

How to Choose the Right Mulch for Fire Safety

Help protect your home from wildfire by choosing the right mulch for your yard. The key is to pick the right type depending on how close it is to your house.



Near the House:

Right next to your home, it's best to use non-combustible mulch like gravel, rocks, or decomposed granite. These materials don't catch fire easily and can keep your home safer if embers land nearby. Just remember to regularly clean off any leaves or debris that might collect on top of the mulch, especially during wildfire season.

A Little Further Out (5-30 feet):

In the area a bit further from your house, you can use small composted wood chips. These help keep your plants healthy by retaining water. Because mulch can catch fire, it's important not to spread it too widely. Alternating mulch areas with non-combustible materials like gravel, rock, or lawn will help reduce the risk of fire spreading.

Further Away (30+ feet):

Larger wood chips and bark can be part of your landscape design, but keep them at least 30 feet from your home and any structures like fences or outdoor furniture. These materials are more flammable, so they're safer when placed further out.

A Note on Watering

Watering mulch during a wildfire isn't effective. The heat and wind can dry it out quickly, and that water might be needed elsewhere by firefighters.

Get more fire smart landscaping tips at firesafemarin.org

