

## Gardening Tips for Defensible Space



- Complete a defensible space survey with your local fire jurisdiction, find your district here: <https://tahoe.livingwithfire.info/get-informed/find-your-fire-district/>.
- Know your planting zones and defensible space zones.
- Choose Tahoe specific native & adapted plants.
- Maintenance is key:
  - Maintain a lean, clean and green garden.
  - Minimize shrubby debris near home, ladder fuels, and dead/dying vegetation.
  - Rake pine needles in the spring and let them *fall in the fall*.
  - Ensure water efficient irrigation systems are working properly.
  - Be a good neighbor and maintain your landscape.
- Visit our website for plant selection ideas: [ucanr.edu/tfg](https://ucanr.edu/tfg)

The logo for the Tahoe Network of Fire Adapted Communities, featuring a map of Lake Tahoe with icons for a fire station, a group of people, a house, and a person gardening, connected by lines. The text "TAHOE NETWORK OF FIRE ADAPTED COMMUNITIES" is overlaid on the map.A close-up photograph of a bumblebee on a cluster of purple flowers, with a blurred background.

### Contact Us

UCCE Master Gardeners of Lake Tahoe  
530.494.9484  
[laketahoemg@ucanr.edu](mailto:laketahoemg@ucanr.edu)  
<https://ucanr.edu/tfg>

A square QR code located at the bottom of the contact information section.

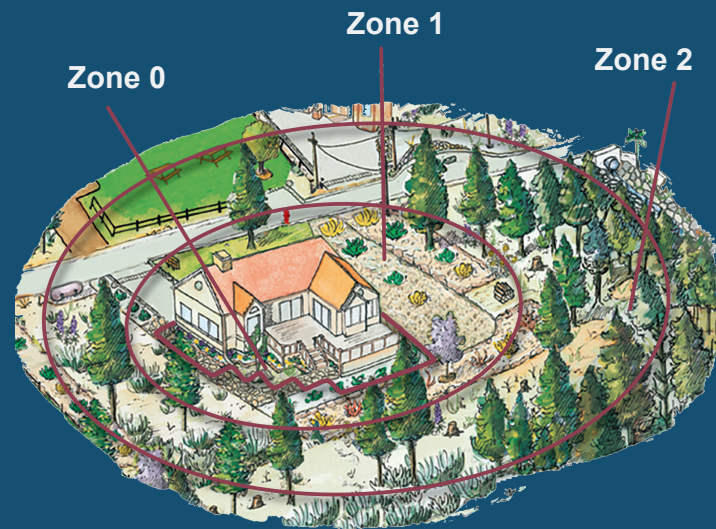
## Tahoe Friendly Gardening for Defensible Space



*Advice to Grow By  
...Ask Us!*



## Residential Defensible Space Zones



This graphic was adapted from Fire Adapted Communities: The Next Step in Wildfire Preparedness, Lake Tahoe Basin, publication #SP-14-05, with permission from University of Nevada Cooperative Extension and the Living With Fire Program.

## Choose Native & Adapted Plants

Utilizing native and adapted plants in your garden will require less water, fertilizer, and pesticides and they will ideally thrive in your Tahoe yards and gardens. Natives tend to be slower growing, prefer well drained soils, and overall need less maintenance. Visit [www.ucanr.edu/tfg](http://www.ucanr.edu/tfg) for a list of Tahoe Friendly Plants for each of your defensible space zones.



Zone 0 Plant - Thyme



Zone 1 Plant - Coneflower



Zone 1/2 Plant - Spiraea



Zone 1 Plant - Columbine

## Design for Defensible Space Zones

Deciding which plants to place in your home garden can have a significant impact on the overall fire adaptation of your landscape. But remember, plant selection is only part of the puzzle. No plant is fire safe! It is up to you to maintain your plants so that they do not become a hazard in the future.

### Zone 0: (0-5 ft) Non Combustible Zone

- Choose rock mulch instead of flammable wood bark or mulch.
- If planting in this zone: choose green, non-woody groundcovers and/or maintained grass.
- Do not plant shrubs and/or trees.
- This is a heavy maintenance area, make sure to clean up any leaf litter and plant debris.

### Zone 1: (5-30 ft) Lean, Clean and Green Zone

- MOST IMPORTANT - ensure separation between shrubby plants, trees and eliminate ladder fuels.
- Create a mosaic (patchwork of plants) within the landscape & garden:
  - Use slow growing perennials and groundcovers;
  - Choose native/adapted shrubs (Elderberry, Wood's Rose, Mountain Pink);
  - Choose/maintain trees (favor deciduous);
  - Choose mulches (rock, tilled wood and plants).

### Zone 2: (30-100 ft) Wildland Fuel Reduction Zone

- MAINTENANCE: Remove dead/dying vegetation, remove ladder fuels and ensure separation between shrubs and evergreens.
- Remember your Zone 2 might be your neighbor's Zone 1. Learn about working with your neighbors at <https://tahoe.livingwithfire.info/>.

### Zone 0 Design Example



### Zone 1 Design Example



### Zone 2 Design Example

