



WEST BASIN
Municipal Water District

Firescaping Workshop

Focusing on:
**Malibu and
Topanga**

September 15, 2021



Go-To Webinar Housekeeping Items:

Waiting to view Liz Davis's screen
Talking: Liz Davis

Webinar Housekeeping

Organizer: Liz Davis | Presenter: Liz Davis

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This Evening's Speakers

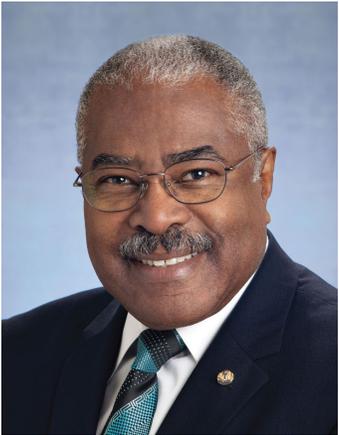
- **Jenyffer Vasquez** – Facilitator
- **Mayor Grisanti**, City Of Malibu- Welcome/Opening Remarks
- **Director Scott Houston** – Introduction to West Basin
- **Douglas Kent, MS, MLA** – Class Instructor
- **Chris Brossard** – Q&A Panelist
- **Gus Meza** – Moderator
- **Matthew Veeh** – Moderator

Mission



Provide a **safe** and **reliable** supply of **high-quality water** to the communities we serve.

Board of Directors



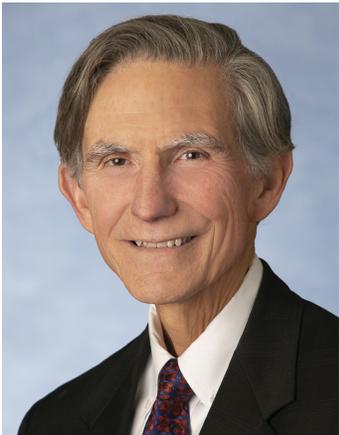
Division I

Harold C. Williams
President



Division II

Gloria D. Gray
Immediate Past
President



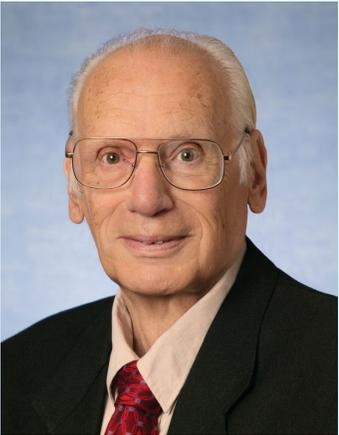
Division III

Desi Alvarez
Secretary



Division IV

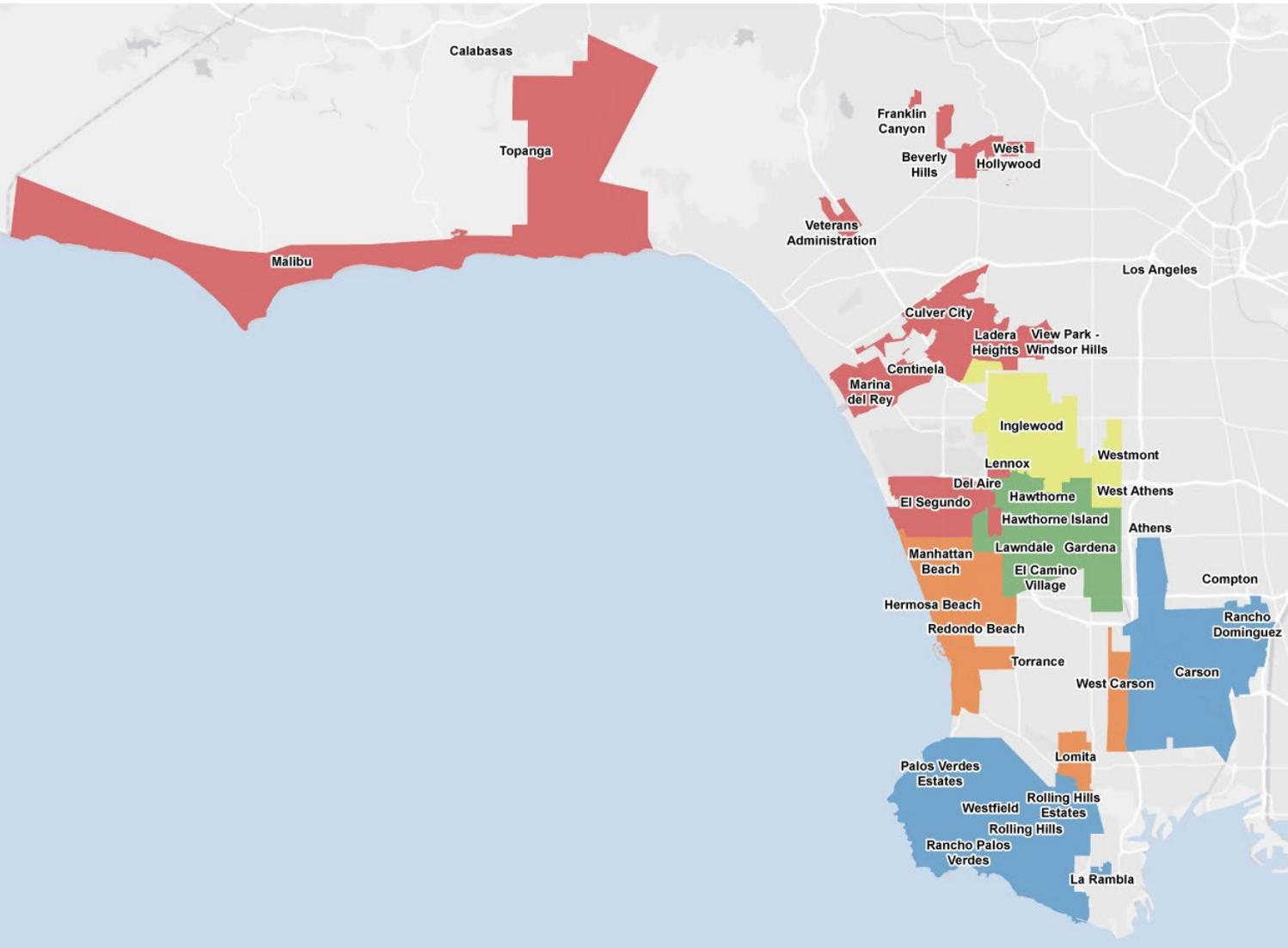
Scott Houston
Treasurer



Division V

Donald L. Dear
Vice President

Service Area



Division I

Carson, Palos Verdes Estates, Rancho Palos Verdes, Rolling Hills, Rolling Hills Estates, and unincorporated LA County areas of Rancho Dominguez

Division II

Inglewood, and unincorporated LA County areas of Lennox, South Ladera Heights, West Athens, and Westmont

Division III

Hermosa Beach, Lomita, Manhattan Beach, Redondo Beach, portion of Torrance and West Carson

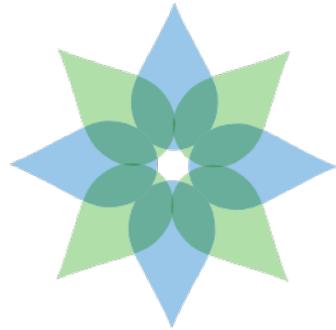
Division IV

Culver City, El Segundo, Malibu, West Hollywood, and unincorporated LA County areas of Del Aire, Lennox, Marina del Rey, North Ladera Heights, Topanga, View Park, Windsor Hills and Wiseburn

Division V

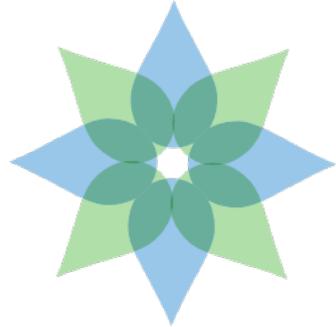
Gardena, Hawthorne, Lawndale, and unincorporated LA County area of El Camino Village

Malibu Smart & Topanga Smart Program



**MALIBU
SMART**

Save water. Live well.



**TOPANGA
SMART**

Save water. Live well.

- Increased incentives for water efficient devices
- Provides \$5 per square foot for Grass Replacement
- Program is 97 % complete and available until November 30, 2021



Structures



CREATING FIRE-RESISTANT PROPERTIES AND COMMUNITIES

Structures

Our 1st Priority!

Whether firebrands or direct flame contact, your structure must be maintained to withstand an assault of intense heat and flying burning embers.



Bond Fire, 2020



Woolsey Fire, 2018

Structures: Hillside Living

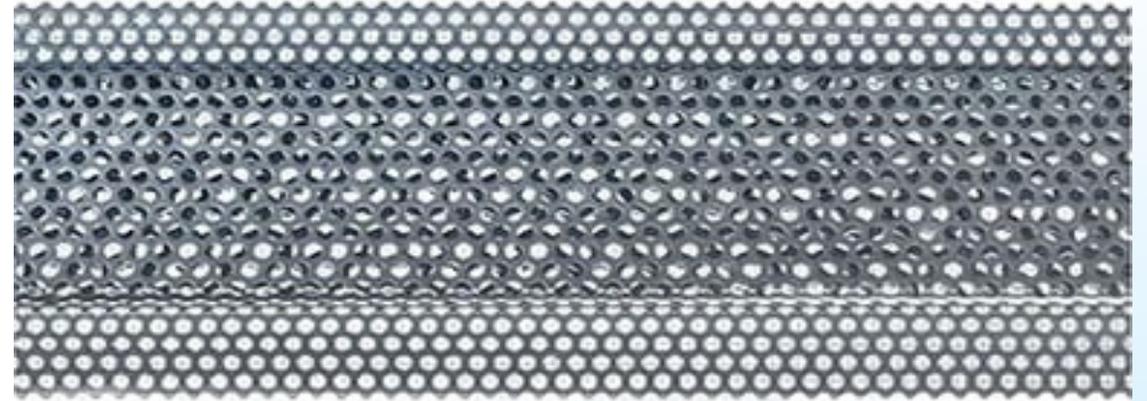
Problems

- Elongated flames
- Intense heat
- Firebrands propelled by convection

Solutions

- Screens
- Eaves
- Trim
- Siding

Woolsey Fire. Photo by:
Business Insider, 2018



Vulcan Vent: Fire and ember safe



Small Properties

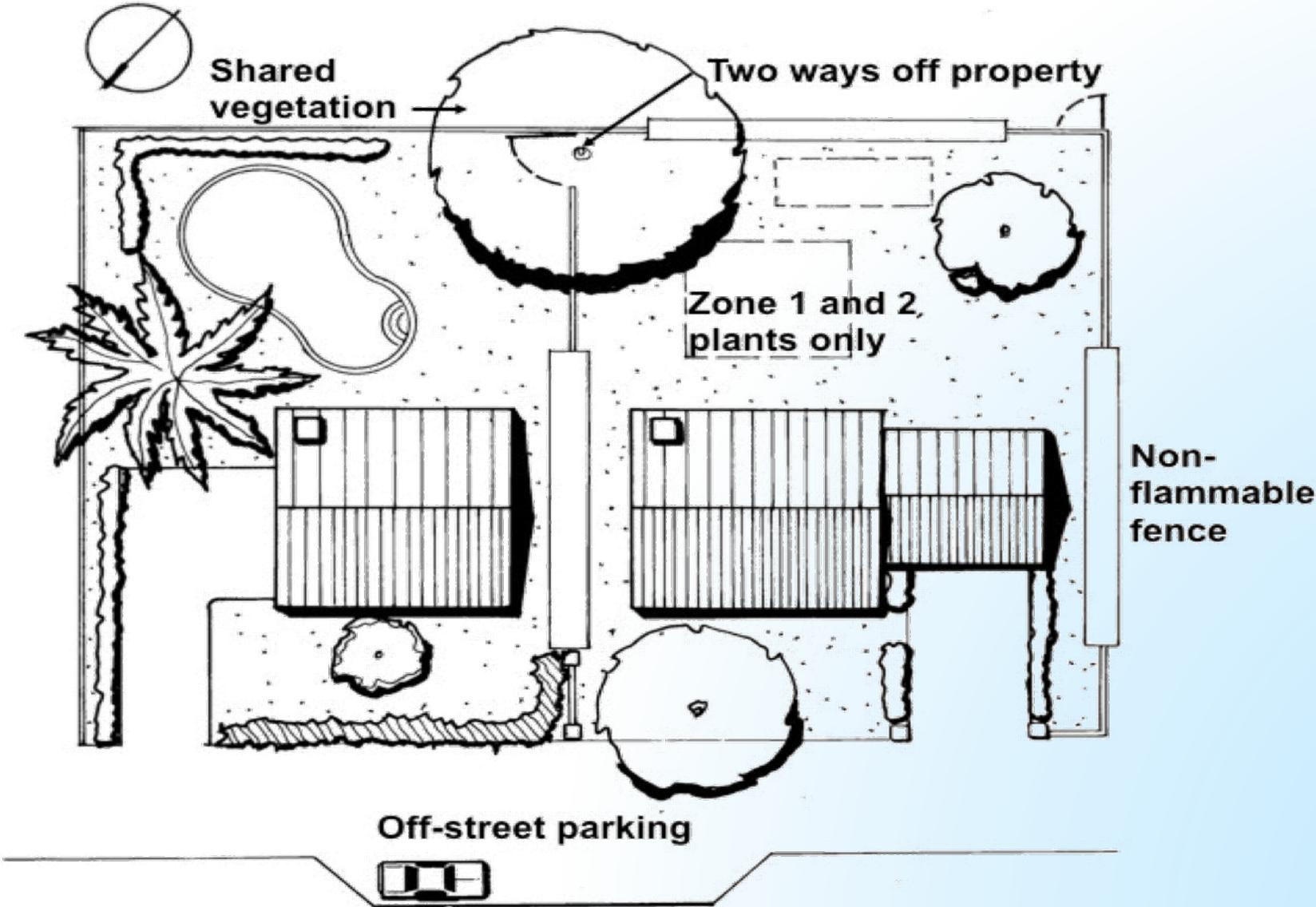
As illustrated by the state's deadliest and most destructive wildfires, small lot neighborhoods are particularly vulnerable to loss. The reason is because there is not enough distance between the homes to buffer the intense heat and a domino effect is created. Homes burn at about 1,110F.



Old Fire, 2003



Structures: Small Lot Design Strategies



Structures: To Do

- Ensure all **openings** are screened.
- Clean **roof** and gutters.
- Manage **seams** and fill gaps.



- Paint, if not sand, all peeling **paint**.
- Make your **address** visible.



Roads: Special Concern for Malibu and Topanga

Problems

- Winding roads with poor forward visibility.
- Flammable features and vegetation immediately along road.
- Roads are narrow, creating choke points.



Roads: To Do

- Make you **address** highly visible.
- Create **off-street** parking.
- Remove flammable vegetation from **5 feet** on either side of road.
- Properly maintain **features** along the road.
- Remove **dead**, dying, diseased and dried vegetation.



Structures



Malibu Firescaping Workshop



First Five Feet



CREATING FIRE-RESISTANT PROPERTIES AND COMMUNITIES

First Five Feet: Our 2nd Priority

The first 5 feet of your home plays a pivotal role in its protection.

- **Avoid storage.** Compost bins, toy boxes, coat and shoe cupboards, and recycle and trash cans should be placed outside of this area.
- **Absolutely no flammable plants.** The most flammable include buckwheat, cypress, eucalyptus, juniper, and any other plant with a brittle nature and fragrance.
- **Absolutely no woody dry organic mulches.** Inorganic mulches, like river rock, are preferred. If organic mulch is needed, then use only humus, the most decomposed.
- **Avoid the use of fabrics,** which includes awnings, cushions and umbrellas.
- **Avoid erecting shading devices with the first 5 feet.** Wooden features attached to a building are a huge liability.

First Five Feet: Do you see it?



The lumber, containers and tools provide opportunities for ignition and unnecessarily add risk to an otherwise fire-hardened home.

First Five Feet: Our 2nd Priority

Malibu's Fire-Resistant Landscaping Ordinance

- No organic mulches
- No flammable fences or hedges
- No artificial turf



First Five Feet: Shade Structures

Problems

- Attached to structures
- Poorly maintained



First Five Feet: Shade Structures

Solutions

- Detach from structure
- Slant to allow heat to escape
- Use fire-resistant wood
- Care for the wood



■ First 5 Feet



Malibu Firescaping Workshop

A night-time photograph of a city with a large fire burning on a mountain in the background. The city lights are visible in the foreground, and the fire is a bright orange and yellow glow on the mountain. The sky is dark, and the fire is the main source of light in the scene.

Defensible Space

CREATING FIRE-RESISTANT PROPERTIES AND COMMUNITIES

Defensible Space: Zone 1

The Garden Zone / Defensible Space

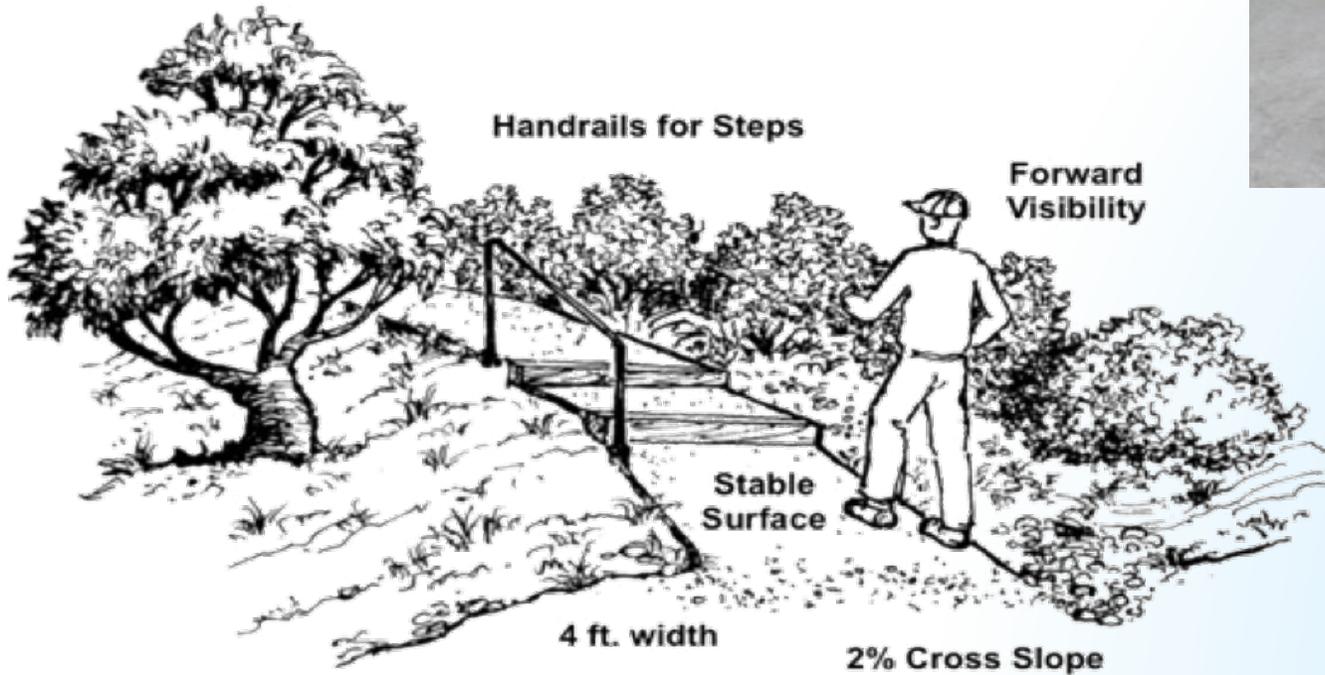
- ➔ **Distance:** Extends 30 ft from house or structure.
- ➔ **Primary Goal:** Able to withstand flying embers and intense heat. Only zone that selected plants can be dependent on imports, mainly water and fertilizers.
- ➔ **Secondary Goal:** This area must maintain a high recreational, functional and/or economical value.



Defensible Space: Pathways

Pathways are vital for fleeing and fighting

- Encircle a structure
- Four-feet wide and stable
- No obstructions that hinder swift travel



Defensible Space: Fencing



Defensible Space: Fencing

Privacy is Essential for Wellbeing

- Use fire-resistant materials.
- Restrict the use of wood.
- Maintain the fence with fire in mind.



Photo copied from Pinterest

Defensible Space: New Ordinance and Law

Malibu's Fire-Resistant Landscaping Ordinance (August 1, 2020)

New landscaping guidelines apply to any landscaping project that requires an Administrative Plan Review Permit (APR) or Coastal Development Permit (CDP or ACDP).

Summary:

- Five-foot buffer around structure.
- No flammable barriers, like fences and hedges, within 5 feet.
- No flammable trees within 50 feet.
- No palm trees.
- No big or tall trees under powerlines.
- Mulches: no organics within 5 feet and no wood chips anywhere.

California AB-38: Defensible Space Inspection (July 1, 2021)

All property sold in High or Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones—which includes all of Malibu—must submit a defensible space inspection prior to the sale of the property.

Important Links

Cal Fire's self-assessment at [Cal Fire's Defensible Space Requirements](#)

To request an inspection: [Cal Fire's Inspection Portal](#).

Defensible Space: To Do

- Remove all flammable items within the first **5 feet!**
- Remove dead, **dying** and diseased vegetation.
- Maintain an effective system of **paths**.
- Schedule an **appointment** with Malibu's Fire Safety Liaison to assess your property. Email FireSafety@malibucity.org



Defensible Space



Malibu Firescaping Workshop



Plants



CREATING FIRE-RESISTANT PROPERTIES AND COMMUNITIES

Plants: Less Flammable

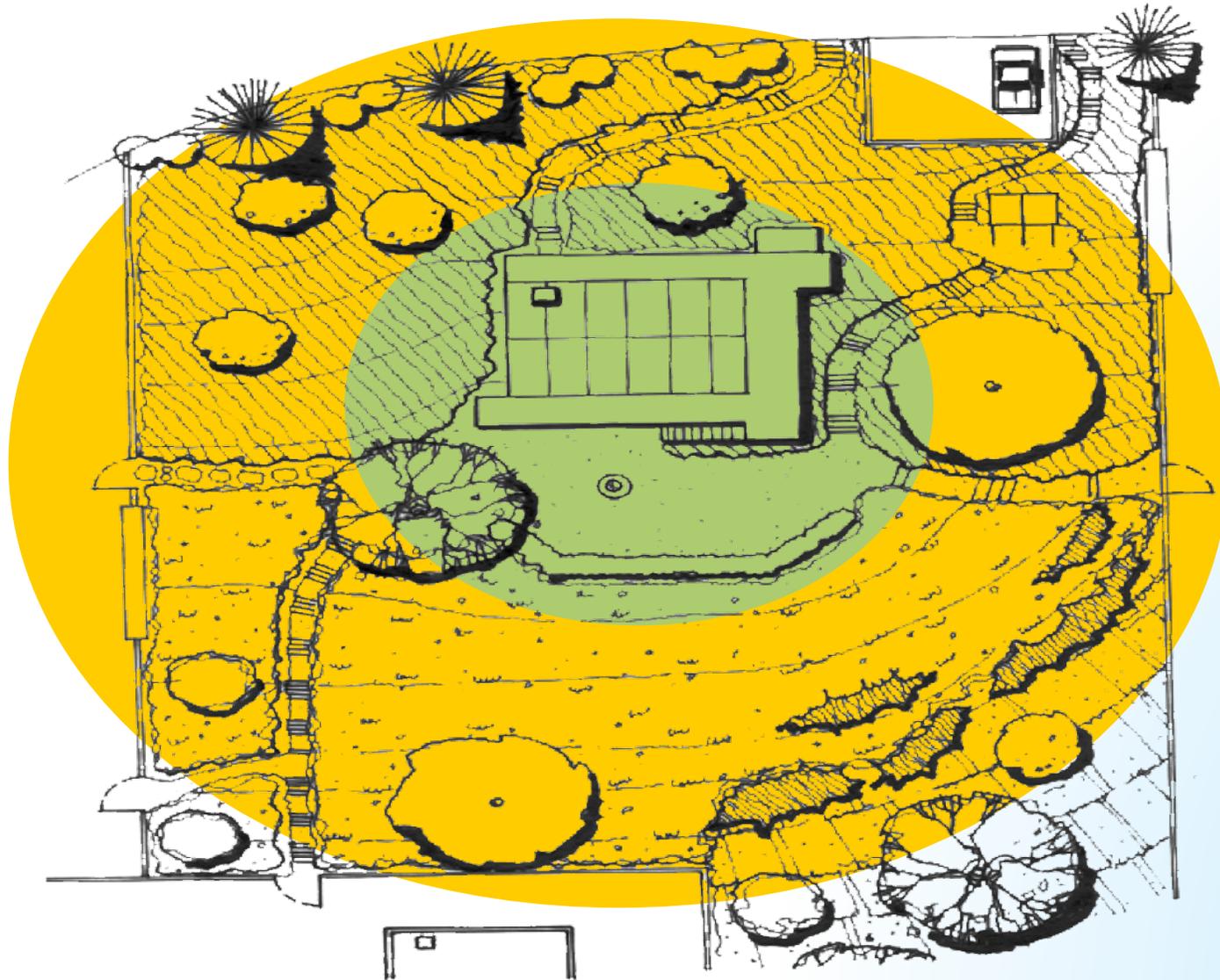
*Knowing Traits is
More Important than Lists*

- Broadleaf plants
- Moist and easily bent leaves
- Thick leaves
- Low amount of litter
- Sap that looks more like water
- Plants without fragrance
- Plants with silver or gray leaves
- Plant leaves without hair



Coral bells (*Heuchera*) and *Carex pansa* have many fire-resistant attributes.

Plants: Less Flammable



●
Zone 1 Plants

●
Zone 2 Plants

Plants: Less Flammable

Zone 1 Plants

- Agapanthus
- Cercis – Redbud
- Citrus
- Crape Myrtle
- Fescue
- Flax
- Gazania
- Grape
- Liquidambar
- Philodendron
- Photinia
- Succulents

Zone 2 Plants

- Artemisia ‘Silver King’
- Ceanothus
- Cistus – Rockrose
- Coast Live Oak
- Cotoneaster
- Hummingbird sage
- Lemonade Berry
- Mallow
- Native Verbena
- Toyon
- Yarrow
- Yucca



Plants: Flammable Plants

Malibu's Fire-Resistant Landscaping Ordinance

- No palms
- No hedges or walls within 5 feet of a structure
- No flammable trees within 50 feet of a structure

Flammable Plants

- Acacia
- Cedar
- Cypress
- Eucalyptus
- Juniper
- Palms
- Pine
- Spruce
- Thuja



Plants: The Problem with Lists



- Too Old
- Diseased
- Injured
- Pest Infested
- Not Healthy

Maintenance is the Fulcrum of Fire Safety

Plants: To Do

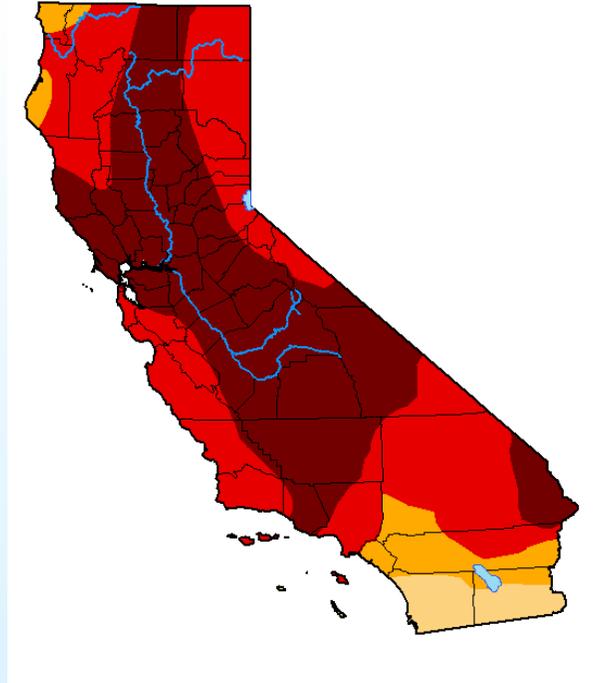
- Remove dead, **dying** and diseased vegetation.
- **Replace** vegetation before it becomes an economic liability and fire risk.
- Do not let your plants **dry** out.



Rebates: SoCalWaterSmart.com

U.S. Drought Monitor
California

- Increased Rebates
- \$5 per ft² Grass Replacement
- \$180 Smart timers
- High-Efficiency Sprinkler nozzles
- High-Efficiency Clothes Washers / Toilets



Be Water Efficient, Save Money and Water

Contacts

For more information about fire protection or water conservation programs, please contact the individuals below.

Douglas Kent

Douglas Kent+ Associates
newair@mindspring.com
www.anfractus.com

Christine Shen

Environmental Sustainability Analyst
City of Malibu
Office: (310) 456-2489, ext. 376
cshen@malibucity.org

Chris Brossard

Fire Safety Liaison
City of Malibu
Office: (310) 456-2489, ext. 387
Firesafety@malibucity.org

Terri Alex

Management Specialist I
Los Angeles County Public Works – Waterworks
Work: (626) 300-4688
talex@dpw.lacounty.gov

Jenyffer Vasquez

Water Policy & Resources Analyst II
West Basin Municipal Water District
Office: (310) 660-6225
JenyfferV@westbasin.org

Gus Meza

Sr. Water Policy & Resources Analyst
West Basin Municipal Water District
Office: (310) 660-6209
gusm@westbasin.org

Plants



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