

## WHEN A WILDFIRE APPROACHES

Should a community be threatened by wildfire, the occupants may be advised to evacuate by law enforcement or fire officials. The purpose of evacuation is to protect people from life-threatening situations. Homeowners have the right to “shelter-in-place”, or stay on the property if they so desire. However, homeowners that shelter-in-place and then change their minds and wish to evacuate later, have often hindered firefighting efforts.

### THE FIVE “P’S” OF IMMEDIATE EVACUATION

- People and Pets! -----→ And other livestock too
- Papers -----→ Important documents
- Prescriptions -----→ Pills and eyeglasses
- Pictures-----→ Irreplaceable memories
- Personal Computer-----→ Information on hard drives and disks

## WILDFIRE EMERGENCY GUIDELINES

### WHERE TO KEEP THESE GUIDELINES

- Refrigerator Door
- Home Bulletin Board

#### **BEFORE THE FIRE:**

- Collect valuables, important documents, medications and other personal items in one place and be ready to evacuate if necessary.
- What you can fit into your vehicle is what you can take (make priorities by what is replaceable and what is not).
- Maintain a mobile survival kit. This includes first aid kit, emergency tools, battery powered radio and flashlight, extra batteries, car keys, credit cards, water and nonperishable food. Also consider blankets and sleeping bags.
- Determine need to have coverings for skylights and windows to increase fire resistance. Have coverings visible and readily accessible.
- Have means of transporting pets and livestock readily available. Make sure you children’s needs are met.
- Clearly post name / address so it can be seen from the street.
- Establish and practice a family evacuation plan and meeting location. Know whom you will notify about the evacuation. Know where you will get fire updates.

#### **WHEN FIRE IS NEARBY**

- Park your vehicle facing out. Put your valuables in the car. Place the car keys where you can find them.
- Dress appropriately. Have sturdy shoes, long pants and shirt, gloves and handkerchief.
- Confine or secure pets to one room or area. Prepare them to be transported.
- Move all flammable furniture (including outdoor furniture) to the center of the home or storage.
- Leave your electricity on and leave some lights on.
- Close shutters, blinds and heavy drapes. Remove lightweight window dressings.
- Close fireplace dampers and fireplace screens.
- Shut all doors, exterior and interior. Leave doors unlocked.
- Place a note attached to front door stating names of all evacuees, time and date of evacuation, destination and contact information.
- Connect garden hose to faucet and leave buckets full of water around the house.
- Place a ladder outside for roof access.

#### **EVACUATION**

##### **Notification**

Residents will be advised of potential hazards and the possibility of evacuation.

Residents should prepare for the following alternatives and will

#### **Shelter in Place**

This would be for a low intensity fire where structures have adequate clearance, are made of fire resistant materials, and the Fire Department feels it is safe to stay.

#### **Immediate Threat**

Issued when the fire is moving toward an area and there is an immediate threat to life and property. Whenever an area is under “Immediate Threat”, roads in the area will be closed.

#### **Planning Your Escape Route:**

The direction of your escape will be dictated by the location of the fire in relation to your home and the direction and speed it is spreading.

#### **IF YOU ARE UNABLE TO EVACUATE WHEN A FIRE APPROACHES:**

##### **INSIDE YOUR HOUSE**

- Stay inside your house away from outside walls.
- Keep all doors closed but leave them unlocked.
- Keep your entire family together and REMAIN CALM. Remember if it gets hot in the house, it is four to five times hotter and more dangerous outside.

##### **TRAVELING**

- Be prepared to be directed by law enforcement or traffic control personnel: Follow their directions.
- Drive travel routes in advance so that you will be prepared.
- Have checklist and map ready.
- If you become trapped 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 while on foot, select an area clear of vegetation or lie face down in a ditch.

##### **AFTER THE FIRE PASSES**

- Check the exterior, roof and under deck immediately, extinguish all sparks and embers. If you must climb on the roof, use caution.
- Check inside the attic and underneath decks for hidden burning embers.
- Check your yard for burning woodpiles, trees, fence posts or other materials.
- Stay clear of all downed power lines.

##### **LIFTING THE EVACUATION NOTICE**

- Evacuation notices may stay in effect for several days. They will be rescinded when it is determined that the threat is over.

##### **RETURN TO YOUR HOME**

The county sheriff or local law enforcement will determine when it is safe for citizens to move back into their homes. Be alert for downed power lines and contact your gas or electric company before turning utilities back on.