

# Quick Guide to Firewise Shrubs

- Select the “right plant for the right place” by choosing plants that are well adapted to the conditions where they are to be planted and by considering their flammability characteristics.
- Conduct routine landscape maintenance, such as pruning shrubs, to maintain vertical and horizontal separation from other plants.
- Periodically remove dead or diseased plant material from plants within your home landscape.
- Remember, there are no “fireproof” plants. All plants and organic mulches burn in extreme weather or fire conditions.
- The 34 shrubs shown here were selected for testing based on responses to a survey from fire professionals across the southern United States.
- To estimate the flammability of shrub and other plant species not shown here, see “Preparing a Firewise Plant List for WUI Residents” at [www.interfacesouth.org/products/fact\\_sheets/Preparing\\_Firewise\\_Plant\\_List.pdf](http://www.interfacesouth.org/products/fact_sheets/Preparing_Firewise_Plant_List.pdf) or [www.interfacesouth.org/products/flammability\\_key.html](http://www.interfacesouth.org/products/flammability_key.html).

## Did you know you can select shrubs based on their flammability?

Researchers at the U.S. Forest Service, University of Florida, and the National Institute of Standards and Technology used three flammability categories to indicate how easily and intensely a shrub will burn: high, moderate, and low.

## Moderate Flammability

Use cautiously in isolated landscape beds within the defensible space, 15 feet or more from the house.

## High Flammability

Plant these shrubs 30 feet or more away from the house. Maintain them regularly.



J. S. Peterson

**Chinese juniper**  
*Juniperus chinensis*



Ted Bodner

**Dwarf yaupon**  
*Ilex vomitoria*



Ted Bodner

**Gallberry/Inkberry**  
*Ilex glabra*



Ted Bodner

**Mountain laurel**  
*Kalmia latifolia*



Joseph A. Marcus

**Ashe juniper**  
*Juniperus ashei*



Sten Porse

**Boxwood**  
*Buxus microphylla*  
var. *koreana*



J. S. Peterson

**Pipestem**  
*Agarista populifolia*



doman.com

**Hershey's Red Azalea**  
*Rhododendron obtusum*



Wouter Hagens

**Glossy abelia**  
*Abelia x grandiflora*



Boris Bauer

**Rhododendron**  
*Rhododendron*  
*x chionoides*



Missouri Botanical Garden

**Blue holly**  
*Ilex x meservea*



Kurt Stueber

**Leyland cypress**  
*Cupressocyparis leylandii*

# Low Flammability

Shrubs suitable for planting within the defensible space; plant 6 feet or more from the house.



**Adam's needle**  
*Yucca filamentosa*



**Anisetree**  
*Illicium floridanum*



**Arrowwood**  
*Viburnum dentatum*



**Bayberry**  
*Myrica pennsylvanica*



**Beautyberry**  
*Callicarpa dichotoma*



**Bigleaf hydrangea**  
*Hydrangea macrophylla*



**Butterfly bush**  
*Buddleia davidi*



**Camellia**  
*Camellia japonica*



**Coontie**  
*Zamia pumila*



**Foster holly**  
*Ilex x attenuata*



**Gardenia**  
*Gardenia jasminoides*



**Klein's forsythia**  
*Forsythia x intermedia*



**Oakleaf hydrangea**  
*Hydrangea quercifolia*



**Oleander**  
*Nerium oleander*



**Pittosporum**  
*Pittosporum tobira*



**Rosebay**  
*Rhododendron maximum*



**Scarlet firethorn**  
*Pyracantha coccinea*  
var. *mohave*



**Shrubby cinquefoil**  
*Potentilla fruticosa*



**Sweet pepperbush**  
*Clethra alnifolia*



**Walter's viburnum**  
*Viburnum obovatum*

For more information, contact Annie Hermansen-Báez of the U.S. Forest Service, Southern Research Station at [ahermansen@fs.fed.us](mailto:ahermansen@fs.fed.us), (352) 376-3271.

To view this fact sheet online, visit [http://www.interfacesouth.org/products/pdf/Shrub\\_Flammability.pdf](http://www.interfacesouth.org/products/pdf/Shrub_Flammability.pdf). For the Spanish version, visit [www.interfacesouth.org/products/pdf/Shrub\\_Flammability\\_es.pdf](http://www.interfacesouth.org/products/pdf/Shrub_Flammability_es.pdf)



**Weigela**  
*Weigela florida*



**Winterberry**  
*Ilex verticillata*

## Additional Resources

- For Firewise landscaping tips, see [www.interfacesouth.org/products/fact\\_sheets/Selecting\\_Maintaining\\_Firewise\\_Plants\\_Landscaping.pdf](http://www.interfacesouth.org/products/fact_sheets/Selecting_Maintaining_Firewise_Plants_Landscaping.pdf) and [www.interfacesouth.org/products/fact\\_sheets/Reducing\\_Wildfire\\_Risk.pdf](http://www.interfacesouth.org/products/fact_sheets/Reducing_Wildfire_Risk.pdf)
- Also visit: [www.interfacesouth.org/research.html](http://www.interfacesouth.org/research.html)
- For information about the Firewise program visit: [www.firewise.org](http://www.firewise.org)

