

Take the YOSEMITE WEST DEFENSIBLE SPACE REALITY CHECK.
 Dispel any myths you may have.

YOSEMITE WEST DEFENSIBLE SPACE REALITY CHECK		
Your Excuse?	Myths About Defensible Space	Facts About Defensible Space
MOTIVATE YOURSELF:		
Unaware	"I didn't know there was a wildfire threat to my neighborhood."	Cal Fire classifies Yosemite West in a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone. Yosemite and the Central Sierra have a severe drought condition for the third consecutive year, which dramatically increases the risk from wildland fire.
Denial	"It won't happen to me. I don't believe it."	Every property owner is at risk. The threat of wildland fire is real, likely and not exaggerated. In 2008, the Telegraph Fire burned 55 square miles and was roaring towards Yosemite West at 30 miles per hour.
Fatalism	"It's all fate. When your number is up, it's up."	Whether your house burns or not is not a matter of luck.
Futility	"It won't make a difference."	Research proves that creating defensible space increases the likelihood of a house surviving a wildland fire or being destroyed. Many property owners have gotten the message, but many have either not acted on it or are slow to adopt defensible space practices. Having defensible space promotes firefighter and public safety.
Irresponsibility	"It's not my job."	It is <i>your</i> responsibility to protect your home, not that of the fire department. Public officials are not solely responsible for minimizing wildfire threat.
No Incentives	"If it was really important, my insurance company would give me a break on my premium."	The costs of implementing defensible space is not offset by lower insurance rates. State law allows insurance carriers to require more restrictive defensible space criteria than the criteria in PRC§4291. Many of your neighbors' homeowners' insurance policies have been canceled in recent years.
Insurance	"So what, my insurance carrier will build me a new and better house. I don't care if the house burns down."	Your house may not be adequately insured with new construction costs starting at more than \$300/sq.ft. Why find secure places for your valuables like pictures and things that can't be replaced, and ignore the house. Your burning property may pose a threat to your neighbor who may care more about their house.

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Unnatural	"It's wrong to cut trees."	You can selectively remove specific trees and native vegetation while retaining the naturalness and wildland look of the landscape, minimizing disturbance to the natural setting, enhancing wildlife habitat, and promoting a more healthy forest. The current forest has up to 1,000 tree stems per acre, yet should only have about 50 large trees per acre. This unnatural density has made the forest more susceptible to disease.
Aesthetics	"It won't look good."	Effective defensible space results in an attractive landscape that compliments your home, and contributes to your property value.
Discomfort	"I don't want to because of scorpions, lizards, snakes."	Working outdoors in a wildland setting is not hazardous. If you're concerned about risks, ask for help.
TAKE THE OPPORTUNITY:		
Illegal	"It's against the law."	No federal laws or local ordinances prevent the creation of defensible space. In fact, California state law requires 100-foot defensible space; visit Cal Fire's website at http://www.fire.ca.gov . Some insurance carriers require more than 100 feet.
Lack of Ownership	"The problem is on my neighbor's property."	The presence of hazardous fuels on a vacant lot poses a serious threat to adjacent property owners' houses. A homeowner cannot create effective defensible space without the cooperation of their adjacent neighbors. Everyone must act now to help build community-wide defensible space in Yosemite West. Inaction is irresponsible. Please cooperate with a neighbor who is willing to help you work on your property.
HERE'S HOW:		
Lack of Knowledge	"I don't know what to do. I don't want to learn new things about landscaping."	You can easily learn about wildfire threat reduction practices by visiting Cal Fire's website at http://www.fire.ca.gov and also visiting the YWPHI website at http://www.yosemitewest.org/firesafe.htm .
Cost	"I don't have the time or money to do it."	The benefits of reduced fire threat outweigh the monetary expense, volunteer labor, and time requirements. In 2009, YWPHI has been awarded a National Fire Plan grant from the USDA Forest Service through the California Fire Safe Council that funds the YOSEMITE WEST DEFENSIBLE SPACE PROJECT . Everyone can participate in the project.
Disposal	"I don't have an easy way to get rid of that stuff."	Participate in the YOSEMITE WEST DEFENSIBLE SPACE PROJECT and the debris generated from hazard fuel reduction services will be chipped.