



Objective:

Before a wildland fire threatens your home, make an emergency plan to provide for your family's safety.

Before a wildfire threatens

If you have followed the advance preparation steps outlined in this booklet, you have created a Firewise home that has a better chance of surviving a wildland fire without firefighter assistance. However, you still need to prepare your personal response to a fire before it approaches your home. Make your plan and decide your response before fire season even begins. You can leave the area long before fire threatens your neighborhood, or stay and defend your home while a wildland fire burns past it.

Plan Ahead for Emergencies

- Create and maintain defensible space around your home.
- Learn the evacuation plan for your children's school or daycare facilities. Also, know the plan for family members in assisted living facilities.
- Designate a relative or friend as an out-of-area contact through whom family members can relay information.
- Identify and learn alternate ways out of your neighborhood in case the usual route becomes blocked.
- Place important documents in a fireproof box and keep in an accessible location.
- Prepare an Emergency Kit for each household member.
- Keep your vehicle's fuel tank at least half full during wildland fire season.
- Plan how you will transport your pets. Do not leave them behind.
- Make arrangements in advance for people and/or pets that will be home when you are not.



Prepare to Evacuate

Stay informed about wildland fires in your area. Authorities may not have time for a formal evacuation notification if conditions change quickly.

- Park your car heading out (so you don't have to back out), with the windows closed and the keys in the ignition.
- Close the garage door but leave it unlocked; disconnect the automatic garage door opener in case of power failure.
- Park your ATV, heading out, with the key in the ignition.
- Place emergency kit valuable documents, family mementos inside the car in the garage for quick departure, if necessary.
- Keep a flashlight, portable radio, and fresh batteries with you at all times.
- Use your preplanned route, away from the approaching fire front.
- If you are trapped by a fire while in your car, park in an area clear of vegetation, close all vehicle windows and vents, cover yourself with a blanket or jacket, and lie on the floor.
- If you are trapped by fire while on foot, select an area clear of vegetation along a road, or lie in the road ditch. Do not lie in the middle of the road! Cover any exposed skin with a jacket or blanket. Avoid canyons that can concentrate and channel fire.
- Put on protective clothing: long pants, long-sleeved shirt, boots, hat and leather gloves. Eye protection is essential!
- Keep pets leashed and in or near the house.
- Prepare large animals for transport.



Leave Early Checklist

- **People:** all family members accounted for
- **Pets:** animals, crates, food, water
- **Pills:** prescriptions and medications
- **Photos:** family mementos, home inventory
- **Papers:** deed for home, vehicle titles, birth certificates



Emergency Supply Kit for each person!

- Four (4) quarts of drinking water
- First aid kit (include eye drops)
- Battery operated radio
- Safety goggles and hat
- Smoke filtering mask or a handkerchief
- Thick canvas or leather gloves
- Long pants and long sleeved shirt, heavy denim or wool
- Wool blanket, large enough to cover a person completely when lying down

Inside Your Home

- Close all exterior windows and doors to prevent sparks from blowing inside.
- Close all doors inside the house to slow the spread of fire from room to room.
- Turn on a light in each room of your house and outside. This will make the house more visible in heavy smoke.
- Fill sinks, bathtubs, and buckets with water.
- Move furniture away from windows and glass doors to prevent ignition from heat radiating through glass.
- Remove curtains and drapes. If you have metal blinds or special fire-resistant window coverings, close them to block radiant heat.

Outside Your Home

- Move combustible yard furniture away from the house or store it in the garage.
- Cover windows, attic openings, eaves, vents, and subfloor vents with 1/2-inch or thicker plywood.
- Close window shutters.
- Attach garden hoses to spigots and place them so they can reach every part of your house.
- Fill trash cans and buckets with water and place them around the exterior of the house.
- Shut off liquefied petroleum gas (LPG), propane, or natural gas valves.
- If you have an emergency generator or a portable gasoline-powered pump that will supply water from a hot tub, pond, well, tank, or river, clearly mark its location and make sure it is ready to operate.
- Place a ladder against the house to help access your roof.
- Place a lawn sprinkler on flammable roofs, but don't turn it on unless the fire is an immediate threat. You do not want to reduce the supply of water.
- If you choose to evacuate using your private aircraft, do so before the fire's arrival. Check for any Temporary Flight Restrictions. The airspace surrounding the fire will be filled with suppression aircraft and a collision could occur. Once you are evacuated, do not re-enter the airspace until all flight restrictions are lifted.

Returning Home

- Stay informed and listen to fire officials. They will determine when it is safe for you to return to your home.
- When you do return home, be alert for downed power lines and other hazards.
- Check propane tanks, regulators, and lines before turning gas on. Only a qualified technician can turn on your natural gas.
- Check your residence carefully for hidden embers or smoldering fires.

If you see an uncontrolled fire or significant smoke in your neighborhood, report it immediately by dialing 911 or 1-800-237-3633. Remain calm on the phone to help the emergency dispatcher confirm the location.

If you do not evacuate

- Every member of your family must have an Emergency Supply Kit with a wool blanket.
- Follow the Pattern of Protection:
 - Outside – defending from falling embers before the front arrives.
 - Inside – sheltering during an intense fire-front arrival.
 - Outside – dousing ignitions and mopping up.
- Connect all hoses to outdoor faucets. Attach pumps to reserve water.
- Assemble shovels and rakes to put out spot fires in the yard.
- Place water-filled buckets outside with dippers, mops and wet canvas bags.
- Put a ladder beside the roof.
- Put a ladder inside to access the roof crawl space or attic.
- Close all doors, but leave them unlocked.
- Wear long sleeved shirts and pants made of wool or heavy cotton, gloves and shoes.
- When the fire approaches the house, stay inside, away from outside walls and cover yourself with a heavy wool blanket.
- Keep your entire family together and remain calm. Remember: If it gets hot in the house, it is many times hotter and more dangerous outside.

After the Fire Passes

While you may have made Firewise preparations, past fire case studies have shown that many home ignitions actually occur after the flaming front has passed and accumulations of burning embers ignite material on or near your home. This is the time to go outside with your shovel and water to put out these small spot fires.

- Check the roof and perimeter of the home immediately, extinguishing all sparks and embers. Use caution!
- Check inside the attic for hidden burning embers.
- Check your yard for burning woodpiles, trees, fence posts, or other materials.
- Keep doors and windows closed.
- Continue rechecking your home and yard for burning embers.



Mike McMillan www.spotfireimages.com