local radio station.

**You don’t want this to happen to your house!**