

Firewise Plant Guide

Providing Information About Drought-tolerant, Deer Resistant, Flammability, and other information

2015

Prepared by
Sun City Texas Firewise Group

There is no such thing as a “fireproof” landscape (unless it is completely covered in concrete), but there are landscapes that are “Firewise” and can help prevent the spread of fire and damage.

All information in this publication was obtained from USDA Plants Data Base, Firewise Communities USA, Native and Adapted Landscapes Plants, and other sources.



Updated January 14, 2015

Sun City Texas has been a Firewise Community since 2009. The Community Association has developed and implemented a management program to maintain community property to meet Firewise guidelines. Homeowner share in the responsibility to maintain their property to meet Firewise guidelines to reduce the probability of their property being damaged by falling embers from wildfires and house fires. The use of native or locally adapted drought tolerant and deer resident species are strongly recommended for all landscaping.

The following are general concepts when designing, choosing, and planting Firewise Landscapes:

- ! Prolonged drought and the risk of wildfires should be a high consideration when making plant choices and their placement in the landscape.
- ! A plant's moisture content is the single most important factor governing its volatility. However, oil and resin content plus other factors in some species render them flammable even when the plant is well watered.
- ! Deciduous plants tend to be more fire resistant because their leaves have higher moisture content and their basic chemistry is less flammable. When deciduous trees are dormant, there is less fuel to carry fire through their canopies.
- ! There is a strong correlation between drought tolerance and fire resistance. For example, a plant may shed its leaves or needles during extreme drought. Other drought-tolerant species may have smaller leaves or thick, succulent leaves. These plants offer less fuel or have a higher moisture content, both of which help reduce the fire hazard.
- ! The use of shrubs and bushes around the house is encouraged. Planting near or right against the home is discouraged especially plants that are extremely flammable and can grow to or over the eaves.
- ! Consider the following when choosing plants and laying out landscaping:
 - " Plants that have a higher water content.
 - " Plants that don't tend to take fire from the ground towards windows or the roof because these are the sensitive area in our houses.
 - " Avoid tall grasses like Pampas grass and other ornamental grasses within 5 feet of the house. They have a tendency to dry out and become easily ignitable.
 - " Use the areas near your house for your hardscapes like rocks, fountains and walkways. These are good barriers that the fire has difficulty jumping unless you get high winds (thirty miles per hour or higher).
 - " Mulch to conserve moisture and reduce weed growth. The least flammable mulch is composted hardwood mulch. Avoid pine bark, pine needles, or other materials that can easily ignite and carry fire.

Landscaping Adjacent to Developer Installed Retaining Walls

The following information is from the Interim Guidelines (April 22, 2014) describes the restrictions applying to all landscaping near Developer installed retaining walls. Any damage to retaining walls and/or surrounding property will be the responsibility of the party deemed to have violated these restrictions. See Table 1 for planting distances.

Table 1. Modifications prohibited near Developer installed walls.

Height of Wall in feet	numbers are distance from the wall in feet				Plants Allowed near wall
	Pavestone® Walls		Limestone Walls		
	No digging*		No digging*		
	Top of Wall	Bottom of Wall	Top of Wall	Bottom of Wall	
0-2	5	5	5	5	Yes (see Note below)
2-10	10	5	5	5	Yes (see Note below)
10-12	15	10	15	10	Yes
Over 12	20	10	20	10	Yes

* "No Digging" in this context means no digging into the ground or drilling into the retaining wall for the purpose of adding plants, irrigation lines, planting bed borders of any kind of material, drain pipe, wiring for any purpose with or without conduit, or for any other improvement or modification to the area adjacent to or attached to Developer installed retaining walls under this guideline is not permitted. The restriction does not apply to the installation i) of lawn grasses, ii) ground cover plantings, iii) inert material or iv) fence posts that are installed 8-inches or more from the wall if installed in accordance with the provisions found elsewhere in the Design Guidelines. This amplification on the "no digging" restriction is based on an April 29, 2011 letter from the Developer's principal fencing contractor.

Note: Oak trees, maple trees, pecan trees, Sycamore trees, redbud trees, or other trees along with crepe myrtle, wax myrtle, and mountain laurels are not allowed any closer than 10 feet from the bottom of any retaining wall, or 15 feet on top of any 10-12 foot walls, and no closer than 20 feet from the top of any walls over 12 feet.

More Sun City Information for Residents: To access the Design Guidelines for Modification and Interim Guidelines (April 22, 2014) on the Sun City web site, go to the site index, click on *Documents, Forms, Guidelines*, and log in with member ID and password.

common name	specific name	native ¹	Distance from Foundations, Retaining Walls	flamability hazard ²	water requirements ³	wildlife value ⁴	deer resistant ⁵
Avoid if Possible							
Chinaberry	<i>Melia azedarach</i>	no	INVASIVE				
Chinese pistache	<i>Pistacia chinensis</i>	no	INVASIVE				
Cypress, Arizona	<i>Cypressus arizonica</i>	yes	10'	high	very low		
Cypress, Bald	<i>Taxodium distichum</i>	yes	10'	high	low		
Cypress, Montezuma	<i>Taxodium mucronatum</i>	yes	10'	high	low		
Japanese honeysuckle	<i>Lonicera japonica</i>	no	INVASIVE				
Juniper (Cedar), all columnar evergreens	various species	yes	10'	very high	low		
Ligustrum, wax leaf	<i>Ligustrum japonicum</i>	no	INVASIVE				
Ligustrum, Japanese	<i>Ligustrum lucidum</i>	no	INVASIVE				
Mimosa (non-native)	<i>Albizzia julibrissin</i>	no	INVASIVE				
Oleander	<i>Nerium oleander</i>	no	10'	med	very low		
Pampas Grass	<i>Cortaderia selloana</i>	no	5'	very high			
Pine	<i>Pinus species</i>	yes	10'	very high	high		
Russian olive	<i>Elaeagnus angustifolia</i>	no	INVASIVE				
Salt Cedar, Tamarisk	<i>Tamarix ramosissima</i>	inv	10'	medium	medium		
Vitex	<i>Vitex angus-castus</i>	inv	5'	low	medium		
Hardwood Trees							
Cherry, Plateau Black	<i>Prunus serotina var eximia</i>	yes	10'	low		yes	
Ash, Texas	<i>Fraxinus texensis</i>	yes	10'	low	very low	yes	
Maple, Big-toothed or Red	<i>Acer grandidentatum</i> or <i>A. rubrum</i>	yes	10'	low	very low	yes	
Oak, Live Oak	<i>Quercus fusiformis</i>	yes	10'	low	low-very low	yes	
Oak, Post	<i>Quercus stellata</i>	yes	10'	low	low-very low	yes	
Oak, Texas Red	<i>Quercus texana</i>	yes	10'	low	low-very low	yes	
Oak, Shumard	<i>Quercus shumardii</i>	yes	10'	low	low-very low	yes	

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Hardwood Trees (continued)							
Pecan	<i>Carya illinoensis</i>	yes	10'	low	low	yes	
Sycamore, Mexican	<i>Platanus mexicana</i>	no	10'	low	medium	yes	high
Walnut, Black	<i>Juglans nigra</i>	yes	10'	low	medium	yes	
Walnut, Texas	<i>Juglans microcarpa</i>	yes	10'	low	medium	yes	
Small Trees							
Buckeye, Mexican	<i>Ungnadia speciosa</i>	yes	6'	low	medium	yes	high
Crape Myrtle	<i>Lagerstroemia indica</i>	no	10'	low	low-medium		
Dogwood, Roughleaf	<i>Cornus drummondii</i>	yes	10'	medium	low	yes	
Mountain Laurel, Texas	<i>Sophora secundiflora</i>	yes	10'	low	very low	yes	very high
Persimmon, Texas	<i>Diospyros texana</i>	yes	5'	low	very low	yes	high
Plum, Mexican	<i>Prunus mexicana</i>	yes	12'	low	low	yes	
Redbud, Mexican	<i>Cercis canadensis var mexicana</i>	yes	10'	low	very low	yes	high
Redbud, Texas	<i>Cercis canadensis var texensis</i>	yes	15'	low	low	yes	high
Silverthorn, thorny elaeagnus	<i>Elaeagnus pungens</i>	inv	8'	medium	low		high
Wax Myrtle	<i>Morella cerifera</i>	yes	10'	low	low-medium	yes	high
Shrubs							
Abelia	<i>Abelia grandiflora</i>	no	3'	medium	low-medium		
Abelia, Glossy	<i>Abelia grandiflora</i>	no	3'	medium	low-medium		
Acuba	<i>Acuba japonica</i>	no	3'	medium	medium		high
Agarita	<i>Berberis trifoliata</i>	yes	4'	medium	very low	yes	very high
Baby Gem Boxwoods (not Japanese)	<i>Buxus macrophylla var asiaticum</i>	no	1'	low			
Beautyberry, American	<i>Callicarpa americana</i>	yes	3'	low	low-medium	yes	
Barberry, Japanese	<i>Berberis thunbergii</i>	no	2'	low	low-medium		high

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Shrubs (continued)							
Bottlebrush, Dwarf	<i>Callistemon citrinus</i>	no	5'	medium	low		high
Butterfly Bush	<i>Buddleja davidii</i>	no	3'	low	medium	yes	
Butterfly Bush, Woolly	<i>Buddleja marrubiifolia</i>	yes	3'	low	low	yes	high
Cotoneaster	<i>Cotoneaster species</i>	no	2'	medium	medium		high
Crepe Myrtle, Dwarf (< 6' tall varieties)	<i>Lagerstroemia indica</i> varieties	no	3'	low	low-medium		
Dalea, Black	<i>Dalea frutescens</i>	yes	2"	low	very low	yes	high
Elbowbush	<i>Forestiera pubescens</i>	yes	2'	low	very low	yes	
Esperanza, Yellow Bells	<i>Tecoma stans</i>	yes	3'	low	low-medium	yes	high
Fatsia	<i>Fatsia japonica</i>	no	5'	medium	medium		
Flame Acanthus	<i>Anisacanthus quadrifidus</i> var <i>wrightii</i>	yes	2'	medium	very low	yes	very high
Flax Lily	<i>Dianella tasmanica</i>	no	1'	low	medium		
Germander, Bush	<i>Teucrium fruticans</i>	no	2'	medium	low		high
Holly, Dwarf Burford	<i>Ilex cornuta</i> var <i>Burfordii</i>	no	2'	medium	low		high
Holly, Dwarf Chinese	<i>Ilex cornuta</i> var <i>Rotunda</i>	no	2'	medium	low		high
Holly, Dwarf Yaupon	<i>Ilex vomitoria</i> var <i>Nana</i>	yes	2'	medium	low		
Holly, Possumhaw	<i>Ilex decidua</i>	yes	6	medium	low-medium	yes	high
Holly, Yaupon	<i>Ilex vomitoria</i>	yes	7	high	low-medium	yes	high
Indian Hawthorne	<i>Rhaphiolepis indica</i>	no	2'	medium	medium		
Indian Hawthorne, Dwarf	<i>Rhaphiolepis indica</i> var <i>Pink</i>	no	1'	medium	medium		
Loropetalum, Dwarf	<i>Loropetalum chinensis</i> var <i>Daruma</i>	no	3'	low	medium-high		
Rose, Knockout	<i>Rosa Species Knock Out</i>	no	2'	low	medium		
Rose, Livin' Easy	<i>Rosa Species Livin' Easy</i>	no	2'	low	medium		
Rose, Martha Gonzales	<i>Rosa Species Martha Gonzales</i>	no	2'	low	medium		
Rosmary, Upright	<i>Rosmarinnus officinalis</i>	no	4'	high	medium		very high
Sage, Silverado	<i>Leucophyllum frutescens</i> var <i>Silverado</i>	yes	3'	medium	low	yes	high

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Shrubs (continued)							
Sage, Texas (Cenizo)	<i>Leucophyllum frutescens</i>	yes	3'	medium	low	yes	high
Thryalis, Golden Showers	<i>Galphimia glauca</i>	no	2'	low	low		very high
Viburnum, Sandankwa	<i>Viburnum suspensum</i>	no	5"	low	medium		high
Perennials							
Artemesia 'Powis Castle', Wormwood	<i>Artemesia 'Powis Castle'</i>	no	3'	low	v low		very high
Black-eyed Susan	<i>Rudbeckia fulgida var. sullivantii</i>	no	1'	low	low-medium	yes	very high
Bulbine	<i>Bulbine frutescens</i>	no	2'	low	very low		high
Calylophus, Square Bud Primrose	<i>Calylophus berlandieri</i>	yes	1'	low	very low	yes	high
Cast Iron Plant	<i>Aspidistra elatior</i>	no	2'	low	low		high
Chile Pequin, Chile Petin	<i>Capsicum annuum</i>	yes	2'	low	low	yes	high
Columbine, Red	<i>Aquilegia canadensis</i>	yes	1'	low	medium	yes	high
Columbine, Yellow	<i>Aquilegia chrysantha var Hinckleyana</i>	yes	1'	low	medium	yes	high
Coreopsis	<i>Coreopsis lanceolata</i>	yes	1.5'	low	medium	yes	high
Cuphea, Bat Face	<i>Cuphea llavea</i>	no	0.5'	low	low-medium		high
Cuphea, David Verity	<i>Cuphea David Verity</i>	no	1.5'	low	low-medium		
Daisy, Copper Canyon	<i>Tagetes lemmonii</i>	no	2'	low	low		very high
Daisy, Engelmann	<i>Engelmann peristenia</i>	yes	1'	low	medium	yes	
Turks Cap	<i>Malvaviscus arboreus</i>	yes	2'	low	low	yes	
Fall Aster	<i>Aster oblongifolium</i>	yes	2.5'	low	low	yes	
Fern, Firecracker	<i>Russelia equisetiformis</i>	no	1.5'	low	low		high
Fern, River	<i>Thelypteris kunthii</i>	yes	1.5'	low	medium-high	yes	
Firebush	<i>Hamelia patens</i>	no	2'	low	medium	yes	
Gaura	<i>Gaura lindheimerii</i>	yes	1.5'	low	low	yes	high
Gayfeather, Blazing Star	<i>Liatris mucronata</i>	yes	1'	low	very low	yes	

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Perennials (continued)							
Hymenoxys, Four Nerve Daisy	<i>Tetranceris sacposa</i>	yes	0.5'	low	very low	yes	high
Indigo Spires	<i>Salvia Indigo Spires</i>	yes	3'	low	low-medium	yes	high
Iris, Bearded	<i>Iris germanica</i>	no	1'	low	low		high
Iris, Bicolor (African)	<i>Dietes bicolor</i>	no	1'	low	low		high
Lamb's Ear	<i>Stachys byzantina</i>	no	1'	low	low		very high
Lantana, Hybrid	<i>Lantana x hybrid</i>	yes	2'	low	low		high
Lantana, Texas	<i>Lantana urticoides</i>	yes	3'	low	very low	yes	high
Lion's Tail	<i>Leonotis leonurus</i>	no	3'	low	low		high
Mexican Honeysuckle	<i>justicia spicigera</i>	no	2'	low	low	yes	high
Obedient Plant, Fall	<i>Physostegia virginiana</i>	yes	2'	low	medium	yes	
Plumbago	<i>Plumbago auriculata</i>	no	3'	low	low-medium	yes	high
Pride of Barbados	<i>Caesalpinia pulcherrima</i>	no	3'	medium	low		very high
Primrose, Missouri	<i>Oenothera missouriensis</i>	yes	1.5'	low	low	yes	high
Purple Coneflower	<i>Echinacea purpurea</i>	yes	1'	low	low	yes	high
Rock Rose	<i>Pavonia lasiopetala</i>	yes	1.5'	low	low	yes	high
Ruelia, Dwarf	<i>Ruellia bruttoniana</i>	no	1'	low	low	yes	high
Sage, Blue (Henry Duelberg)	<i>Salvia farinacea</i>	yes	1.5'	low	low	yes	
Sage, Cedar	<i>Salvia roemeriana</i>	yes	1'	low	very low	yes	very high
Sage, Cherry (Autumn sage)	<i>Salvia greggii</i>	yes	2'	low	low	yes	very high
Sage, Jerusalem	<i>Phlomis fruticosa</i>	no	2'	low	low		high
Sage, Majestic	<i>Salvia guaranitica</i>	no	2'	low	low		very high
Sage, Mexican Bush	<i>Salvia leucantha</i>	no	2'	low	low	yes	very high
Sage, Russian	<i>Perovskia atriplicifolia</i>	no	1.5'	low	low		very high
Sage, Tropical	<i>Salvia coccinea</i>	yes	1'	low	low		very high
Skeletonleaf Goldeneye	<i>Viguiera stenoloba</i>	yes	3'	low	very low	yes	high

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Perennials (continued)							
Skullcap, Heartleaf	<i>Scutellaria ovata</i> var <i>bracteata</i>	yes	1'	low	low	yes	
Skullcap, Pink	<i>Scutellaria suffrutescens</i>	no	1.5'	low	low		high
Society Garlic	<i>Tulbaghia violacea</i>	no	2'	low	low-medium		high
Spiderwort	<i>Tradescantia species</i>	yes	1'	low	low	yes	
Texas Betony	<i>Stachys coccinea</i>	yes	2'	low	low	yes	very high
Verbena	<i>Verbena species</i>	yes	1'	low	low	yes	high
Winecup, Perennial	<i>Callirhoe involucrata</i>	yes	2'	low	low	yes	high
Yarrow	<i>Achillea species</i>	no	1.5'	low	medium	yes	very high
Zexmenia	<i>Wedelia texana</i>	yes	2'	low	low	yes	high
Yuccas/Agaves/Succulents/Cacti/Sotols							
Agave, Parry's	<i>Agave parryi</i>	yes	1'	very low	very low	yes	high
Agave, Queen Victoria	<i>Agave victoriae-reginae</i>	yes	1'	very low	very low		
Agave, Squid	<i>Agave bracteosa</i>	no	1'	very low	very low	yes	high
Basket Grass, Sacahuista	<i>Nolina texana</i>	yes	2'	very low	very low	yes	very high
Cactus, Prickly Pear	<i>Opuntia species</i>	yes	2'	very low	low	yes	high
Texas Sotol	<i>Dasyllirion texanum</i>	yes	2'	very low	low	yes	high
Yucca, Gaint	<i>Hesperaloe funiera</i>	no	2'	low	very low	yes	
Yucca, Paleleaf	<i>Yucca pallida</i>	yes	1'	very low	very low	yes	high
Yucca, Red	<i>Hesperaloe parviflora</i>	yes	2'	very low	very low	yes	high
Yucca, Softleaf	<i>Yucca recurvifolia</i>	no	2	low	very low	yes	high
Yucca, Twistleaf	<i>Yucca rupicola</i>	yes	2	low	very low	yes	very high
Groundcover							
Aztec Grass	<i>Ophiopogon intermedius</i>	no	1'	very low	medium		

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Groundcover (continued)							
Dalea, Gregg	<i>Dalea greggii</i>	yes	2'	low	low	yes	high
Germander, Creeping	<i>Teucrium cossonii</i>	no	1'	low	low		high
Jasmine, Asian	<i>Trachelospermum aiaticum</i>	no	2'	low	medium		
Leadwort Plumbago	<i>Ceratostigma plumbaginoides</i>	no	2'	low	low		high
Liriope	<i>Liriope muscari</i>	no	1'	low	medium		
Monkey Grass	<i>Ophiopogon japonicus</i>	no	0.5'	low	medium		high
Mountain Pea	<i>Orbexilum</i> species	no	2'	low	low		
Purple Heart	<i>Setcreasea pallida</i>	no	1.5'	low	low		
Rosemary, Trailing	<i>Rosmarinas officinalis var prostratus</i>	no	3'	high	low		high
Santolina (Lavender Cotton)	<i>Santolina chamaecyparissus</i>	no	2'	low	very low		very high
Sedge, Berkley	<i>Carex tumtlicola</i>	no	0.5'	low	low		high
Sedge, Blue	<i>Carex flacca</i>	no	1'	low	medium	yes	high
Sedge, Cherokee	<i>Carex cherokeensis</i>	yes	2'	low	low	yes	high
Sedge, Meadow	<i>Carex perdentata</i>	yes	1'	low	low	yes	high
Sedge, Texas	<i>Carex texensis</i>	yes	1'	low	low	yes	high
Sedum	<i>Sedum species</i>	yes	1'	low	low		high
Silver Ponyfoot	<i>Dichondra argentea</i>	yes	1.5'	low	low	yes	
Violet	<i>Viola missouriensis</i>	yes	1'	low	low-medium	yes	
Wolly Stemodia	<i>Stemodia lanata</i>	yes	1.5'	low	low	yes	high
Ornamental Grasses							
Fountain Grass, Dwarf	<i>Pennisetum alopecuroides</i>	no	5'	high	medium		
Inland Sea Oats	<i>Chasmanthium latifolium</i>	yes	5'	high	low-medium	yes	very high
Little Bluestem	<i>Schizachrium scoparium</i>	yes	5'	high	low	yes	very high
Maiden Grass, Chinese silvergrass	<i>Miscanthus sinensis</i>	no	5'	high	high		

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Ornamental Grasses (continued)							
Mexican Feathergrass, wiregrass	<i>Nassella tenuissima</i>	yes	5'	high	low		high
Muhky, Big	<i>Muhlenbergia lindheimeri</i>	yes	5'	high	low-medium	yes	very high
Muhly, Deer	<i>Muhlenbergia rigens</i>	yes	5'	high	low	yes	very high
Muhly, Gulf	<i>Muhlenbergia capillaris</i>	yes	5'	high	low-medium	yes	very high
Muhly, Pine	<i>Muhlenberdia dubia</i>	yes	5'	high	very low	yes	very high
¹ native? - did the plant originate in the United States yes - native to United States no - introduced to United States inv - plant is know to reasily escape into native areas by wildlife, wind, or water movement							
² Flamability hazard - the ease that a plant can burn at high temperatures for a prolonged time. Above Medium should not be planted within 5 feet of building.							
³ Water - The water needs after establishment.							
⁴ Wildlife Value - Parts of the plant provide food and/or shelter for wildlife.							
⁵ Deer Resistance - The natural preference for deer to browse.							