

How to garden for a 'green' planet

By JoAnne Skelly

Many gardeners think "green" and make caring for the environment a daily activity. You, too, can improve your green thinking by composting, using organic techniques, conserving water and reducing or eliminating pesticide use.

Think about recycling your yard waste. Having a compost pile at home keeps green waste out of landfills and provides you with free compost. If you don't think you can compost at home or don't have a chipper, consider checking with your local landfill to see if it accepts untreated clean wood such as branches and pallets. These materials are typically ground up and used as wood chips in parks, although not all landfills are able to compost at this time.

Simplify your life and be environmentally conscious by focusing on maintaining a healthy, rather than a perfect lawn. Manicured, baseball-field perfection requires too much water and fertilizer, too many pesticides and a lot of work. A healthy lawn is still lovely, is achieved with properly installed and efficiently scheduled irrigation, and is fertilized at the right time of year with the correct amount of fertilizer.

Also, consider mowing your lawn with a push mower or an electric mower. Either uses

less energy and creates less pollution than a gas lawn mower. A gas law mower used for one hour releases as many hydrocarbons into the atmosphere as a car driven for 50 miles.

Think and act green in 2007! What your household does to live more lightly on the land, when added to the efforts of many households across the United States, can make an impact.

For more on green gardening information, contact me at (775) 887-2252 or skellyj@unce.unr.edu. To receive answers to specific questions, ask a Master Gardener by emailing mastergardeners@unce.unr.edu.

LOOK ONLINE

Cooperative Extension's Horticulture site:
<http://www.unce.unr.edu/programs/horticulture/>

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July 27, 6 to 9 p.m.
Grand Sierra Resort, pool area (complete with beach sand)
White attire is requested but not required

Enjoy a Friday-night-on-the-town along with an evening on the beach at Reno's shining new hotspot, the Grand Sierra Resort. The Grand Sierra's much-anticipated new nightclub and restaurants – Nikki Beach, Charlie Palmer Steak & Fish, and Dolce – will provide an exciting array of hot appetizers and cool spirits. Dancers and celebrity DJs will entertain and models will walk on water.

Special thanks to Southern Wine & Spirits for generously supporting this event.

10th anniversary of the *Living With Fire* publication

Living With Fire: A Guide for the Homeowner, celebrates its 10th anniversary this year. The guide was written by Ed Smith and produced by the University of Nevada Cooperative Extension. There have been more than 2 million printed and more than 40 versions created throughout the U.S. and Canada.

It may be the University's most widely circulated and most popular wildfire threat education publication in the United States. A master CD is available to agencies who wish to create a customized version of this publication by registering at <http://www.livingwithfire.info>.

For more information about *Living With Fire*, contact Ed Smith, (775)782-9960 or smithe@unce.unr.edu; or Sonya Sistare, (775)784-4848 or sistares@unce.unr.edu.



Wildfire threat reduction tips for Nevada homeowners

By Ed Smith

THE HOUSE

- ▶ Replace wood shake and shingle roofs with fire resistant types
- ▶ Remove pine needles, leaves, and branches from the roof and rain gutters
- ▶ Replace single-pane windows with multiple-paned or tempered glass
- ▶ Screen attic, eave, and foundation vents with 1/4" or smaller wire mesh
- ▶ Enclose the underside of decks and keep this area free of easily ignitable materials
- ▶ Remove flammable items from around the house and deck, such as decorative baskets, pine cones, newspapers, etc.

Defensible space distance is measured from the base of the house, extending outward.

THE YARD

- ▶ Do not plant shrubs in front of foundation vents or below eave vents
- ▶ Do not use wood or bark mulch within 3 feet of the house
- ▶ Use rock, gravel, irrigated herbaceous plants, lawn, or hard surfaces within 3 feet of the house
- ▶ Use metal garbage cans with tight fitting lids
- ▶ Move wood piles 30 feet or more from the house
- ▶ Do not plant evergreen shrubs or trees, such as juniper, within 30 feet of the house
- ▶ Do not create large, mass plantings of shrubs and trees within 30 feet of the house
- ▶ Do not allow dead plant material, such as leaves and needles, dead branches, dried grass and weeds, to accumulate within 30 feet of the house
- ▶ Keep easily ignited items, such as trash, gasoline cans, wood scraps, and cardboard boxes, at least 30 feet away from the home

NATURAL VEGETATION

- ▶ Remove all dead trees and shrubs located within 100 feet or more of the house
- ▶ Thin out dense stands of trees and shrubs, such as pinyon pine, Utah juniper, and sagebrush within this 100-foot or more radius
- ▶ Remove lower tree limbs within 100 feet or more of the house

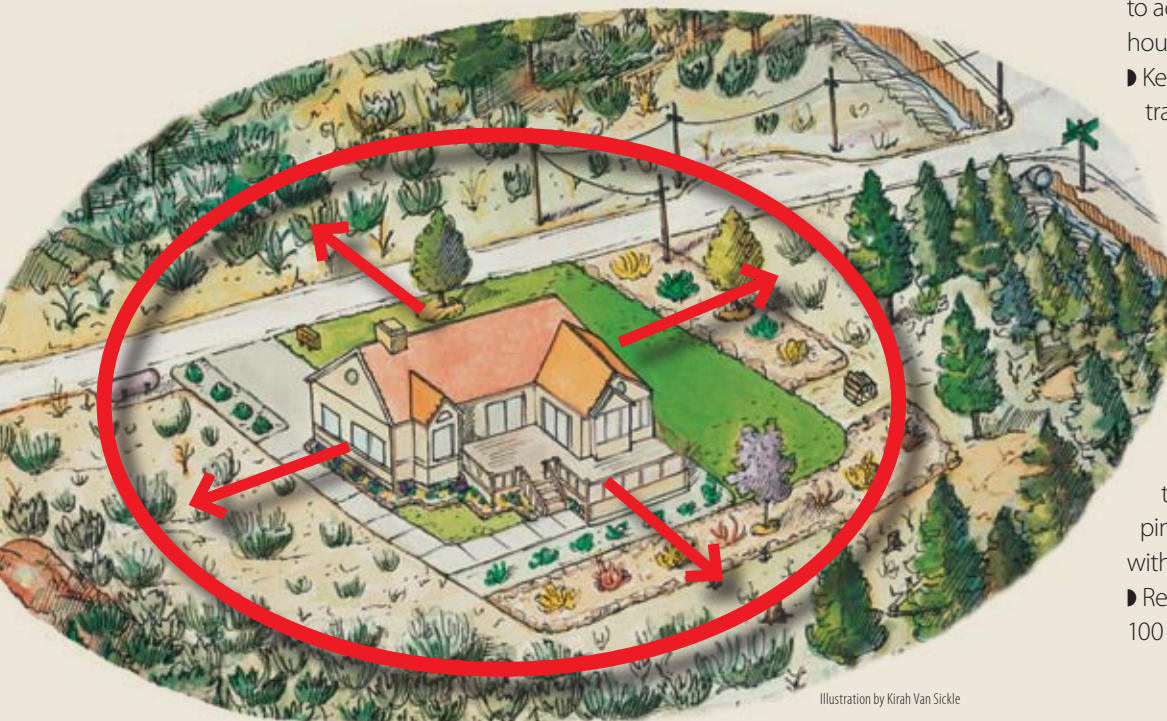


Illustration by Kirah Van Sickle