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Get Your Home Ready for Fire Season

by *homewarranty.com*

Being prepared for fire season can help you feel less anxious heading into the season. Here are some recommendations to help you get your house ready for the fire season.

Create "Defensible Space": Your defensible space is the buffer between your house and the trees, grass, and shrubs that surround it. Use this space to slow or stop the spread of a wildfire. Radiant heat can be as dangerous as direct flames, so the wider your defensible space, the better. Here are just a few recommendations:

- Keep space clear of leaves, twigs, and branches by regularly raking it
- Keep the height of your lawn below 4 inches by mowing as needed
- Trim tree branches that are lower than 15 feet from the ground
- Request the power company remove branches from power lines near your property

Roof: Houses with wood roofs are in greater danger of being destroyed by fire than those homes built with metal, tile, or composition materials. If your home currently has a wood roof, consider re-roofing with a fire-resistant material.

Cut back branches that hang low over the roof of your house.

Deck: Decks within 10 feet of your home should be built with ignition-resistant or non-combustible material, such as pressure-treated exterior-rated fire-retardant-treated lumber.

Make sure beneath your deck is clear of all combustible material and debris.

Windows: Replace single-pane windows with dual-paned windows. As they are vulnerable to the heat of wildfire before it even reaches the home. Once windows break, they allow burning embers into the house and may start fires inside.

Chimney: Install 1/8 inch metal mesh screening over chimneys or stove-pipe vents to prevent embers from straying onto your rooftop or yard. Also, store firewood at a safe distance from your home. Never stack it next to the exterior wall of your house.

Gutters: Keep your rain gutters free of combustible debris.

Patio Cover: As we mentioned for fire-resistant roofing, this would also apply to your patio covering. Replace your patio covering with the same material you would use on your roof.

Your Street Number: Make sure your address is easily read from the street and is not obscured by branches or shrubbery so that the fire department can find your home if necessary.

Helpful Resources and Websites:
ReadyForWildfire.org
ucanr.edu/sites/fire/Prepare/Building/

August Calendar

August 7 - Purple Heart Day

August 8 - National Garage Sale Day

August 18 - National Ice Cream Pie Day

August is National Back to School Month

Homeowner Tip:



Inspect Your Home's Siding

Check your exterior trim and siding to make sure your home's trim, casings, and siding are secure to the house and there are no gaps.

Look for peeling paint, wood rot, and crumbling caulk. If you repair wood, remember to prime all six sides before replacing.

5 Things You Should Never Buy at a Garage Sale

August 8 is National Garage Sale Day. Instead of talking up all those great deals that await you in the early morning hours on someone else's lawn, we're here with a list of things you should probably never buy at a garage sale.

1. Baby gear - We're not talking clothes here. By gear we mean cribs, playpens, and car seats. Older models may not have the same safety features as newer ones.

2. Bicycle helmets - Bike helmets should be replaced after any crash involving your head. When you buy a helmet at a garage sale you have no way of knowing that helmet's mysterious, and possibly sordid, past.

3. Mattresses - Two words: bed bugs. These pests can be found in all 50 states, and they can be difficult to get rid of once they find compatible roomies. Old mattresses can have odors or stains you may not easily put to rest.

4. Bath and body products - Yard sale versions of these products may not be as effective as they were when new. Once open, exposure to air and/or bacteria may begin to break them down.

5. Puzzles and board games - Unless these items are in original packaging or you are able to confirm that all pieces, parts, and game components are accounted for, you may be setting yourself up for more frustration than it's worth.



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Mud Pie: Celebrate National Ice Cream Pie Day

Thankfully, an average dairy cow can produce enough milk in her lifetime to make a little over 9,000 gallons of ice cream.

Ingredients:

- 1-1/2 cups Oreo cookie crumbs
- 1-1/2 teaspoons sugar, optional
- 1/4 cup butter, melted
- 4 cups chocolate chip ice cream, softened
- 1/4 cup chocolate syrup
- Additional Oreo cookies, optional

Directions:

- In a small bowl, combine cookie crumbs and sugar if desired. Stir in butter. Press onto the bottom and up the sides of an ungreased 9-in. pie plate. Refrigerate for 30 minutes.
- Spoon 2 cups ice cream into crust. Drizzle with half of the chocolate syrup; swirl with a knife. Gently top with remaining ice cream.
- Drizzle with remaining syrup; swirl with a knife. Freeze until firm. Remove from the freezer 10-15 minutes before serving.
- Garnish with whole cookies if desired.

