



County of San Diego  
Department of Agriculture, Weights and Measures  
and the Farm and Home Advisors' Office  
**HOMEOWNER'S GUIDE: SEEDING FOR  
EROSION CONTROL IN BURNED  
LANDSCAPING ADJACENT TO HOMES**



Soil erosion may occur around homes when *landscaped areas* on sloping ground are damaged by wildfire. There are steps you can take after the wildfire to help protect your home and property. Avoid disturbing soil on a slope and do not remove existing vegetation. Loose soil is easily washed away. Whether burned or unburned, the roots of vegetation hold the soil together and should not be removed. Unless trees or shrubs pose an imminent hazard to health and safety, it is recommended that property owners leave them in place.

On landscaped sites where there are few plant roots to hold soil or where the soil has been disturbed, surface erosion may be reduced by seeding certain annuals. The seed mixture provided is adapted to Southern California, but it should not be used in native areas where wildfire has burned the vegetation. Native plants will re-grow from the live portion of burnt plants and from dormant seed. Planting non-native grasses or flowers will interfere with this natural process.

**Key Steps for Seeding Burned *Landscaping Areas* Around Homes**

1. Plan your operation to begin before the fall rains, usually in late October into November.
2. Obtain supplies of seed, fertilizers and straw.
3. Spread the seed uniformly by hand or with a hand-operated seed spreader
4. To improve the growth of the seed mixture, use of an organic or slow-release chemical fertilizer containing sulfur and phosphorous works best. Do not apply more than the product label recommends.
5. Spread weed-free straw (do not use hay) on top of the seed and fertilizer. We recommend about one (1) bale of straw per 1000 square feet\* of area. Wet the straw to keep it from blowing away.
6. If you can irrigate, sprinkle lightly avoiding runoff until the soil is wet to a depth of 6 inches, then sprinkle daily to keep the soil moist until seeds begin to sprout. If you can not irrigate, wait for the rains to bring up your seed mix. If it is a dry winter, apply water on the site in February and March. This will help to obtain full growth of the plants, enhance the flower display, and promote subsequent regeneration.
7. During the dry months following seeding, the grasses and plants, as well as residual straw may dry out and become a fire hazard. Remove this dry material in the zone around structures.

**Seed Mix Includes:**

California Poppy (*Eschscholzia californica*), Blue Annual Lupine (*Lupinus succulentus*), Annual Fescue (*Vulpia myuros*), Hykon Rose clover (*Trifolium hirtum*)(inoculated seed)

For additional information on erosion control:

Download the *Homeowners' Guide to Flood, Debris, and Erosion Control After Fires*  
at <http://www.sdcountry.ca.gov/dpw/docs/fire/AfterFire.pdf>  
or call the County Stormwater hotline at 1-888-846-0800.

\* To calculate the square feet of a rectangular planting area, multiply the length in feet by the width in feet.  
Example: 50 feet long times 20 feet wide equals 1000 square feet.