



Building FireSmart Forest Fire Models

Building fire models is an inexpensive and simple way to illustrate the principles of FireSmart treatments in a fun and effective manner.

Materials:

- 1 metal baking pan (9 x 13 inches)
- 2 sheets green paper (8.5 x 11 inches)
- 90 headless matchsticks (or equivalent) – can be found in the craft section of stores
- 1 lighter
- 1 stapler & lots of staples
- 1 pair of scissors
- 1 paper cutter (if available)
- Plasticine – enough to fill the bottom of the pan
- Dryer lint

*These are the materials needed for one untreated fire model pan. To make more models increase the number of materials accordingly.

Instructions:

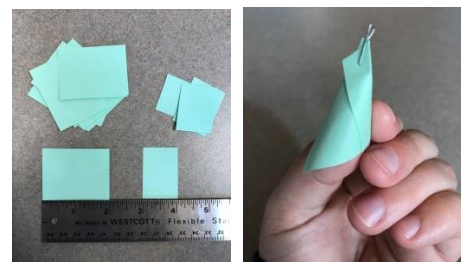
1. Base

- a. Line the bottom of the pan with plasticine.



2. Tree Toppers

- a. Use the paper cutter to cut the paper into small rectangles
 - i. Unpruned trees - 2 x 1½ inch squares
 - ii. Pruned trees – 1 x 1½ inch squares; also cut the pointed tip from the bottom of the pruned trees
 - iii. You will need to make more unpruned than pruned trees.
- b. Roll the paper around your thumb as shown.
- c. Staple the top of the cone.
- d. You now have coniferous tree-toppers.



3. Tree Set-Up for Untreated Model (no FireSmart treatment)

- a. Place matchsticks randomly around the base of the pan. They will act as the tree trunks.
- b. Approximately 90 matchsticks should be used for an untreated forest model.
- c. Put the large (unpruned) paper toppers on the matchstick trees. Leave a few trees without paper toppers to represent deciduous trees.
- d. Sprinkle some dryer lint throughout the pan to represent the undergrowth and dry materials on the forest floor.

4. Tree Set-Up for Treated Model (FireSmart treatment)

- a. Place matchsticks randomly around one half of the pan. This will be the untreated side. On the other, treated, side, space out the trees more or create a fire break by making a space with no matchsticks.
- b. Approximately 70-80 matchsticks should be used for a treated forest model.
- c. Put the large (unpruned) paper toppers on the matchstick trees on the untreated side of the pan. On the treated side, top the trees with the small (pruned) tree toppers. Leave a few trees on each side without paper toppers to represent deciduous trees.
- d. Sprinkle some dryer lint through the untreated side of the pan to represent the undergrowth and dry materials on the forest floor.

5. Finishing the model

- a. Add some monopoly houses on one side of the pan (in the treated model this should be on the treated side of the pan) to represent a forest community. The plastic that the houses are made of can be compared to vinyl siding.



Untreated model tree set-up



Untreated model trees with toppers



Completed untreated model



Completed treated model

It is recommended to make one untreated and one treated model to effectively display the difference that FireSmart treatment can make in a forest. These models may also be used in conjunction with the Wildfire Manager education program to challenge participants to come up with their own FireSmart treatment plans.