

Master Gardener workshop will focus on fire safe landscaping

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Q. This has been an extremely dry year overall. A few late rains brought a huge crop of weeds and grasses around my property. What can I do in my landscape now to make my home safer from wildfires this summer? George, Atascadero.

A. Drought and wildfires often go hand in hand in our arid climate. And unfortunately, late rains and warmer temperatures brought us a bumper crop of grasses and weeds. Every year wildfires destroy thousands of acres in California, and when homes are involved, the loss can be devastating. You can act now to learn ways to make your home and landscape more resistant to wildfires throughout the year.

You can be more fire safe by keeping trees trimmed and by removing debris and leaves from roofs and gutters. Remove dead or dying plants and any woody vegetation that encroaches on structures. It's important to choose fire resistant plants in any new landscaping you install. All jurisdictions in this county require that homeowners keep weeds and grasses under control, which means prevention - mowing, tilling or other means of removal. Ongoing regular maintenance by pruning, weed suppression/removal and adequate irrigation are necessary to maintain a fire safe landscape.

The UCCE Master Gardeners of San Luis Obispo County will conduct a timely and free Advice to Grow By workshop on Fire Safe Landscaping on Saturday, May 17, 2014. The workshop will be held from 10:00 AM to 12 Noon at our demonstration garden, the Garden of the Seven Sisters, located at 2156 Sierra Way in San Luis Obispo.