



## Helping Communities Better Plan the Wildland-Urban Interface

### Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) Code

Based on science and research, a Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI) Code serves as a tool to make a community safer and bridges traditional building, fire, and landscaping standards. Adopting a code that specifically addresses wildfire aligns with Washington State guidelines and follows other western U.S. communities that face similar wildfire hazard.

#### What is a WUI Code?

- A WUI Code is adopted locally and can be customized to address differing wildfire risk within a community. For example, different mapped WUI areas within a community may have different levels of hazard, and thus different requirements.
- WUI Codes are customized for individual community needs, but typically address a combination of factors that reduce wildfire hazard, such as vegetation management, road design, water supply, construction materials, and site plan conditions like setbacks and slopes.

#### What are the benefits of a WUI Code?

- A WUI Code ensures future development is built to a consistent standard and provides a measurable way to address wildfire risk.
- The standards for new construction make structures more likely to withstand wildfire and can reduce long-term spending on fire suppression.
- A WUI Code may help keep insurance coverage available. As more states across the West experience losses from wildfire, some insurance companies have already begun dropping customers or raising rates.



Photo: FEMA/Andrea Booher

## Who has adopted WUI Codes?

Many communities have adopted WUI codes, including:

**Wenatchee, Washington:** adopted a WUI Code in 2009 to address new development in their growing WUI areas.

**Kittitas County, Washington:** found all unincorporated areas of the County to be at risk from wildfire and identified four hazard level rankings that apply differing code requirements.

**Yakima County, Washington:** adopted a WUI code with multiple amendments to best serve their community. It is managed by the County Fire Marshal's office.

**Flagstaff, Arizona:** adopted a WUI code that includes defensible space for entire properties to better mitigate wildfire risk at the neighborhood level.



Photo: NIFC

Learn more at [planningforwildfire.org](http://planningforwildfire.org)

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