

**CITY OF HAYWARD AND  
FAIRVIEW FIRE PROTECTION  
DISTRICT RESIDENTS GUIDE  
TO  
WILDFIRE PREPAREDNESS &  
EVACUATION**

**HOW TO  
GET READY  
STAY INFORMED  
EVACUATE**



# Message from the Fire Chief

Over the past few years California has experienced a dramatic rise in both the number and severity of wildland fires. These fires have ravaged wildland-urban interface areas taking lives, destroying homes and obliterating infrastructure. Six of the 20 largest fires in California's recorded history have burned in the last five years and 10 of California's most destructive wildfires have occurred since 2015.

The information in this booklet is designed to help you prepare your family, home and neighborhood for the approaching wildland fire season. The more prepared we are as a community the better we'll be able to respond when conditions are right for a catastrophic fire in our area.

Please heed the recommendations presented here; register your cell phones with the Alameda County Mass Notification System (AC Alert), prepare your home by removing excess fuel from around your structures and be ready to evacuate when wildfire threatens our area.

The City of Hayward is committed to keeping the Hayward and Fairview Fire Protection District communities safe. You can help by preparing now for the fire season ahead.

Respectfully,

**Garret Contreras**  
**Fire Chief**

## Message from CERT

Thank you for reading this booklet and getting prepared for an evacuation. Whether it is a wildfire, earthquake or other disaster, you need to be ready to evacuate on short notice or, in some cases, to Shelter in Place. There is much more information on the City of Hayward Disaster Preparedness website listed below. You can find out more about how to prepare for a disaster and acquire critical skills by taking a series of free classes offered by the Hayward Fire Department, please visit [www.hayward-ca.gov/cert/](http://www.hayward-ca.gov/cert/) or [www.hayward-ca.gov/nert/](http://www.hayward-ca.gov/nert/) for more information and to sign up.

Don Nichelson  
Public Education Officer  
Hayward Fire Department

Program your cell with Hayward's dispatch number 510-732-2626. Program your cell with Alameda County Sheriff's Dispatch number 510-667-7721.  
Don't rely on 911 from a cell phone.

All web pages listed in this document (and many more) can be found at [www.hayward-ca.gov](http://www.hayward-ca.gov)

# Warnings

A fast-moving wildland fire that occurs late in the fire season and is pushed by high winds presents a unique threat to our communities. The information included here is intended to provide Hayward and Fairview residents with an overview of the steps that should be taken to prepare for an evacuation if one becomes necessary. The best plans are always practiced and reviewed. Residents should use this information to create and practice their individual and family evacuation plans.

Law enforcement agencies managing an evacuation may issue either a "pre-evacuation warning" or an "evacuation order". A **PRE-EVACUATION WARNING** means that the need to evacuate is highly likely. Residents should prepare to evacuate with little or no notice. Individuals that may need additional time to leave when an evacuation order is initiated should consider evacuating when the pre-evacuation warning is issued. An **EVACUATION ORDER** is a mandatory order by law enforcement to leave the area and provides for restricting access under California Penal Code, section 409.5. Law enforcement coordinates all evacuation actions with the fire service. The police will maintain the security of the evacuated area and will facilitate the re-entry and repopulation of residents as soon as it is deemed safe for people to return.

**Situational Awareness.** By remaining aware of the weather and potential wildfire conditions, residents will be able to make better informed decisions.

A **RED FLAG WARNING** is issued for weather events that may result in extreme fire behavior which will occur within 24 hours. A **FIRE WEATHER WATCH** is issued when fire weather conditions could exist in the next 12-72 hours. A Red Flag Warning is the highest alert. During these times all residents must use extreme caution because a simple spark could cause a major wildfire. A Fire Weather Watch is one level below a Warning, but fire danger is still high. The type of weather patterns that can cause a watch or warning include low relative humidity, strong winds, dry fuels, the possibility of dry lightning strikes, or any combination of the above.



Many fire stations fly a red flag in front of the station on Red Flag warning days. If there is a Red Flag Warning, pay close attention to your surroundings. Consider having your car loaded with everything you might need if you leave suddenly. Make sure you have at least a  $\frac{3}{4}$  full tank of gas and be ready to go.

Individuals with access and functional needs and the disabled need to arrange beforehand for not one, but several "guardian angels" to help get them out should evacuation become necessary. It is important for everyone to know their neighbors and their emergency needs.

To see the daily fire weather forecasts and any Fire Weather Watches or Red Flag Warnings, go to: <https://www.wrh.noaa.gov/fire2/?wfo=mtr>

# Public Safety Power Shutoff (PSPS)

Beginning in 2019, PG&E has expanded their Public Safety Power Shutoff (PSPS) program to include all electric lines that pass through high fire-threat areas. Those power lines include both distribution and transmission lines.

The most likely electric lines to be considered for shutting off for safety will be those that pass-through areas that have been designated by the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) as at elevated (Tier 2) or extreme (Tier 3) risk for wildfire. This includes both distribution and transmission lines.

The specific area and number of affected customers will depend on forecasted weather conditions and which circuits PG&E needs to turn off for public safety.

Most of the East Bay is designated as both Tier 2 and Tier 3.

## Public Safety Power Shutoff Criteria

- **A Red Flag Warning** – as declared by the National Weather Service
- **Low Humidity Levels** – generally 20% and below
- **Forecasted sustained winds generally above 25 mph and wind gusts in excess of approximately 45 mph** – depending on location and site-specific conditions as temperature, terrain and local climate
- **Condition of dry fuel** – moisture content of fuel on the ground and live vegetation
- **On Ground Real Time Observations** – from PG&E’s Wildfire Safety Operations Center and field observations from PG&E crews

## PSPS Event Notifications

Extreme weather threats can change quickly. When possible, PG&E will provide customers with advance notice prior to turning off the power. PG&E will also provide updates until power is restored.

### Timing of Notifications

- 48 hours before power is turned off
- 24 hours before power is turned off
- Just before power is turned off
- During the Public Safety Outage
- Once power has been restored

Update your contact info by visiting [www.pge.com/mywildfirealerts](http://www.pge.com/mywildfirealerts) to make sure PG&E has your current contact information.

You will also be notified of a PSPS from AC Alert. To make sure you are contacted for a PSPS or an emergency, you can register with AC Alert at [www.hayward-ca.gov/ac-alert](http://www.hayward-ca.gov/ac-alert)

# Notifications

## **DO THIS NOW!**

### **Increase Your Chances of Being Notified in an Emergency**

The Alameda County Office of Emergency Services maintains the City of Hayward and Fairview Fire Protection District's Mass Notification System (AC Alert). AC Alert is used by City and County agencies throughout Alameda County to rapidly disseminate emergency alerts to people who live, work, or visit our County. AC Alert can send alerts by voice, text and email, as well as messaging Nixle subscribers, posting to social media pages, and sending FEMA Wireless Alerts (WEA). To make sure we can reach you in an emergency register with AC Alert at [www.hayward-ca.gov/ac-alert](http://www.hayward-ca.gov/ac-alert)

#### **HOW TO SIGN UP**

- Visit [www.hayward-ca.gov/ac-alert](http://www.hayward-ca.gov/ac-alert) and click on the sign-up button.
- Create your profile account as instructed.
- Enter how you want to be contacted, with phone numbers and/or emails.
- Enter your primary address and any additional addresses on which you want to be notified. Emergency alerts are sent based on the locations that you enter.
- In addition, you can subscribe for optional notifications from cities based on where you visit for work, or school, etc.



#### **HOW IT WORKS**

If there is a safety hazard or concern in your area, you will get a notification on whichever device you entered when you signed up. Once you confirm that you have received the message, the system will stop trying to reach you. If you don't confirm, the system will continue to try to reach you using all the contact paths that you have provided. You can update your information at any time. If you would like to stop receiving notifications altogether, you can opt-out by removing your profile from the system.

**Increase your **Situational Awareness** by subscribing to these other services:**

**NIXLE:** The Hayward Police Department hosts a NIXLE site that is routinely used to transmit non-life-threatening messages to area residents. See page 6 for website instructions.

Evacuation Messages can be delivered in many ways including AC Alert, radio, and television. If you feel that you are in danger, you should never wait for an "official" evacuation order. Leaving early can reduce the possibility of being stuck in a traffic jam or not being able to get of the area.

# Evacuation Tips

You live in an area where an evacuation may be necessary due to wildfire, earthquake or other threat. Here are some tips to make your evacuation go more smoothly:

## DO NOW: Go-Bag

1. Have a Go-Bag for each member of the household stored near your vehicle with at least:
  - a. Sturdy, closed toe shoes
  - b. Socks and underwear (2 pair each)
  - b. Long pants
  - c. Long sleeve shirt
  - d. Jacket & Hat
  - e. N95 Masks (4-8)
  - f. Flashlight
  - g. Toiletry kit including
  - h. medications for a week
  - i. Spare eyeglasses and
  - j. sunglasses
2. Keep your electronics (cell phone, tablet, laptop with chargers) plugged in but all together and ready to grab and go.

## DO NOW: Documents

1. Store in the cloud and/or have a memory stick or CD in your Go-Bags with .jpg or .pdf of the following:
  - a. House documents including title, mortgage papers, insurance policies
  - b. Personal ID including driver's license, passport, social security, DD 214
  - c. Health documents including insurance policy, medical record, medicare card, name and phone number of primary care physician, name and phone number of a pharmacy, list of current medications with dosages, list of allergies and existing conditions.



- d. Keepsake photos
  - e. Photo or video record of each room in the house showing all valuable items
  - f. List of all valuable items including purchase date, cost, model and serial numbers
2. See the Document Worksheet for documents that are needed to rebuild your life if your house is gone.

## DO NOW: Preparedness Actions

1. Register your phone numbers and/or email addresses with AC Alert, [www.acalert.org](http://www.acalert.org)
2. Register your cell with your local Nixle. To opt-in for Nixle, text your zip code to 888777.
3. Set Nixle and AC Alert as Do Not Disturb available contacts on your cell phone.
4. Have a battery-operated radio, flashlight, pocketknife, shoes, socks, underwear, long pants, long sleeve shirt in a bag tied to the head of your bed. (In an earthquake you'll be able to find it.) This is part of your Go-Bag.
5. Learn how to open your garage door when the power is out. If you are unable to pull the cord and open it now, you will not be able to do it in an emergency.
6. Install an Uninterruptable Power Supply (UPS) for your cable modem and your portable phone base station to keep your home network and phones available when power is out. See last page for more information.



# Evacuation Tips

## DO NOW: Access and Functional Needs (AFN) individuals



1. AFN persons include anyone with mobility, developmental, cognitive, hearing or language issues. Frequently older but may be of any age.
2. Take special precautions so that AFN persons will know about evacuation orders at any time of day or night, even if power fails.
3. Pre-determine who will help any AFN person evacuate and have a backup. Family, friends and neighbors who live very close by!
4. Prepare to take durable medical goods, oxygen and any other special needs.
5. If you are the AFN individual, be proactive and find redundant, responsible people to evacuate you. Do not rely on first responders to evacuate you. They may be overwhelmed.

## DO NOW: Communications

1. Predesignate an Out-of-State Contact (OoSC) and program the contact's cell number into each family member's cell phone.
2. The Out-of-State-Contact (OoSC) will be the clearinghouse for your family's calls. This prevents too many calls into and out of the local area.
3. My OoSC is:



## DO NOW: Neighborhood

1. Know who in your neighborhood will need help to evacuate.
2. Know your neighbors and their schedules, including vacation plans.
3. Redundantly coordinate responsibilities for children, AFN persons and animals.
4. Select a Neighborhood Block Captain to organize the neighborhood and get every neighbor onboard a plan for checking on everyone's safety.

## DO NOW: Animals

1. Have pet food in a Pet Go-Bag with leashes, poop-bags, water dish, medications, etc.
2. Keep your dogs and other animals confined indoors if there is smoke outside.
3. Have kennels for your dogs in case they have to go to a shelter.
4. Keep a collar on cats and keep them confined to a single room so you can get them easily. Keep a kennel for cats in the same room.
5. Make sure all of your animals are microchipped.
6. Have photos on your cellphone with your animals and you together to prove ownership.
7. For larger animals, have a pre-designated place for them out of the area and a way of transporting them. Contact your local horsemen's association, etc.
8. If you must leave and you don't have all of your animals controlled, leave gates and a downwind window open. Animals will frequently escape and survive.
9. Try to take your pets with you but don't become a fatality while trying to save your animals.



# Evacuation Tips

## DO AT RED FLAG WARNING: Vehicle



1. Take only a single vehicle to help reduce traffic jams:
2. Make sure that you have at least  $\frac{3}{4}$  full tank of fuel.
3. Park your vehicle:
  - a. In a driveway facing the street, not in a garage. If you have a driveway gate, leave it open. OR
  - b. On the street in the direction of departure.
4. Keep vehicle keys in your pocket.
5. Keep plenty of drinking water in your vehicle.
6. Load time-sensitive medications into vehicle. Unopened insulin can be stored at room temperature for up to 28 days.
7. Keep an emergency kit and a first aid kit in your vehicle.
8. Pre-load your vehicle with GO-Bags, keepsake items and small toys for your children.
9. Plan to evacuate before mandatory order is issued.

## DO WHEN FIRE IS NEAR: Actions



1. If you feel you are in danger consider evacuating early, before the Mandatory Evacuation Order is given. Traffic will be lighter, and you can get out safely.
2. Evacuating early also helps firefighters keep roads clear of congestions and lets them move more freely to do their job. In an intense wildfire they may not have time knock on every door.
3. If there is any possibility that the fire might reach you, consider sleeping in shifts so that one responsible person is awake at all time to monitor fire status.
4. If smoke is heavy, wear an N95 mask and use the air conditioner if you can set it to recirculate fan only. Do not open windows.
5. Turn off any propane tanks and move any stored fuel (lawnmower gas, etc.), propane tanks and other flammable items away from your house including furniture, etc.
6. Place a metal ladder to the roof near driveway to aid firefighters.
7. Fully open or remove thin, flammable drapes.
8. Close heavy drapes.
9. Cover up your body by putting on long pants, long-sleeved shirt, sturdy shoes and a baseball cap or bandana to cover your face. Do not wear polyester or nylon, they will melt in high temperatures. Try to wear 100% cotton or wool.
10. Do not pre-wet any clothing to avoid steam burns.

## DO AT TIME OF EVACUATION: Communicate **Text. Don't Call.**

1. Use TEXT messages with no photos and no voice phone calls.
2. Send a text message to your Out-of-State-Contact (OoSC) when evacuating, indicating destination.
3. Send another text message to your OoSC when arriving at destination.
4. Register on the Red Cross "Safe and Well" website (see page 9).
11. Report any missing family members to law enforcement.
12. Report any found persons who were previously reported missing.
13. Keep your OoSC up to date on status of all family members.



# Evacuation Tips

## DO AT TIME OF EVACUATION: Actions

1. Leave outside lights on for first responders.
2. Close and lock all doors, windows and vents. This will prevent drafts and could help save your house.
3. Leave any driveway gates open
4. Drive safely and cautiously out the area.
5. Drive with headlights on even during daytime.
6. Be alert for downed power lines and emergency personnel
7. Never touch a downed wire. Consider all down lines as live high-voltage lines.
8. If you can go directly out the area to a safe shelter area, do so, then register on the Safe and Well website.



3. If you cannot get out of the area, go to the Temporary Refuge Area (TRA) in your area. If one has not been planned, spontaneously find a large area with few trees and shelter in the center of an open area, such as a school playfield or golf course.

## IF YOU GET TRAPPED AND ARE UNABLE TO EVACUATE:

1. **Shelter in Place.** For more information [www.readyforwildfire.org](http://www.readyforwildfire.org)
2. Keep your family together.
3. Stay inside your home and keep all doors and windows closed but keep them unlocked.
4. Leave inside and outside lights on.
5. Fill sinks and tubs with water.
6. Put large “HELP” sign in a front window. See page 16.
7. Keep calm. Remember that if it gets hot inside, it is four to five times hotter outside.

## DURING EVACUATION:

1. If your trapped by fire while evacuating in your car, park in an area clear of vegetation, close all windows and vents, cover yourself with a blanket or jackets and lie on the floor. If you have windshield and/or rear window shade, deploy it to minimize the heat transfer through the windshield or rear window.
2. If you are trapped while evacuating by foot, your first place of refuge should be a defensible building or swimming pool. If you cannot reach a structure, select an area clear of vegetation. Do not seek refuge in low-lying areas such as drainage ditches as many times these geographic features will act a “chimney” and will burn much hotter than other areas.

*All residents who are out of town during the evacuation period are asked register, as soon as possible, on the Red Cross “Safe and Well website:*

<https://safeandwell.communityos.org/cms/>

By registering on the Safe and Well website you are telling people that you are OK. Family and friends will not worry about you and Law Enforcement will not spend valuable hours searching for you.

For information about current fires, **DO NOT call 911.**

Visit our City web page [www.hayward-ca.gov](http://www.hayward-ca.gov) for up to date news.

# Disaster Recovery Document Worksheet

Type	Document	Issuer	Issue Date	Exp Date	
<b>Housing</b>	Title, Lease, Rental Agreement				
	Mortgage				
	Insurance – Home or Renters				
	Insurance – Earthquake				
	Insurance – Flood				
<b>Personal ID</b>	Birth Certificate				
	Passport				
	Driver’s License, State ID				
	Green Card				
	Social Security				
	Military DD-214				
	Will & Trust				
<b>Health</b>	Insurance Policy				
	Medical Records				
	Medicare ID				
<b>Auto</b>	Insurance				
	Vehicle #1 Title or Loan				
	Vehicle #1 Title or Loan				
	Vehicle #1 Title or Loan				
<b>Other</b>					

# Disaster Recovery Document Worksheet

Doctor Type	Name	City	Phone
Primary Care			
Dentist			
Pharmacy			

Drug	Dose	Freq	Prescriber	Date	Qty

# Recovery

The first step to recovery is preparedness. Regardless of the type of disaster, wildfire, earthquake, flood, hurricane, terrorism, or any other, the first part of recovery is adequate preparation.

**First, prepare your home to not be lost!** Be ready for wildfire. This includes creating defensible space around your home. If the fire doesn't get to your home, your home is more likely to survive. If your home's exterior has small mesh vents, fire resistant roofing and siding, it is more likely to survive. If it is seismically retrofitted to current standards, it is more likely to withstand an earthquake. If you live on a hillside and have adequate retaining walls, it is more likely to withstand earth movement. Eucalyptus trees, which are prevalent in Hayward and Fairview, have a lifespan of 80-90 years. If you have dead trees or too many trees that are too close to your house, remove them and replace them with more fire-resistant varieties. If your trees are overgrown limb them up at least 6 ft from the ground and remove all ground brush from underneath them. Ask a fire department or nurseryman for a list of suitable fire-resistant varieties for this area. Cypress trees and bushes are green on the outside but brown (dead) on the inside and burn very fast. Consider also removing them! Another part of preparedness is adequate insurance coverage.

**Insurance** What do you have that needs insurance? Home or renters, auto, boat, RV, personal items and other such property needs to be covered. Consult your insurance agent and check the details of each insurance policy to find the risks that are covered. Most homeowner's policies cover fire BUT NOT flood or earthquake. Those are separate policies. Check the policy for the difference between water damage and flood damage. Typically, water damage is from water before it hits the ground.

If your home is destroyed, who is going to pay for your housing while you rebuild? How long will they pay for temporary housing? After a major fire, all the builders will be busy and building materials will be scarce so it will take much longer to rebuild than if it were just one home that burned. Adding additional housing time is frequently very low additional premium cost. Who will pay for debris removal? When you rebuild, you will need to build to current building codes. Does your policy include additional coverage for the increased cost of code compliance?

Is all your 'stuff' covered? Check the coverage of your homeowner's or renter's policy to find out the limits of coverage and what you must do to prove that you had the items. Frequently, a video tour of your home, inside and outside, with narration is a great tool for proving ownership. Be sure to describe what you are photographing including where it came from, when you got it and the value. If the values are high, get an appraiser to provide an appraisal and keep a digital copy with your other documents and your video. Make sure that all policies for your personal property include all-risk coverage so you are covered for theft, fire, earthquake, flood, etc.

# Evacuation Zones

The City of Hayward and Fairview Fire Protection District is divided into Evacuation Zones to aid first responders. It is not necessary for residents to know which zone they are in. The zones are simply a communications tool for fire, police and the AC Alert.

When a disaster is eminent or has happened, police and fire officials will determine which zones, or parts of zones, need to be evacuated.

AC Alert will then send an Evacuation Warning or Evacuation Order to those residents within the affected zones. Only devices registered in the AC Alert program will be notified by the system.

To register go to [www.acalert.org](http://www.acalert.org)

If necessary due to the scope of the disaster, the Federal Integrated Public Alert & Warning System (IPAWS) can be utilized to broadcast through every cell tower in the county.

**Evacuation Message.** When delivering an evacuation order to residents, the following information may be included in the evacuation message:

- Location of the hazard
- Route to take to evacuate
- Location of Temporary Refuge Area
- Time that is available to evacuate
- What to do with pets / livestock
- How to request assistance for those who need assistance
- Procedures to check on the safety of neighbors

**Evacuation routes:** Evacuation routes will be dependent upon the location of the disaster. Unlike a hurricane that always comes from one direction, fire is driven by wind and can come from any direction. The best way for residents to evacuate will depend on where the disaster is, which way it is moving if it is a fire, and which roads are clear enough for traffic and will be communicated in the evacuation order. Some routes may be used for incoming fire and rescue equipment while other routes may be designated for traffic in all lanes to exit the area.

**Where to go:** While it is always best to leave early and get out of the area completely, at times that may not be possible. Temporary Refuge Areas may be set up, if appropriate, and you will be directed to them. If a Temporary Refuge Area is not established, find a large area with few trees and shelter in the center of an open area, such as a school playfield or golf course.

# Reducing your Home's Wildfire Risk

## HOME:

1. Use metal vent screens with 1/8" mesh.
2. Keep wooden fencing and patio decks away from the house. Leave a gap or install flashing so fire will not spread from fencing or decks to the house.
3. Chimneys should be inspected and cleaned by professionals. A recommendation is to have your fireplace and chimney cleaned every two years if it used often.
4. **MAKE SURE THERE ARE WORKING SMOKE DETECTORS IN YOUR HOME.**
5. Have fire extinguishers and know how to use them.
6. Sweep your walkways, patios and decks regularly to remove leaves, needles and other combustible materials that may gather against your house.
7. Remove vegetative debris (leaves, pine needles, twigs) from your gutters and roof.
8. Remove combustible materials from under your deck.
9. Caulk any openings along the top or bottom of wall siding or around windows where gaps could allow embers to enter your home.
10. Store your deck furniture, children's toys and other combustible items inside if a wildfire threatens.

## GARDEN:

1. Remove woody, fire prone vegetation, especially within the 0-5 foot "no fire" zone around your structure. Ivy, juniper, rosemary and other mature plants tend to have new growth on top of woody stems. Replace with stone mulch and drought tolerant plants that are easy to maintain at 6" high or less.
2. While there are no "fire-proof" plants, choose drought tolerant native plants that are low to the ground and have a low sap or resin content.
3. Choose fire retardant plant species that resist ignition such as rockrose, ice plant and aloe. Fire-resistant shrubs include hedging roses, bush honeysuckles, currant, cotoneaster, sumac and shrub apples.
4. Group plants by water needs. Create "islands" of plants with space in between.
5. Replace bare, weedy or unsightly patches near your home with ground cover, rock gardens, vegetable gardens and fire-resistant mulches.
6. Mulch can help retain water but be careful about the type of mulch. Mulch can be a fire hazard when it dries out. Rake it back by at least a foot from the side of your house and from combustible fencing. Consider using non-combustible mulch such as stones or gravel.
7. Remove fallen pine needles and leaves near structures to avoid fire embers igniting them. Do not allow leaves or mulch to exceed a depth of 3 inches within 30 feet of your house.
8. Create a separation between trees and shrubs- at least 10 feet on flat ground, greater on steep slope - to eliminate a "ladder" of fuels that can spread flames to tree crowns or structures.
9. Move flammable material such as stacked wood at least 30 feet from your home or other structure.
10. For both drought and wildfire prevention, remember that less is better and easier to maintain.

## WEED ABATEMENT:

1. Properties need to be maintained throughout the year. You may need to provide additional abatement throughout the season.
2. Cut as soon as practical, once annual grasses have died and turned brown (typically May or early June). Mow before 10:00 a.m. with wind speed < 5 MPH.
3. Never mow during Fire Weather Watches or Red Flag Warnings.

# HOW TO PREPARE YOUR HOME FOR WILDFIRES



WILDFIRE RISK REDUCTION STEPS THAT CAN MAKE YOUR HOME SAFER DURING A WILDFIRE

## VEGETATION MANAGEMENT

### 1. HOME IGNITION ZONES

Limiting the amount of flammable vegetation, choosing fire-resistant building materials and construction techniques, along with periodic exterior maintenance in the three home ignition zones- increases the chances your home will survive a wildfire when exposed to embers and/or a surface fire. The zones include the **Immediate Zone:** 0 to 5 feet around the house; **Intermediate Zone:** 5 to 30 feet; and the **Extended Zone:** 30 to 100 feet.

### 2. LANDSCAPING AND MAINTENANCE

To reduce ember ignitions and fire spread, trim branches that overhang the home, porch and deck and prune branches of large trees up to (depending on their height) 6 to 10 feet from the ground. Remove plants containing resins, oils and waxes and ensure mulches in the **Immediate Zone** (0 to 5 feet around the house) are non-combustible options like crushed stone and gravel. Maintain vegetation annually.

## FIRE RESISTIVE CONSTRUCTION

### 3. ROOFING AND VENTS

Class A fire-rated roofing products offer the best protection. Examples include: Composite shingles, metal, concrete and clay tiles. Inspect shingles or roof tiles and replace or repair those that are loose or missing to prevent ember penetration. Box-in eaves, but provide ventilation to prevent condensation and mildew. Roof and attic vents should be screened to prevent ember entry.

### 4. DECKS AND PORCHES

Never store flammable materials underneath decks or porches. Remove dead vegetation and debris from under decks/porches and between deck board joints.

### 5. SIDING AND WINDOWS

Embers can collect in small nooks and crannies and ignite combustible materials; radiant heat from flames can crack windows. Use fire-resistant siding such as brick, fiber-cement, plaster or stucco and dual-pane tempered glass windows.

### 6. EMERGENCY RESPONDER ACCESS

Ensure your home and neighborhood has legible and clearly marked street names and numbers. Driveways should be at least 12 feet wide with a vertical clearance of 15 feet, for emergency vehicle access.

## BE PREPARED

Develop, discuss and practice an emergency action plan with everyone in your home. Include details for pets, large animals and livestock. Know two ways out of your neighborhood and have a pre-designated meeting place. Always evacuate if you feel it's unsafe to stay – don't wait to receive an emergency notification if you feel threatened from the fire.

Conduct an annual insurance policy check-up to adjust for local building costs, codes and new renovations. Create/update a home inventory to help settle claims faster.



## OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- Store firewood away from the home
- Mow the lawn regularly
- Prune low-hanging tree branches
- Landscape with fire-resistant plants
- Create small fuel breaks with hardscaping features

**TALK TO YOUR LOCAL FORESTRY AGENCY OR FIRE DEPARTMENT TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE SPECIFIC WILDFIRE RISK WHERE YOU LIVE.**

**FIREWISE USA<sup>®</sup>**  
RESIDENTS REDUCING WILDFIRE RISKS

**VISIT FIREWISE.ORG FOR MORE DETAILS**

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**Order a Reducing Wildfire Risks in the Home Ignition Zone checklist/poster at [Firewise.org](https://www.firewise.org)**

Keep this booklet near a front window. visible from the street.

Place this sign in the window if you cannot evacuate.

**HELP**



A few more things to remember...

1. AC ALERT SAVES LIVES- register your phone numbers and/or email addresses at [www.acalert.org](http://www.acalert.org), today.
2. During wildfires, the first utility to go out is frequently power. Without power you cannot do many things the way you normally do, i.e. open your garage door, access the internet, use the telephone, etc. If possible be sure to have back up system in place.

Remember a cable or landline modem connects your household devices to the internet. This modem needs power. An Uninterruptible Power Supply (UPS) can supply the power to keep a modem active for many hours. It is a device that plugs into a 110 volt wall outlet and protected devices plug into it. The UPS battery will keep electronic items powered for several hours.

A wireless telephone also requires power at the base station to connect. The same UPS can be used for both the telephone and a modem.

A 450 VA UPS will power a cable modem and a wireless telephone base station for about 18- 24 hours. A small unit, like the APC BGE90M will keep you going for 4-5 hours.

3. Be sure to know how to open your garage door manually. An option on newer garage door openers is a battery backup. A garage door company may be able to retrofit your opener or replace it.
4. Staying informed is the best way to stay alive. To get warnings for fires and other disasters, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Agency (NOAA) broadcasts alert on Weather Radios. These are the same alerts that interrupt radio and television broadcasts.
5. Having a Weather Radio that can automatically sound an Alert can give you time to get out to safety and save your life visit <https://www.nws.noaa.gov/nwr/> for more information.

Retailers sell different kinds of weather radios that are equipped with different abilities and features. You must be careful which kind you purchase-many radios offer the weather band, letting you listen to the feed, but *will not activate* on individual alerts for your county. Most that provide other features, like a cell phone charger, hand- crank operation, flashlight, etc. do not have the critical Alert feature. There are some that are limited to tornados. Look for a radio, whether it is a desktop or portable, that has the Alert feature. For home use, a desktop model with a backup battery is usually the best. Some radios need programming for your county while others auto-sense your location. For more information, go to: <https://www.weatherstationadvisor.com/>