

Be ember aware!

BY SANDY SHAFFER

If you live in the Applegate, you and your family are at risk from wildfire, even if you don't live on a forested site! Over 90% of homes that burn in wildfires in our country do so because of flying embers, not from a forest fire raging through the tree tops. And embers can fly *up to a mile* ahead of a wildfire, reaching out to threaten homes in towns, on farms or along rivers. So please, read on to learn how to make your home *and your family* fire-safe.

The *most important* thing you can do to help make your home fire safe is an *early summer cleanup*. These are tasks such as cleaning leaves and pine needles from your gutters and roof, raking debris within 30 feet of all structures and mowing grass and weeds down to less than six inches in height. Why? Because these are the "fine fuels" that collect over the fall and winter that could very easily ignite during a summer wildfire. A pile of dry leaves underneath a redwood deck could easily ignite and cause the deck material to catch fire, ultimately engulfing your home. Same thing with firewood or anything flammable stored under the deck! So, move all firewood to at least 30 feet away from structures in late spring. The risk is too great.

Walk around your property

looking for fine fuels that could ignite from embers and spread to things that you *really don't* want catching on fire – your home, your car, an RV, out-buildings, or power poles. Rake leaves and pine needles out from under vehicles, large propane tanks and power lines. Did you know that large propane tanks are less likely to explode during a wildfire than smaller ones? I'm not a scientist, but it's something to do with the volume of cold gas inside, so the large tanks tend to stay cooler longer than the small ones.

When a wildfire is nearby, some items should be removed from around the home and put inside. Dry vegetation near the house is a no-brainer; *what's harder to think about* are those flammable items that we live with day to day; things like patio furniture, fiber door mats, vehicles, BBQ propane tanks and such. They can ignite and start a fire, or they can get too hot due to burning weeds or leaves underneath, and really intensify a fire situation on your homesite. Put these things inside.

An example: take a look at this photo at right of a brick house in Texas that had a tile roof and a defensible space. It burned because a fiber doormat caught fire and burned through the wooden door! Who would have thought? So do a walk-around to make a (short) list of those items that would need to be moved inside if a fire broke out in your neighborhood,

and review this list with everyone in the family.

Finally, also look at your home's building materials to see if there are vents and openings not screened off (use metal screening or hardware cloth at least ¼" mesh or smaller). Make sure your roof, siding and windows are in good shape, no openings or missing tiles, preferably fire-resistant and clean. Home construction is *very important* to surviving a wildfire; for more information on building materials and wildfire risks, go to either <http://firewise.org> or <http://rvfpc.com> and search for the Home Ignition Zone. It's time well spent.

One last thing as we get into

this summer's fire season: know your vegetation and keep the rake at hand if necessary! Did you know that madrone trees drop dead leaves in late July, right in the middle of the summer? And, pine trees drop old needles in August! Don't let them sit around – we get most of our local fires during August and September. Finally, always be prepared for whatever Mother Nature might throw at us – in my neighborhood it was a wind/hail event last August 1 that left about two inches of vegetation debris covering the ground, the house and the roof! Our rakes came out the next morning...

Sandy Shaffer

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An Applegate Valley Marketplace at Eve's Cafe

15090 Highway #238 A, Applegate, OR 97530

Watch for the sign—EVE'S CAFE—and head on down to Eve's Cafe and the MARKETPLACE with family, friends, or summer guests. At the MARKETPLACE, you can find delicious foods, fresh produce and a local real estate office all located between the Applegate Bridge and North Applegate Road—opposite the Applegate Store. A local place with many choices!

EVE'S CAFE

A visit to Eve's will have the flavor of many summers past. When you step into the cafe, a relaxed atmosphere surrounds you with lace curtains at the window, and old-fashioned, country decorations. There is a choice of tables inside, or outside in a colorful garden developed over many years by Cathy and Bill Dunlap. But - it is the food that brings people back again and again!

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APPLEGATE FARMERS MARKET

Bring your canvas bags or basket to the APPLEGATE FARMERS MARKET after a delicious breakfast or lunch at Eve's - for a Sunday market experience. Choose from wholesome, fresh grown salad, and vegetable produce. Many local, organic growers and craft persons have been invited to join Rob and Pam Key in this community market.

Rob says he has been growing organic vegetables in the valley for seven years.

Rob and Pam Key 541-659-5311

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A custom, personalized real estate service is available to locals in the Applegate at APPLEGATE VALLEY MARKETPLACE. Don and Debbie Tollefson, after selling real estate several years in the Applegate, have opened their own real estate office in the front of EVE'S. If you have guests this summer, after stopping at EVE'S and the Farmers Market, you can visit on the porch in front of EVE'S at the home of APPLEGATE VALLEY REAL ESTATE. Here, you can have a cup of coffee or tea with Don and Debbie, and learn of properties listed locally and in the surrounding area. Team Tollefson also offer notary service.

They can be reached at: 541-218-0947

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