

# Professional Landscapers Firewise Training - 2013



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# Definition

- Wildland Urban Interface- the zone where human-made improvements intermix with wildland fuels.

# 2011 Texas Wildfire Season

November 15, 2010 to October 31, 2011

27,976 Fires (TFS Reported)

3,959,040 acres

2,862 Homes (1,939 Labor Day Weekend)

2,700 “other” Structures

47.3% of total U.S acres burned

6 of the largest fires in TX history

# Pinnacle Fire 4/17/2011

Only 100 acres

11 Homes destroyed

Another 10 damaged

Over 100 FF's



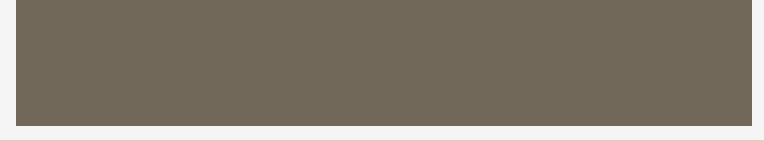
# Steiner Ranch 9/4/2011

Only 125 acres

24 Homes destroyed

30 Damaged

Firefighters from as far as Dallas/Fort Worth



# Bastrop County Complex

## 9/4/2011

“Most Catastrophic Wildfire in Texas History”

34,068 acres

1,645 Homes

2 Fatalities

100% Containment on October 10,2011

Firefighters from every state in US

(ex. Hawaii)





# 2011 a fluke? What about 2012

Fewer Fires....

But, more acres burned

# History of fire

Natural

Sculpted our landscape

Texas landscapes are actually fire dependant... whoa....

# History of fire

## Change of land use

- lack of grazing
- poorly planned development
- lack of land owner responsibility

## Native invasives??

- everything is out of wack!
- poor/lack of land management

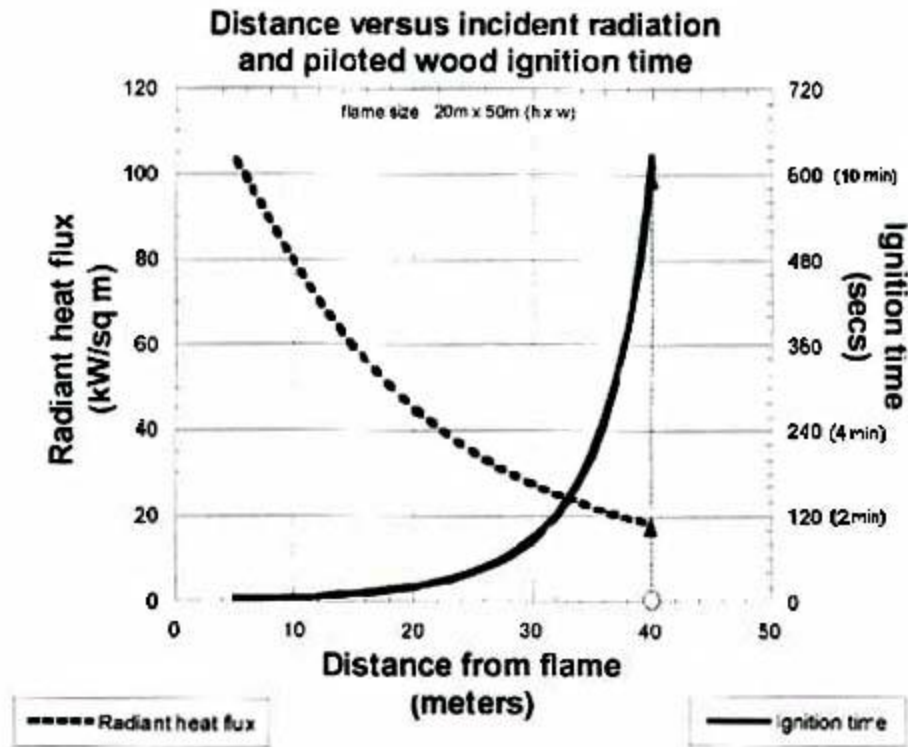
# History of fire

Megafires??

“Modern day fires are more a land management failure than a fire management failure”

But, that doesn't mean that we don't have a place at the table

# Why Do Homes Burn?



# Importance of Defensive Space

# Ember Storm Video





# What Happened to Us?













# Wicking Fences







No Tsunami of fire here...



# What Happened to Us?

Gutters

Attic vents

Patio Furniture

Wooden Privacy Fences

\*\*\*No Defensible Space\*\*\*

Mulch beds

Dead Yard Waste

Highly Flammable Landscaping



But it doesn't have to be  
like this!!







What Did we learn??

# Lessons Learned

- Embers are our enemy!!
- Limited Resources  
(BOX North and a BOX South)
- Shared responsibility with homeowners
- Community planning and effort

# What to expect from FD

- Size-up
- Structural Triage
- Structural Prep



# Structure Triage

Defendable

Defendable with some improvements

Non-defendable....Wait, What?!

# Structural Prep

- “I don’t care what’s on fire when I get there”
- Sever any connection from vegetation fire to the structure

# Structural Prep

- Rip down the gutters
- Rip off gates next to house
- Knock out a section of the wooden fence
- Yard sale the patio furniture from decks

# Structural Prep

- Remove any questionable vegetation next to and around the home
- Dealing with the highly flammable landscaping is the toughest and most time consuming part of structural prep

# Structural Prep

- If there's no defensible space or if addressing the landscaping is too time consuming we stop and move on....yep.
- We typically only allow 2-5 mins **AT THE MOST** for structural prep



So What are We Doing  
With Homeowners??





Community/Regional Effort

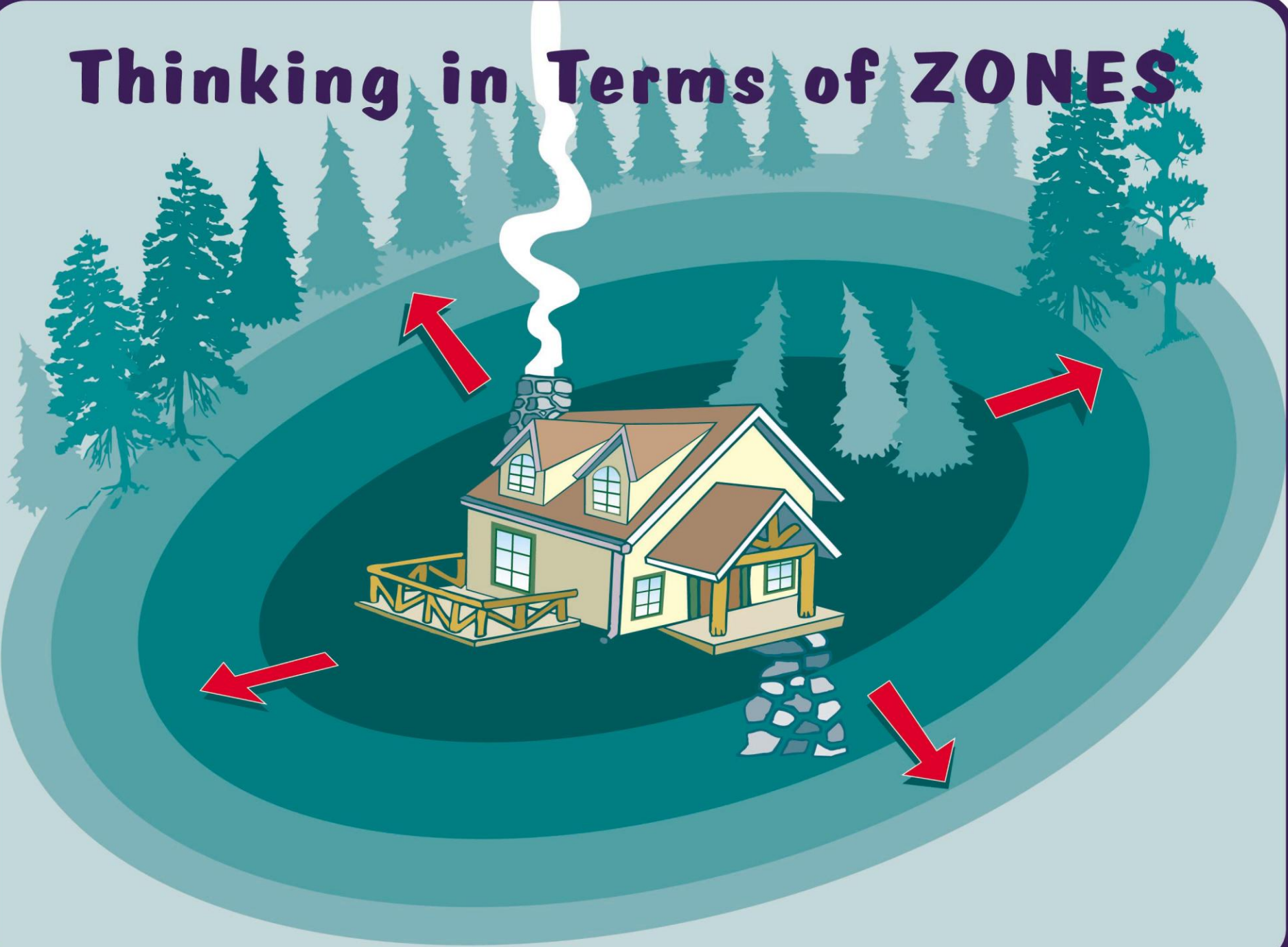
Firewise

Ready, Set, Go!

Fire Adapted Communities



# Thinking in Terms of ZONES



# Foundation to 30 Feet

The primary space adjacent to your home.



# IT'S THE LITTLE THINGS



**SPACE BETWEEN SIDING & EAVES GABLES**

**VENTS & SCREENS**

**WINDOW BOXES**

**SPACKLE AROUND WINDOW**

**CELLAR WELLS & VENTS**

We can do things  
to reduce the  
losses!!

With creative landscaping



With better construction practices



# And increased Public Education













Thanks

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