



The type of fence you have may depend on what you're using it for, but one factor many residents don't consider is whether a fence offers wildfire protection or increases the risk.



If you live in an area prone to wildfires, finding solutions for dangerous fence issues should be part of protecting your home.



Woodside Fire
Protection
District

Woodsidefire.org

A wood fence, or landscape wall, attached to the house can lead a wildfire right to your home, especially if plant debris, dead vegetation, or other flammable material has gathered at the bottom.

Vinyl fences are durable and more fire-resistant than wood fences. They also resist termites and other insects. However, the extreme heat created by a wildfire can cause them to melt, potentially spreading the fire.

Metal is also durable and fire resistant, but a chain-link, wrought-iron, or barbed-wire fence can't block heat, embers, or flames. Also, fire can travel along the fence toward the home if dead plants or other combustible materials have built up in or around it.

No fence material can offer complete wildfire protection, but there are steps you can take to increase the level of protection your fence provides:

- Consult with your city or county Building Department prior to construction
- Consider non-combustible materials, ignition-resistant wood, or heavy timber construction if you're adding or replacing a fence. Combining wood framing and wire mesh can also reduce the amount of combustible fence material
- If you have a fence made from combustible material, add a non-combustible gate, or structure, between the fence and your home to keep them at least 10-feet apart
- Create a 1-inch gap at the bottom of the fence to keep fence boards from touching the soil, since direct contact can cause rot and decay, making the wood more flammable
- Keep the fence line clear of dead plants
- Never store combustible materials, such as firewood, against a combustible fence
- Avoid wood slat fences with gaps. Burning embers that get trapped in gaps will cause the fence to catch fire, increasing your home's chances of igniting

For more information, please visit the Woodside Fire website or call **(650) 851-1594** to schedule a wildfire home assessment.