

EMERGENCY GUIDE FOR FIRES

If you discover a forest fire:

- Call 112.
- Follow the Self-protection Plan for your housing development.
- Follow the instructions of the fire brigade and the police.
- Listen to the radio to find out what's going on and what you should do.

In an emergency situation, call 112 when in need of help.

What you can do to prevent fire and protect yourself in woodland, housing Developments, farms and isolated houses.

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If you discover a forest fire...

Are you protected against forest fires?

Know the forest and the risk of fire

What type of forest fires are there?

- The most frequent and violent burn all the vegetation and flammable matter littering the ground.
- There are also crown fires which only burn the crowns of trees, especially conifers such as pines.
- Another type are ground fires, almost non-existent in Catalonia and not visible, which burn all the organic matter in the earth's subsoil.

What factors affect forest fires?

- The weather: humidity and rain can reduce the risk of fire but wind and high temperatures encourage its spreading.
- The land's topography: fire quickly spreads up the steepest terrain, especially on sunny slopes (south and west facing).
- Flammable matter: the type, quantity and distribution of grass, shrubs, leaves and trees, etc. all affect fire.

How do forest fires spread?

- By direct contact between the flames and the flammable matter.
- Through the heat generated by the flames or column of smoke.
- By secondary outbreaks caused by burning particles falling ahead of the fire front.



How to keep your home and its surroundings safe from forest fires

With forest fires the safest thing is to be far away from the danger, but actually moving away from it may not be. In fact, in some cases it can be very risky.

If you follow the tips in this guide, you can turn your home into a place that will give you safe refuge in the event of forest fire.

1. In the home and garden

- Keep a strip of land free of vegetation and forest residue at least 2 metres wide around the building and 10 metres wide around the plot.
- In the garden, a minimum distance of 6 meters between the trees is recommended (increase the distance if the plot is on a slope). The branches must not touch each other.

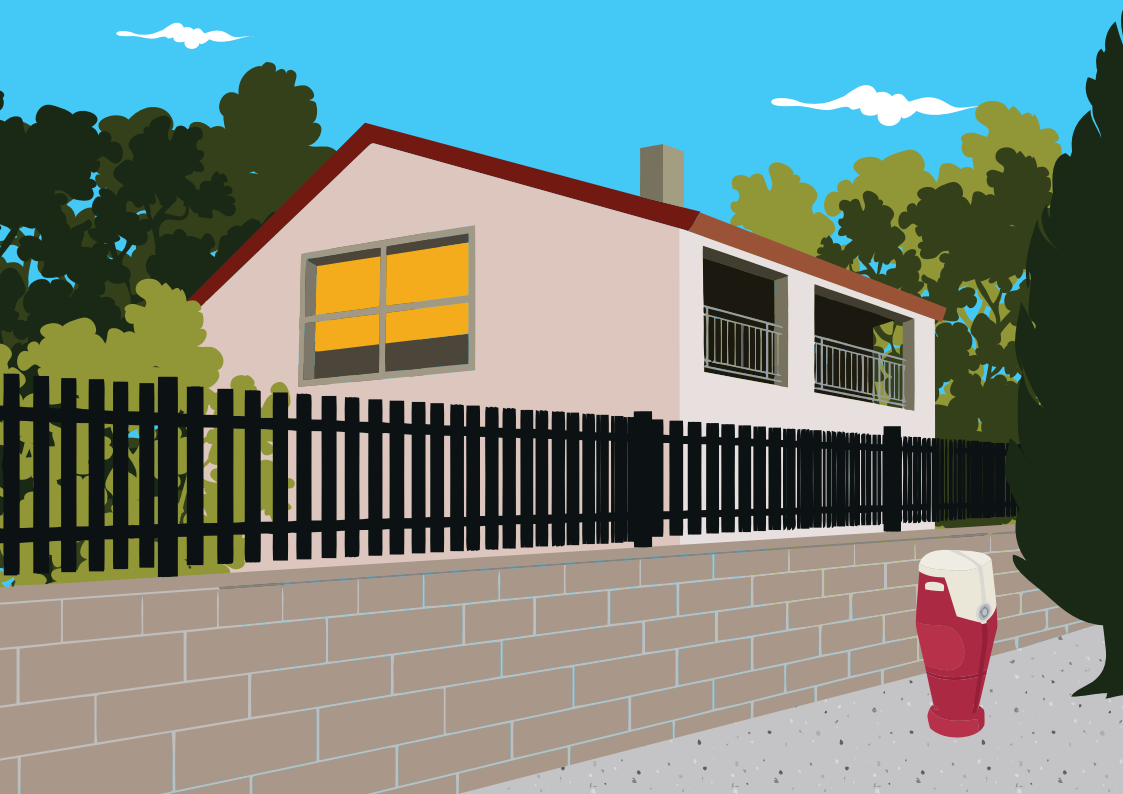


- Keep the roof clear of dry leaves, branches and other organic matter.
- Store firewood away from the house.
- Be careful with the chimney! Protect it to prevent sparks or embers falling down it into the house.
- Have a hose long enough to go round the house.
- Store fuel (gas bottles, gasoil containers, etc.) in ventilated and protected enclosures.
- Have multipurpose ABC fire extinguishers for different classes of fire, especially in the kitchen, the attic and garage.



How to keep your home and its surroundings safe from forest fires

- Don't use dry heather fences: they are highly flammable.
- Give priority to evergreen vegetation and high wood density trees (box, ivy, Holm oak, oak and olive).
- Don't use synthetic materials to build exterior walls, doors and windows (polycarbonates, methacrylate, PVC, etc.).



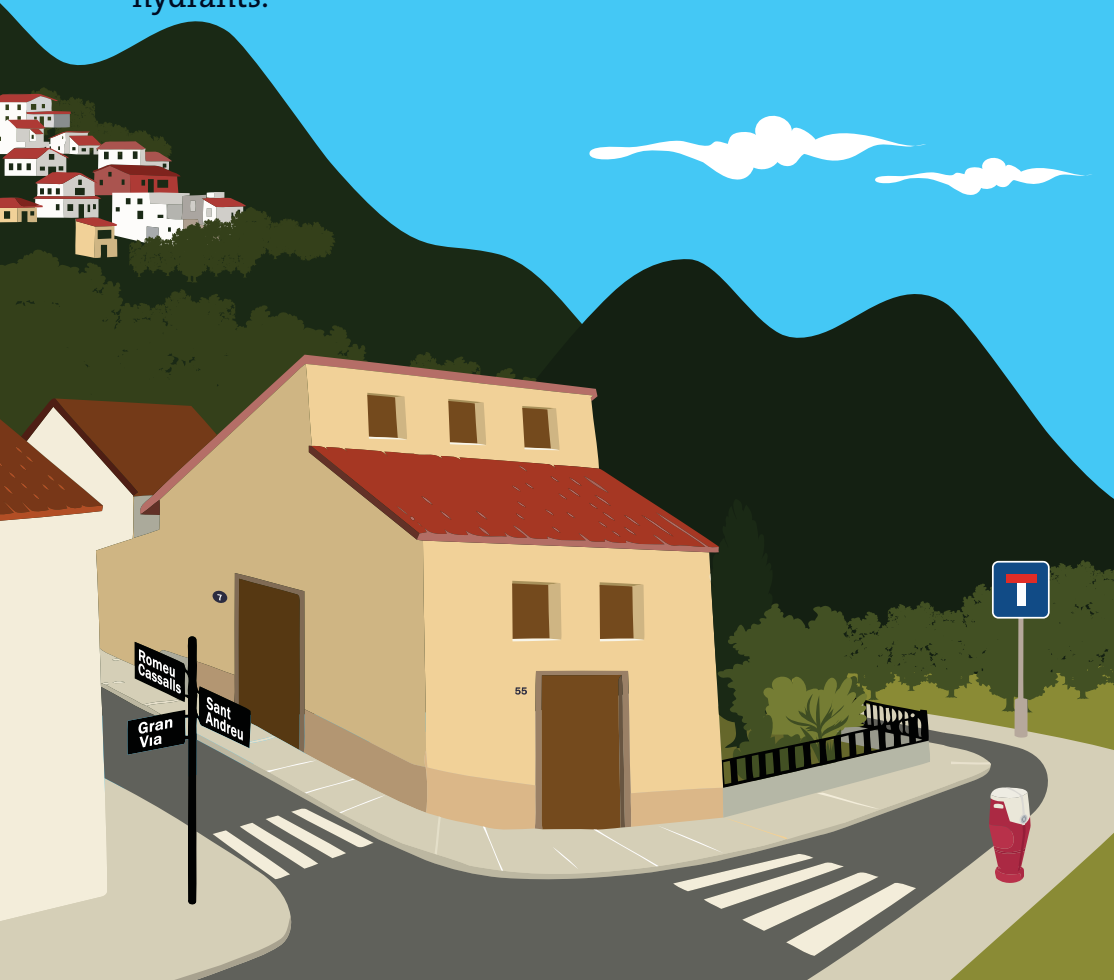
- You can use barbecues, but only if they are made of brick, fitted with fireguards and surrounded by a strip of land free of vegetation
- It is forbidden to light any kind of fire. If you want to burn plant residue or for any other type of activity involving fire (fireworks, soldering, ...): from March 15th to October 15th you must apply for authorization from the Ministry of Agriculture, Herding, Fishing, Nutrition and Environment via your local council. From October 16th to March 14th, you have to inform your local council.



How to keep your home and its surroundings safe from forest fires

2. In the streets of housing developments and at isolated houses

- Streets must be signposted at every junction. Cul-de-sacs must be signposted as such.
- Houses must be numbered correctly and visibly.
- The housing development must be equipped with fire hydrants.



- Do not park on roundabouts or in narrow streets so that emergency vehicles can get through.
- Street trees must not encroach on plots of land and must be cut back up to a height of 3.5 metres so that fire engines can get by.

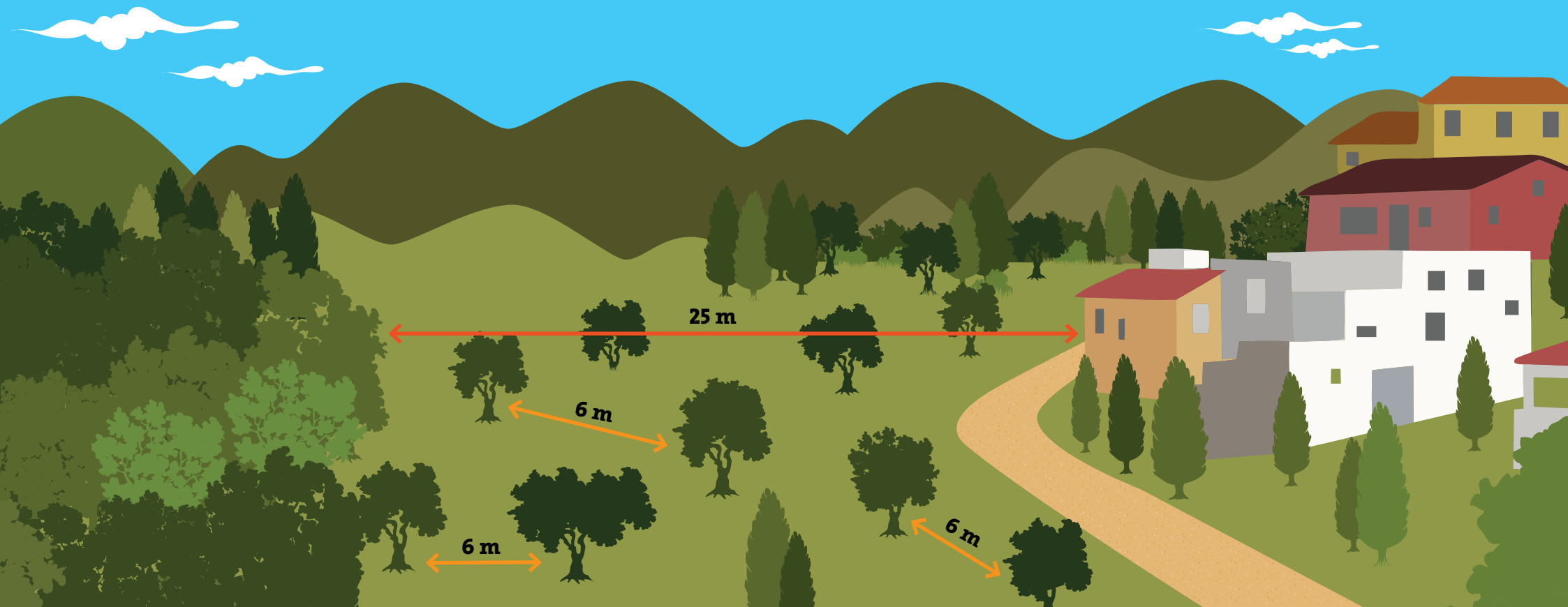


How to protect housing developments, isolated houses and their surroundings against forest fires

1. Housing developments, isolated houses and surrounding areas

- Perimeter protection strips are legally mandatory strips of land that must surround housing developments, isolated buildings and installations in contact with the forest.

- In these strips nearly all scrub must be removed and trees partly cut back to reduce the strength of fires and prevent them from reaching the houses.
- They must be at least 25 metres wide and free of dry vegetation and with any trees pruned and cleared.
- Vacant plots must comply with the same conditions as the perimeter protection strips.



How to protect housing developments, isolated houses and their surroundings against forest fires

2. Access to housing developments and isolated houses

- Access roads must allow for the passage of fire engines and the evacuation of people.
- Wherever possible there should be two different public roads, one for entering and the other for leaving, each with a minimum useful width of at least 3 metres. If there is only one access road, it must be at least 5 metres wide plus the verges.
- Access roads and ditches must be kept clear of dry vegetation.



3. Get ready for emergencies: the Self-protection Plan

- Self-protection plans for housing developments and isolated population centres must be drawn up.
- This plan will cover all the risks that may affect the housing development and all measures for prevention, detection and action in the event of a forest fire.
- It will be coordinated with the local council's Emergency Plan.



Forest fire warning systems

When a forest fire might affect housing developments or isolated houses, warnings and information may be given by different means:

- Mobile loudspeaker systems on police and emergency vehicles, especially in housing developments.



- Radio stations, especially public ones, and local and regional television stations.
- In person door-to-door or by phone in the case of farms and isolated houses.
- Other systems may be brought in such as warning sirens.



What to do in the event of an emergency in a populated area

a. Stay inside the house if the fire has already reached it, is moving very quickly or it would be dangerous to attempt an evacuation.

In these cases, if the authorities do not give you other instructions, it is always safer to remain inside the house.

- Go into the house with the whole family and pets. It is important to stay together as a group.
- Remove any flammable objects from outside the house.



- Close all doors and windows and shut off gas, gasoil and other fuel stopcocks.
- Block any openings to prevent smoke and gas from the fire getting in and locate fire extinguishers.



What to do in the event of an emergency in a populated area

- Fill the bath and sinks with water and thoroughly wet any areas threatened by the flames.
- Keep calm. You will be safe inside the house.



b. Evacuate the house by following the authorities' instructions. They will decide if the fire is far enough away for it to be safe to evacuate.

- Prepare to evacuate if the fire comes within 2 kilometres of your house.
- Close all doors and windows and shut off gas, gasoil and other fuel stopcocks.



What to do in the event of an emergency in a populated area

- Walk in the opposite direction to the fire until you reach a safe place (designated by the authorities).
- First evacuate children, the elderly and people with breathing difficulties and anxiety problems. Do not waste any time.



- Allow free passage for emergency vehicles so they can operate.
- Help the emergency services to enter your home.
- Always follow this advice in accordance with the instructions of the police and fire brigade.



What to do in the event of an emergency in a populated area

c. **Actively protect your home in addition to following the advice about staying indoors.**

The following actions should only be taken by adults who can tackle the fire:

- Position hoses so they can reach any part of the house using pumps powered by internal combustion engines.
- Extinguish small fires or ones that have just started with a hose or buckets of water.



- Protect yourself with long-sleeved cotton clothing, closed shoes and a mask or damp scarf or handkerchief for breathing.



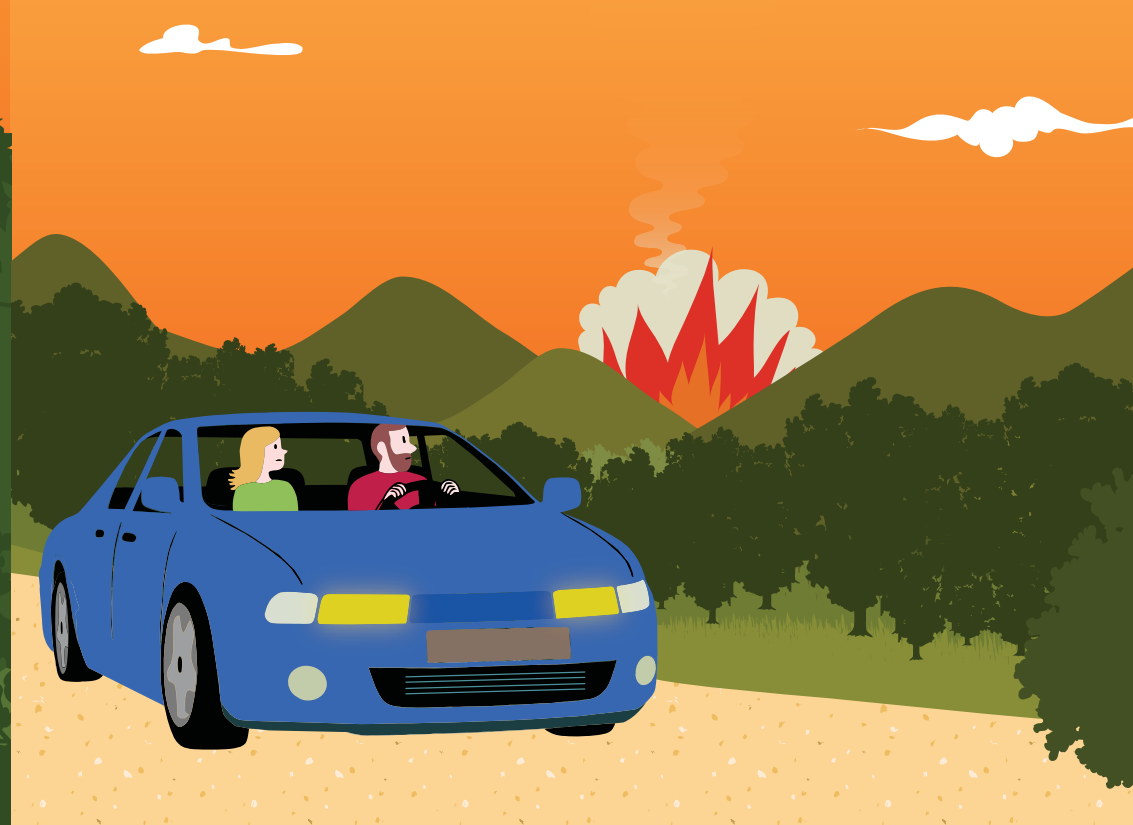
How to protect yourself from fire in woodland or open country

- Move away in the opposite direction to the fire and try to get to an area that has already been burnt.
- Wet a scarf or handkerchief and cover your face to avoid breathing in smoke.
- Avoid slopes and narrow valleys and do not take shelter inside wells or caves as the oxygen in them may quickly run out.
- If you are near the sea or a river, keep close to the water, and if necessary get into it.



How to protect yourself if fire catches you by surprise in your car

- Stop in a protected place.
- Close doors and windows and switch off the car's ventilation.
- Turn on your headlights so you can be found in the smoke.



If you discover a forest fire

- Call 112 and give as much information as you can.
- Warn neighbours.
- If your housing development has a Self-protection Plan, do what it says.
- Follow the instructions of the fire brigade and the police.
- Listen to the radio to find out what's going on and what you should do.

- You need to know the access and evacuation roads for your housing development or farm.
- Follow the advice in this guide, prepare your home against fire and carry out the self-protection measures recommended for each situation.



Are you protected against forest fires? ✓

Your house

1. Windows and openings

- a. There are openings through which smoke from the fire can get in and the chimney does not have a fireguard.
- b. All openings can be closed and windows are made of glass and wood or aluminium.
- c. The house is completely sealed. The windows have double glazing and wooden shutters or metal blinds. The chimney has a fireguard.

2. Vegetation around the house

- a. Some trees are in contact with the outside walls or a wall is covered with climbing plants and the roof is NOT clear of dry leaves, branches and other organic matter.
- b. There is a strip at least 2 metres wide free of vegetation around the outside walls and I occasionally clear the roof of dry leaves, branches and other organic matter.
- c. There is a 10 metre wide strip around the house in which there are no trees and I regularly clear the roof of dry leaves, branches and other organic matter.

3. Hose

- a. There is no hose near the house.
- b. There is a hose, but it only reaches some parts of the house.
- c. A hose reaches all parts of the plot and I have an internal combustion engine pump to operate it if there is a power outage.

4. Fencing between plots

- a. It is made of heather or a flammable synthetic material.
- b. It is made of solid wood or vegetation that remains green during the summer and does not generate much plant residue.
- c. It is made of fireproof material (stone, ceramics, steel, etc.).

5. Stored fuel

- a. There is an approved gas or petrol tank or stack of firewood within 10 metres of the house.
- b. There is an approved gas or petrol tank more than 10 metres from the house.
- c. I have a small amount of firewood and it is more than 10 metres from the house or my approved gas or petrol tank is underground or in a ventilated, fireproof enclosure.

Housing developments and isolated houses

6. Signposting

- a. The streets leading into and out of the housing development are not signposted, cul-de-sacs are not signposted as such and the houses are not numbered in a visible way.
- b. The streets leading into and out of the housing development are well signposted, although cul-de-sacs are not, house numbers are not visible and water supply points are not indicated.
- c. The streets leading into and out of the housing development and cul-de-sacs are well signposted, house numbering is visible and water supply points are indicated.

Are you protected against forest fires? ✓

7. Access

- a. There is only one road leading into the housing development, or there is more than one but they are narrow and single track.
- b. There is more than one access road, but a large fire engine would not be able to get along them even though there are a number of places where two vehicles can pass one another.
- c. There is more than one access road along which fire engines can enter the housing development and they are two-way.

8. Perimeter protection strip

- a. There is no perimeter protection strip around the housing development.
- b. There is a perimeter strip that is less than 25 metres wide around almost the entire housing development, or it does not comply with scrub removal and tree pruning requirements.
- c. There is a perimeter strip that is at least 25 metres wide around the entire housing development which complies with scrub removal and tree pruning requirements.

9. Vacant plots

- a. Vacant plots have lots of dry vegetation and high tree density.
- b. Most vacant plots are free of dry vegetation and have low tree density.
- c. All vacant plots are free of dry vegetation and have low tree density.

Self-protection Plan

10. Self-protection Plan for emergencies

- a. I don't know if there is one. It makes no difference as I don't know what they are for.
- b. The housing development has an Emergency Plan though we have never tried it out.
- c. The housing development has an Emergency Plan, and we tried it out less than 3 years ago.