



GUIDELINE 416

LANDSCAPE AND FUEL MODIFICATION ZONE PLANS

Properties located within State Mapped Fire Hazard Severity Zones ([FHSZ](#) viewer) or a local Hazardous Fire Areas (HFA) are required to maintain proper defensible space in accordance with State and Local Laws and Ordinance. Installation of new landscape is the starting point to make sure correct plants are selected and proper spacing is provided and maintained. This requires review and approval of landscape plans by the Fire Department, along with other agencies having jurisdiction over the property.

Required Plan Review: A Fire Department plan review is required when the project is located within a State Mapped Very High, High, or Moderate, Fire Hazard Severity Zone, or a local Hazardous Fire area determined by the VCFD.

To determine if you are in a State mapped FHSZ, please visit [Calfire FRAP FHSZ Viewer](#).

Landscape plans shall show compliance with the following:

- VCFD Current [Ordinance](#) adopting VCFD Fire Code.
- VCFD Standard 515 - [Defensible Space and Fuel Modification Zones](#).
- VCFD Standard 517 - [Application of Mulch and Chips in Defensible Space](#).
- VCFD Guideline 410 - [Prohibited Plant List](#).
- VCFD Guideline 417 - [Plant Reference Guide](#).
- VCFD Guideline 418 – [Defensible Space](#)
- Government Code 51182, Public resources Code 4291, Calif. Code Regulations Title 14 Sec 1299.03 and CCR Title 19 Sec 3.07, as applicable.

Note: All vegetation within the 0-100 foot zone around buildings is subject to defensible space laws and regulations. This includes ornamental plants, cultivated landscape plants, native plants, trees, shrubs, grasses, weeds, and wildland vegetation.

Plan Notes:

Show the following Fire Department notes on the plans:

- All landscaping shall comply with Ventura County Fire Department Standard 515 based upon type and height of plants, spacing and slopes.
- Existing vegetation shall be modified or removed to comply with Standard 515.
- All vegetation within the 100-foot defensible space / fuel modification zone shall be maintained year-round in accordance with VCFD Standard 515 and State Laws.
- Show VCFD Standard 515 Table 3 – Fire Department FMZ Spacing. Include notes to Table 3.

Items required on plans:

- Project Information: Assessor Parcel Number(s), Site Address, Owner and Applicant Information.
- Landscape Designer Information
- Site Plan with a Site Vicinity map.
- A scale of 1" = 20, 30 or 40-feet shall be used. Provide actual scale and North arrow.
- Location of all structures on the property and any structures on adjacent properties within 100-feet. Indicate square feet, construction type and use.
- Plant List including both Botanical Name and Common Name. Group by trees, shrubs, ground cover. List in alphabetical order by botanical name. Use symbols for each plant being used. Show width and height of plants and trees at full maturity.
Plant Selection Notes:
 - Be aware of height limits for ground cover and shrubs within Standard 515. Shrubs shall not exceed 6-feet in height.
 - Any seed mix shall show percentage by plant type.
 - New invasive or prohibit plants shall not be used. Existing invasive and prohibited plants may require removal.
 - Plants identified as "Target Hazard" in the VCFD Plant Reference Guide shall not be used within the zones specified. Indicate by "*" any target hazard plant proposed within allowable zones.
 - Ground cover and shrubs underneath trees shall have the proper vertical spacing required by Standard 515.
- Planting layout plan. Indicate spacing between plants.
- Hardscape plan (can show on planting layout plans)
- Areas of mulch application. Indicate depth of coverage. (Mulch prohibited within 5 feet of any building). See VCFD Standard 517.
- Show grade breaks between zones: 0-20%, 20+-40%, over 40%
- Show 5-foot, 30-foot & 100-foot zone lines from all building, including off-site buildings less than 100 feet from the project property lines.
- Indicate existing landscape to remain by type, size, area.

Advisory Notice: State Law has implemented a new 0-5 foot ember resistant zone (**Zone 0**) around buildings subject to Defensible Space Laws and Regulations. This includes any building located in a State mapped Very High, High, or Moderate Fire Hazard Severity Zone. The new Zone 0 will be effective January 1, 2023, for new buildings and January 1, 2024, for existing buildings. While formal requirements for this zone have not been issued by the State, recommended items are listed in VCFD Guideline 418 – Defensible Space available at VCFD.org/FHRP. It is highly recommended that any new landscaping be install such that it will not be subject to modification and or removal when Zone 0 goes into effect.

Complete VCFD [Form 610 Fire Permit Application](#) and indicate Other Plan Review: Landscape/Fuel Modification Plans. Submit Form 610, plans, and required [fee](#) to the Fire Prevention Bureau.

Question regarding this document can be sent to FHRP@ventura.org or call the FHRP Unit at 805-389-9759.