SUMMER-IZE YOUR DESERT HOME

Taking steps to protect your desert home while you're away for long periods is crucial, especially with the increasing risks of wildfires. Here are some effective steps.

CREATE DEFENSIBLE SPACE

Maintain a fire-safe perimeter around your home

Zone 1 (0-5 feet from the house and perimeter wall/fence):

- Remove all vegetation down to bare mineral earth except for protected plants and mature trees. Trim branches of mature trees to 4 feet above the ground.
- Avoid placing flammable furniture or decorations close to the house.

Zone 2 (Additional 15 feet beyond Zone 1):

- Remove dead and dying vegetation
- Remove all invasive vegetation
- Remove all grasses
- Trim trees and shrubs to prevent fire spread

FIRE-RESISTANT LANDSCAPING

- Use plants with high moisture content like succulents, agave, and aloe vera
- Avoid resinous plants like juniper and pine, which are highly flammable
- Schedule regular maintenance to ensure your landscaping stays clean and safe

EMBER PROTECTION

- Seal all gaps, cracks, and crevices in the home's exterior
- Install metal mesh screens on attic vents, eaves, and crawl spaces
- Use non-flammable covers for gutters and remove any debris buildup

IN-HOME SAFETY

- Store flammable liquids (gasoline, propane, cleaning supplies) properly in fireproof cabinets or outside in a safe shed
- Minimize clutter (paper, cardboard, and other combustible materials)
- Unplug all non-essential appliances to reduce the risk of electrical fires
- Inspect wiring and replace damaged cords before leaving
- Use surge protectors to prevent electrical overloads from lightning strikes or power surges
- Use a fireproof safe for important documents and valuables
- Install smoke alarms that send alerts to your phone
- Close all the doors inside your home to limit the spread of heat and fire
- It is recommended that you leave the water on to your home fire sprinkler system, monitor the water usage so you will be notified in the event of water flowing at your home

EMERGENCY PLANNING

- Ensure your property is clearly marked for firefighters and that your address markers are clearly visible from the street
- Enroll in emergency alert systems for wildfire updates in your area
- Leave emergency contact information with neighbors
- Have a backup plan for insurance and valuables in case of damage

For more information, visit ScottsdaleFD.com, search Wildfire Prevention