

Mulch Fire Hazard

- Mulch is flammable, some kinds more than others. In order, from most to least:
 - Rubber
 - Pine needles
 - Shredded pine/cedar bark
 - Pine and hardwood nuggets
 - Cocoa hulls (never ignited in tests)

- To mitigate hazard:
 - Provide a minimum clearance of 18 inches between landscaping mulch beds and combustible building materials.
 - Ensure proper clearance to electric devices, such as decorative lights, by following the manufacturer's instructions.
 - Use just enough mulch to discourage grass and weed growth. Avoid thick layers.
 - Keep landscaping mulch moist if possible, especially in extended dry spells. Mulch fires are more likely to occur in mulch beds in the afternoon.
 - Don't throw smoking materials in mulch beds.
 - If you see anything smoking in a landscaped bed, put it out with plenty of water. If the burning material is not thoroughly wet or removed, it may re-ignite.
 - Consider using gravel mulch instead of wood mulch and planting fire resistant plants. CSU is a great resource for more information on fire-resistant landscaping in Colorado. <http://extension.colostate.edu/docs/pubs/natres/06303.pdf>