



When a Fire Threatens



What to do When a Fire Threatens: Strategies for Action

I. Inside the Home

If you have prepared for a fire ahead of time and taken the precautions outlined in this program, you can feel more secure that your home will survive a wildland fire threat. However, there are additional actions you can take if a wildland fire is approaching your property.

Be prepared to evacuate all residents if necessary. In some cases, a homeowner may choose to remain with the home to help provide protection. The information below are some guidelines for evacuating or for choosing to remain at the home. Remember, however, that no property is worth losing a life.

- Have a plan to evacuate family members and pets.
- Make the decision and take action to evacuate early to avoid being caught in traffic or the fire itself.
- Be sure that everyone in the family knows the location of a prearranged meeting place, as well as evacuation routes.

- Place valuable keepsakes and important papers in your vehicle and place the vehicle inside the garage, facing out. Leave the windows rolled up.
- Disconnect electric garage door openers so the door can be opened manually in the event of a power outage.
- Don't panic; remain calm and attempt to remain in touch with emergency personnel if available.



- A. Inside the Home (When Choosing to Remain With the Home)
- Keep a radio or television tuned for instructions.
 - Close all exterior doors and windows and exterior vents. Also close all interior doors.
 - Leave a light on in each room; this may help firefighters in smoky conditions.
 - Fill bathtubs, sinks, and other containers with water for putting out hot spots if no other source is available.
 - Remember that the hot water heater and toilet are sources of water, if needed.
 - Remove curtains and other combustibles from around windows (radiant heat can ignite curtains through the glass).

- Move all over-stuffed or upholstered furniture (over-stuffed chairs, couches, etc.) to the middle of the room, away from windows.
- Close all window blinds and shutters.
- Open the fireplace damper, but be sure the screen is in place to prevent embers from entering the house.
- Wear only cotton or wool clothes, preferably long pants, long-sleeved shirts or jackets, and boots.
- Continually check the attic, if possible, for embers, smoke, or fire.

* The decision to remain with your property is a personal choice which should be made only if conditions allow for your personal safety.



B. Outside the Home

- Place a ladder against the house (to allow access to the roof to extinguish spot fires).
- Be sure all outside hoses are connected to faucets and, if possible, turned on.
- Close or cover all eaves and foundation vents.
- Move flammable patio or lawn furniture or any other materials away from the house.
- Shut off propane at the tank or natural gas at the meter.
- Soak rags, towels, or small rugs with water and have on hand to put out embers or small fires.
- Continually check the roof for embers, smoke, or fire.

- If possible, place a lawn sprinkler on a wood shake or shingle roof, but wait until embers begin falling before you turn the sprinkler on. Don't waste water. However, if there is adequate water pressure, periodically spray down a wood shake or shingle roof and wood siding.