

Application of Ocean Friendly Gardens Criteria in Fire Hazard Zones



An Ocean Friendly Garden (OFG) is a garden that applies CPR - Conservation, Permeability, and Retention© - to revive the health of our watersheds and oceans

Ocean Friendly Gardens are designed to mimic nature and to restore the natural water cycle by conserving water and reducing runoff that causes pollution at the beach and in our local waterways. In Fire Hazard Zones we must also be careful to design our landscapes and install plant material that is fire resistant and will protect against the spread of wildfires. With some forethought and good maintenance, our gardens and yards can be **Beautiful, Ocean Friendly** and **Fire Resistant** – protecting the safety of our families, our community and our water resources.

Site Location/ Street Address: _____

Conservation: Reduce outdoor water demand & provide wildlife habitat.

Plants

- Non-invasive and climate-appropriate, unless food bearing.
- All plant material should have fire resistant characteristics - slow growing open form, does not produce much litter, maintains high moisture content, low volatile oil content – find recommended plant lists in Landscaping in Fire Hazard Zones resources linked below.
- Grouped by water need
- At least 10% of the plants are natives
- Plants spaced appropriately to prevent fire moving from natural areas to structures. *See reference below for landscape design in Fire Hazard Zones.*

Turf Grass Areas

- No turf grass, OR kept to a minimum AND
- Climate-appropriate (rainfall keeps it healthy), maintained organically, and consider inter-seeding with nitrogen-fixing plants such as clover

Irrigation

- Hand watering OR
- High efficiency irrigation system (drip, rotator sprinkler)
- Automatic irrigation controller, if present, has a rain shut-off device

Permeability: Convert hard surfaces into sponges

Healthy, Living Soil

___ 2 to 4 inches of natural mulch maintained on planted areas. Initial application can be up to 6 inches to hold in soil moisture and keep down weeds.

___ 50% or more of the woodchip mulch must be smaller than 1 inch in length or diameter. *See reference below for list of fire resistant mulch material.*

___ No woody mulch within 5 feet of structures. Stone, gravel or other non-combustible material only.

___ No commercial fertilizers. If fertilizer is needed, use compost, compost tea, or worm castings.

___ No use of pesticides, herbicides or fungicides

___ No landscape fabric (weed cloth)

Hardscape

___ Walkways and patios direct rainwater runoff to landscaping. Add permeability with pavers or permeable materials *or* by creating gaps and filling in with gravel or plants. For even more impact, same technique can be applied to driveways.

Retention: Detain the rain that falls on your property

Re-direct It

___ Rainwater from the roof is directed to landscaping or a permeable area OR

___ To rain tanks that overflow into permeable areas if that is not possible

***Caution – only non-combustible materials should be within 5 feet of structures.** Roof runoff can be directed into dry stream bed with pebbles or stones.

Soak It Up

___ Use simple contours such as bio-swales, dry creeks, and basins

___ Use of dry wells or similar features if rainfall volume and space constrain your yard

Landscaping in Fire Hazard Zones Resources: includes information on selecting fire resistant plant and mulch material & special design and maintenance considerations

<http://go.surfrider.org/ofg-firehazardzones>

OFG Sign will be awarded to any garden that meets the above criteria. Eligible yards and gardens can be posted to the online OFG map: <https://oceanfriendlygardens.crowdmap.com>

OFG Map ___ OK to post the garden ___ Sq. Ft. roof area ___ Sq. Ft. garden area