

Landowner _____



WHAT IS A FIREBREAK?

A permanent or temporary strip of bare or vegetated land planned to retard fire.

PURPOSE

To prevent the spread of wildfire or contain prescribed burns.

HOW IT HELPS THE LAND

This practice can help by:

- Containing a prescribed fire within the boundary of the burn unit
- Providing a non-flammable buffer to assist with the control of wildfires
- Providing access by personnel and equipment to the burn unit

WHERE THE PRACTICE APPLIES

This practice applies to all land uses where the protection from wildfire is needed or prescribed burning is applied.

WHERE TO GET HELP

For assistance with this practice, contact your local Natural Resources Conservation Service or your local Conservation District office.

APPLYING THE PRACTICE

Firebreaks may be temporary or permanent and shall consist of fire-resistant vegetation, non-flammable

materials, blackened (burned) areas, or bare ground surrounding the area to be burned or the protected area.

There are five basic types of firebreaks including:

- Natural – Existing terrain such as roads, trails, cropland, rivers or other areas devoid of vegetation can serve as a firebreak.
- Bare Ground - Firebreaks can be constructed to mineral soil with the use of disks, graders, plows, or bulldozers.
- Blackline - Burned firebreaks are installed only when used in combination with other types of firebreaks to meet the minimum width requirement.
- Vegetated – Perennial or annual cool season plants can be established to act as a firebreak.
- Mowed wet-line –Spraying water on a mowed firebreak to create a wet-line immediately in advance of ignition of the fire can be used as long as adequate personnel, equipment, and water supplies are available for safe conduct of the procedure.

The type of firebreak(s) selected will be determined by the specific site conditions due to the variability of vegetation types, topography, and soil conditions.

The total width of the firebreak is based on the type of fuel to be burned and the location in relation to the area to be burned.

The following minimum firebreak widths shall be established along the edges of the burn unit:

- Downwind edge – 100' wide, when fuel consists of non-volatile fuel and 500' wide when volatile fuels such as juniper are on-site.
- Downwind flank edge – 100' wide, when fuel consists of non-volatile fuel and 300' wide when volatile fuels such as juniper are on-site.
- Upwind flank edge – 10' wide and 100' wide when volatile fuels such as junipers are on-site.
- Upwind edge – 10' wide.



Combinations of firebreak types are typically used to establish the total minimum firebreak width such as this 10' wide bare ground firebreak coupled with a 90' wide blackline firebreak to equal the required 100 ft minimum on this downwind flank edge.

MAINTAINING THE PRACTICE

Inspect firebreaks for woody materials such as dead limbs or blown down trees and remove them from the firebreak.

Inspect all firebreaks at least annually and rework bare ground firebreaks as necessary to keep them clear of flammable vegetation.

Access by vehicles or people should be controlled, when necessary, to prevent damage to the firebreak.



Vegetated firebreaks are established in cool season plants to provide a non-flammable buffer to assist with control of wildfires or prescribed burns.

Firebreak– Job Sheet

Landowner _____ Field number _____ Designed by _____ Date _____

Purpose: (check all that apply)

To contain prescribed burns

To prevent spread of wildfire

Type: (check all that apply)

Natural Bare Ground Blackline Vegetated Mowed/wetline Other _____

Duration:

Temporary

Permanent

Design:

Type:	Planned width of firebreak by location			
	Downwind edge	Downwind flank edge	Upwind flank edge	Upwind edge
Constructed:				
Vegetated:				
Blackline (burned):				
Mowed/wet-line:				
Natural:				

Additional Specification and Notes (construction method, vegetation type, requirements, etc.)

THIS IS NOT A PRESCRIBED BURN PLAN (Refer to JS 338 01 for Prescribed Burn Plan)

