

Chapter 3
Wildland-urban interface areas.

Option #1: Keep Current Washington Amendments adopted for chapter 3

301 General.

301.1 Scope. Wildland urban interface areas shall be determined using the Washington wildland urban interface map (WA-WUI). WA-WUI designations are permitted to be modified, upon approval of a finding of fact in accordance with Section 302.

User note: The WA-WUI map is available at <https://data-wadnr.opendata.arcgis.com/apps/wildland-urban-interface-viewing-app/explore>.

301.2 Construction in wildland-urban interface or intermix areas. Where a structure is proposed to be constructed in an area designated by the WA-WUI map as wildland-urban interface or intermix, the construction shall comply with the provisions of this code.

301.3 Construction in wildlands areas. Where a structure is proposed to be constructed in an area designated by the WA-WUI map as wildlands, the applicable wildland urban interface area designation shall be based on a finding of fact in accordance with Section 302.

302 Wildland-urban interface area designations.

302.1 General. Wildland urban interface area designations are permitted to be established in accordance with this section.

302.2 Finding of fact. The applicable wildland urban interface designation shall be based on a finding of fact. The finding of fact shall comply with the provisions of Appendix E or is permitted to be based on the worksheet and procedures in Section 302.3.

302.3 Simplified wildland urban interface designation worksheet. The wildland urban interface designation is permitted to be established using the procedure outlined in Figure 302(1), using the worksheet in Figure 302(2).

302.3.1 Area to be evaluated. For the purposes of establishing structure and vegetation densities, the area covered by a square of 1320 feet on a side (40 acres) shall be evaluated. The square area shall be located such that the site under consideration is in its center, except where the square would overlap a water body shown on the WA-WUI map with a surface area greater than 200,000 square feet, the location shall be adjusted such that no part of the square overlaps the water body.

Table 302.3(1)

Outline of Simplified Procedure for Determining Wildland Interface Designation

For the area to be evaluated in Section 302.3.1:
1. Determine structure density category (uninhabited, very low, low, medium, or high).
2. Determine vegetation density category (nonvegetated or vegetated).
3. Determine proximity category (near or distant).
4. Based on structure density, vegetation density, and proximity categories, determine if compliance with this code is required (WUIC applies, WUIC does not apply).
5. Where compliance with this code is required, determine wildland urban interface area designation (intermix or interface).

302.3.2 Structure density category. The structure density category shall be determined by counting the number of structures within the area to be evaluated per Section 302.3.1. The structure density category shall be determined as follows:

UNINHABITED:	0 structures
VERY LOW:	1 structure
LOW:	2 to 8 structures
MEDIUM:	9 to 120 structures
HIGH:	more than 120 structures

302.3.3 Vegetation density category. Vegetation coverage within the area to be evaluated per Section 302.3.1 shall be determined in accordance with Chapter 9. Vegetation density shall be determined by dividing the vegetation coverage by 1,742,400 square feet (40 acres). Where the vegetation density is less than 50 percent, the vegetation density category for the site shall be nonvegetated. Where the vegetation density is 50 percent or more, the vegetation density category for the site shall be vegetated.

302.3.4 Proximity category. The distance from the site being evaluated to a high-density vegetated area shall be measured from the closest edge of the site boundary to the closest edge of the nearest high-density vegetated area. Where the distance is less than 1.5 miles, the proximity category shall be near. Where the distance is 1.5 miles or more, the proximity category shall be distant.

302.3.5 WUIC applicability. The WUIC shall apply, and the site shall be designated as intermix or interface in accordance with Section 302.3.6 under either of the following conditions:

1. The structure density category is very low to high, and the vegetation density category is vegetated.

2. The structure density category is very low to high, and the proximity category is near.

The WUIC shall not apply under either of the following conditions:

1. The structure density category is uninhabited, and the site is not located within an area designated as intermix or interface on the WA-WUI map.

2. The structure density category is uninhabited to high, the vegetation density category is nonvegetated, and the proximity category is distant.

302.3.6 Wildland urban interface area designation. Where required by Section 302.3.5, the site shall be designated as intermix or interface in accordance with Section 302.3.6.1 or 302.3.6.2.

302.3.6.1 Intermix designation. The site shall be designated as intermix where the structure density category is very low to high, and the vegetation density category is vegetated.

302.3.6.2 Interface designation. The site shall be designated as interface where the structure density category is very low to high, and the proximity category is near.

For the area to be evaluated in Section 302.3.1:

1. Determine structure density category (uninhabited, very low, low, medium, or high).
2. Determine vegetation density category (nonvegetated or vegetated).
3. Determine proximity category (near or distant).
4. Based on structure density, vegetation density, and proximity categories, determine if compliance with this code is required (WUIC applies, WUIC does not apply).
5. Where compliance with this code is required, determine wildland urban interface area designation (intermix or interface).

Figure 302.3(2). Worksheet for simplified procedure for determining wildland interface designation

~~Figure 302(1). Outline of simplified procedure for determining wildland interface designation~~

1. Determine structure density category in accordance with Section 302.3.2. Numbers in table are the number of structures within the area determined by Section 302.3.1.

UNINHABITED	VERY LOW	LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH
0	1	2 TO 8	9 TO 120	MORE THAN 120

2. Determine vegetation density category within the area determined by Section 302.3.1.

NONVEGETATED	VEGETATED
Less than 50% vegetated	50% or more vegetated

3. Determine proximity category to the nearest high-density vegetated area.

NEAR	DISTANT
Less than 1.5 mi (2.414 km)	1.5 mi (2.414 km) or more

4. Use structure density, vegetation density, and proximity categories from above to determine if WUIC applies.

WUIC Applies	WUIC Does Not Apply
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structure density category is very low to high; and • Vegetation density category is vegetated. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structure density category is uninhabited; and • The site is not located within an area designated as intermix or interface on the WA-WUI map.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structure density category is very low to high; and • Proximity category is near. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structure density category is uninhabited to high; and • Vegetation density category is nonvegetated; and • Proximity category is distant.

5. Where WUIC applies, the site shall be designated as intermix or interface as follows:

INTERMIX	INTERFACE
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structure density category is very low to high; and • Vegetation density category is vegetated. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structure density category is very low to high; and • Proximity category is near.
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Figure 302.3(2). Worksheet for simplified procedure for determining wildland interface designation

302.4 Review of wildland-urban interface areas. The *code official* shall review for approval evaluated areas for new or modified findings of fact. Where a new or modified findings of fact are *approved*, the *code official* shall recommend to WADNR a modification to the *wildland-urban interface areas* mapping.

Option #2: Remove all Washington amendments to Chapter three and utilize model code language depicted below.

SECTION 301 GENERAL

301.1 Scope. The provisions of this chapter provide methodology to establish and record wildland-urban interface areas based on the findings of fact.

301.2 Objective. The objective of this chapter is to provide simple baseline criteria for determining wildland-urban interface areas.

SECTION 302 WILDLAND-URBAN INTERFACE AREA DESIGNATIONS

302.1 Declaration. The legislative body shall declare the wildland-urban interface areas within the jurisdiction. The wildland-urban interface areas shall be based on the findings of fact. The wildland-urban interface area boundary shall correspond to natural or man-made features.

302.2 Mapping. The wildland-urban interface areas shall be recorded on maps available for inspection by the public.

302.3 Review of wildland-urban interface areas. The code official shall reevaluate and recommend modification to the wildland-urban interface areas in accordance with Section 302.1 on a 3-year basis or more frequently as deemed necessary by the legislative body.

SECTION 603
DEFENSIBLE SPACE

603.1 Objective. Provisions of this section are intended to modify the fuel load in areas adjacent to structures to create a defensible space.

(NEW) 603.2 Fuel modification. Buildings or structures, constructed in compliance with the conforming defensible space category of Table 503.1, shall comply with the fuel modification distances contained in Table 603.2. For all other purposes the fuel modification distance shall be not less than 30 feet (9144 mm) or to the lot line, whichever is less. Distances specified in Table 603.2 shall be measured on a horizontal plane from the perimeter or projection of the building or structure as shown in Figure 603.2. Distances specified in Table 603.2 are allowed to be increased by the code official because of a site-specific analysis based on local conditions and the fire protection plan.

EXCEPTIONS:

1. Buildings or structures constructed, altered, relocated, or repaired in compliance with sections 501.4 through 501.8.
2. Existing buildings or structures in compliance with section 101.4.
3. Additions and alterations in compliance with section 101.5.
4. Within urban growth areas designated under RCW 36.70A.110 the jurisdictions *code official* may exempt buildings or structures with a conforming water supply based on either section 402.1 or Section 404 and in conformance with 2021 International Fire Code Section 507.

604.1 General. Defensible spaces required by Section 603 shall be maintained in accordance with Section 604.

604.2 Modified area. Nonfire-resistive vegetation or growth shall be kept clear of buildings or structures, in accordance with Section 603, in such a manner as to provide a clear area for fire suppression operations.

604.3 Responsibility. Persons owning, leasing, controlling, operating or maintaining buildings or structures are responsible for maintenance of defensible spaces. Maintenance of the defensible space shall include modifying or removing nonfire-resistive vegetation and keeping leaves, needles and other dead vegetative material regularly removed from roofs of buildings and structures.

604.4 Trees. Tree crowns extending to within 10 feet (3048 mm) of any structure shall be pruned to maintain a minimum horizontal clearance of 10 feet (3048 mm). Tree crowns within the defensible space shall be pruned to remove limbs located less than 6 feet (1829 mm) above the ground surface adjacent to the trees.

604.4.1 Chimney clearance. Portions of tree crowns that extend to within 10 feet (3048 mm) of the outlet of a chimney shall be pruned to maintain a minimum horizontal clearance of 10 feet (3048 mm).

604.4.2 Deadwood removed. Deadwood and litter shall be regularly removed from trees.