

Adoption of the International Wildland-Urban Interface Code

Overview

The *International Wildland-Urban Interface Code* (WUI) is designed to bridge the gap between enforcement of the *International Building Code* and the *International Fire Code* by mitigating the hazard of wildfires through model code regulations. This comprehensive wildland-urban interface code establishes minimum regulations for land use and the built environment in areas that have been identified as wildland-urban interface areas. Adoption of the WUI code will provide the Austin Fire Department authority to enforce building construction and vegetation maintenance standards that will improve identified WUI areas (figure 1) within Austin's City limits and limited purpose jurisdictional areas. The requirements of the WUI code will not be retroactively applied to existing areas and structures unless those areas and structures have been designated as distinct hazards (see examples below) to life or property. The requirements of the WUI code will apply only to those areas and components of existing structures that are being remodeled or replaced and to all new construction being built or brought into the WUI.

Issues addressed in the WUI code include:

- Identification of WUI areas
- Emergency access
- Water supplies, including man made and drafting
- Fire protection plans
- Building construction requirements based on surrounding fuels and potential fire hazard severity (figure 2), defensible space, and water supplies
- Fire protection requirements including: fire sprinkler systems (optional or conditional), defensible space, spark arresters, LPG installations and storage of combustible materials

Distinct Hazard examples:

- Structures close to wildland areas
- Structures not ignition resistant or not protected from embers
- Structures near steep slopes
- Lack of space or poor water supply for firefighting operations
- Vegetation that could allow high fire intensity or fire transfer from surface to aerial, i.e. to tree canopies
- Lack of natural or built fire breaks
- Limited access

Figure 1: Austin Wildland-Urban Interface Code Applicability

WUI Area Footprint

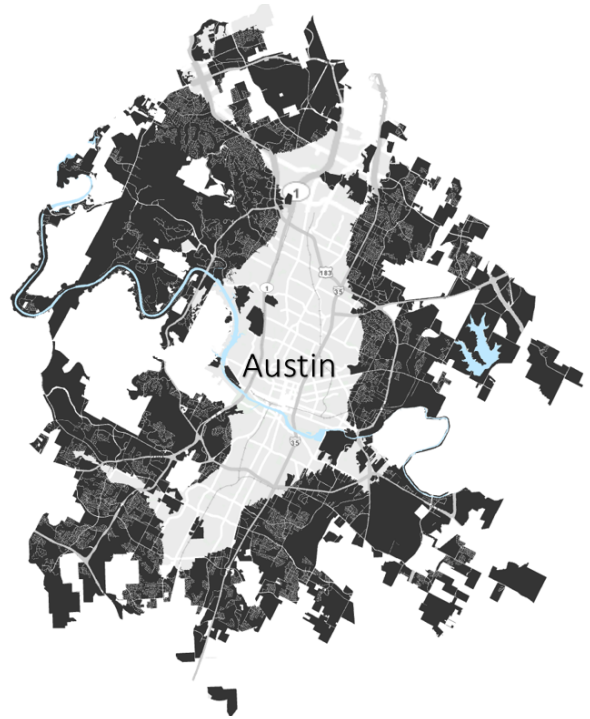
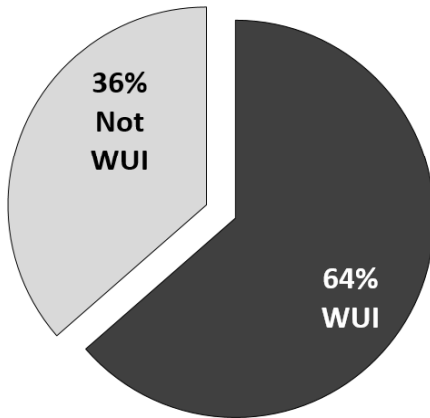


Figure 2: Austin Wildland-Urban Interface Hazard Zones

WUI Hazard Severity Zones

