



Low Water, Fire-Resistant Native Plant Materials for El Paso County

All plants will burn if conditions are right. Fire resistant does NOT mean fire-proof. *Fire-resistant plants* share characteristics. They often:

- have a higher moisture content in their leaves
- have little seasonal buildup of dead vegetation
- have low, compact growth form
- are high in soap or pectin content
- have green stems
- are drought tolerant

Other tips:

- Plants nearest a home should be more widely spaced and smaller than those farther away.
- Create pathways with gravel and decorative rock stepping stones within the landscaped area. This will help modify fire behavior and slow its spread across a property.
- Mulch to conserve moisture and reduce weed growth. The most fire-resistant mulch is pea gravel.
- Cutback all perennials in late winter and remove the dead material.

Landscape Zones:

Zone 1 – The first 5' from your house should have non-flammable, hard surface materials such as rock, gravel, sand, cement, bare earth or stone/concrete pavers.

Zone 2 – Low-water, fire-resistant native plants (5-30' from the house).

Ground Covers and Grasses

- *Sedum lanceolatum* - Yellow Stonecrop
- *Antennaria parvifolia* – Small-leaf Pussytoes
- *Antennaria rosea* – Rosy Pussytoes
- *Callirhoe involucrata* – Poppy Mallow
- *Penstemon caespitosus* – Mat Penstemon
- *Buchloe dactyloides* – Buffalograss*
- *Bouteloua gracilis* – Blue Grama*

*Irrigated and mowed grasses are more fire resistant- dry grasses are flammable

Perennials

- *Allium cernuum* – Nodding Onion
- *Aquilegia spp.* – Columbine
- *Asclepias tuberosa* – Orange Butterfly Weed

- *Aster laevis* – Smooth Aster
- *Aster porteri* – Porter Aster
- *Astragalus spp.* – Milkvetch
- *Calochortus spp.* – Mariposa Lily
- *Geranium caespitosum* – Wild Geranium
- *Geum triflorum* – Prairie Smoke
- *Penstemon barbatus* – Scarlet Bugler Penstemon
- *Penstemon eatonii* – Firecracker Penstemon
- *Penstemon secundiflorus* – Sidebells Penstemon
- *Penstemon palmeri* – Palmer Penstemon
- *Penstemon pinifolius* – Pineleaf Penstemon
- *Penstemon strictus* – Rocky Mountain Penstemon

Shrubs and cacti

- *Opuntia spp.* – Prickly Pear Cactus
- *Cylindropuntia spp.* – Cholla Cactus
- *Philadelphus microphyllus* – Littleleaf Mockorange
- *Rhus trilobata* – ‘Autumn amber’ is the most fire resistant due to compact size
- *Rhus glabra* – Smooth Sumac
- *Symphoricarpos albus* – Snowberry
- *Thermopsis divaricarpa* – Golden Banner
- *Yucca baccata* – Banana Yucca*
- *Yucca glauca* – Great Plains Yucca*

*Remove leaves and other debris that may get caught in the yucca

Slightly less resistant, but still worth considering, especially toward the far edge of Zone 2:

- *Mirabilis multiflora* – Desert 4 o’clock
- *Gaillardia aristata* – Blanketflower
- *Prunus besseyi* – Sand Cherry (the ‘Pawnee Buttes’ selection is the best due to its low growth form)
- *Eriogonum umbellatum* – Sulfur Flower
- *Laitris punctata* – Spotted Gayfeather
- *Linum lewisii* – Blue Flax
- *Oenothera caespitosa* – White Tufted Evening Primrose
- *Ratibida columnifera* – Mexican Hat
- *Rudbeckia hirta* – Black-eyed Susan

Resources:

https://csfs.colostate.edu/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/2021_CSFS_HIZGuide_Web.pdf

<https://idahofirewise.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/FireXResistanceXofXPlantsXMasterXDatabase.pdf>