



Eaves are the underneath part of the roof that extends beyond the home's outer wall to the roof's edge.



Although eaves were designed to protect your home, open eaves may actually put it at risk. Most homes are damaged or lost in a wildfire because of contact with embers, not flames.



Redwood City
Fire Department

www.redwoodcity.org

Eaves stop the rain that falls on the roof from pouring down the sides of the house, protects structural footings from wearing away and reduces rain splatter. However, open eaves can also trap embers that can lodge in gaps, cracks, and crevices and ignite your home. You can tell if you have open eaves by checking the underside of the roof from its outer edge to where it meets the home's exterior. If you can see the rafter tails (2 x 4's or 2 x 6's), you have open eaves. Although open eaves are less expensive to build, they're dangerous during a wildfire.

However, closing or boxing open eaves offers protection by directing hot air and embers away from your home. This is done by filling the open eaves with non-combustible material to create a soffit. Soffits also stop birds from building nests under eaves, protect roof rafters from termites or other insects, and reduce painting and other maintenance costs. Always be careful not to block roof vents, which are used to remove moisture and heat from the attic.

If you have open eaves and are not able to box them at this time, you should seal all gaps, cracks, and crevices in the eave area with caulking material. Taking care of the paint on roof eaves and fascia (the trim at the roof's edge) is also important, noting bare wood catches fire much faster than wood with a good coat of paint.

For more information, please visit the Redwood City website or call **(650) 780-7400** to speak with a Fire Prevention Officer