

PREPARING FOR WILDFIRE SEASON

CHECKLIST



Preparing for a wildfire should start long before fire season. Over the past five years, fire seasons have been lasting longer and larger, more destructive fires have become the norm. Don't wait until there's an emergency to make a plan. We've created some helpful checklists that will get you, your family, and your property ready for fire season.

Prepare Your Property

As a fire approaches, it is typically not a wall of flame, but blowing embers that burn down structures over many hours. Having 100 feet of clearing may not protect your property, as a blowing ember can start a fire almost a mile away.

Here are some tips that will keep your property safer in the event of a wildfire. Remember, you can always ask your local fire department to come out to your property for pointers.

- Learn what type of vegetation you have around your house. Pine trees burn hotter and throw embers. Dry grass burns faster but burns out quickly. "Ladder fuels" allow fire to move upwards.
- Clear dead or dry vegetation from the roof and base of your house.
- Trim vegetation so that a ground fire cannot spread to the top of trees or up the side of your house. Eliminate dead branches on trees 6 to 10 feet from ground level.
- Make sure combustible items like floor mats, deck furniture, wood piles, etc. are not stored against the house.
- Eliminate landscaping that overhangs the house.
- Take photos of everything in your house before a fire, including furniture, serial numbers, important documents, and photographs and store a copy off-site.

Pack Your “Bug-Out Bag”

Make sure everyone in your house, including pets, has a bag with important supplies ready to go in case of an evacuation order. Keep your “bug-out bags” where they can be loaded quickly, like in your garage or your hall closet next to the front door. Be sure to include:

- Change of clothes
- Toiletries
- Extra cash
- Important keys
- Phone numbers
- Food and water for at least two days
- Printed map with all the roads in your town

Prepare Your Evacuation Plan

You may need to evacuate your community quickly during a wildfire. Get to know the area around you and plan safe routes beforehand.

- Find more than one way out of your community
- Note whether there are potential obstacles that could cause evacuation issues, like large trees near the side of the road
- Keep a printed map of different routes out of town in your car’s glove box
- Keep your family up to date on your plans so they know you are safe and are less likely to try to find you
- Be part of a neighborhood watch or early alert system and don’t wait to evacuate
- Find a safe zone or meeting place away from the house to meet at if there is an evacuation order