



UI Extension Forestry Information Series II

Fire No. 22

Wildfire Evacuation - Have a Plan

Yvonne Barkley

As with many natural disasters, wildfires are unpredictable. Homeowners living in the wildland/urban interface need to be prepared to evacuate themselves, their pets and their livestock in the event of a wildfire disaster.

Once evacuation orders have been given, it is vitally important that WUI residents leave early - **sixty percent of lives lost to wildland fire are of those that chose to stay and wait and see and then evacuated too late.**

Evacuation planning should

- be done well ahead of time
- be rehearsed
- include your neighbors - planning an emergency community fire procedure and an alert system with your neighbors can save time and lives.

Planning checklist

Know who to call. Know your fire protection district; post their number by all telephones. Have contact information for all pre-arranged locations and neighborhood and school emergency phone trees and program these numbers into to your cell phone.

Children too. Children should know who to call and where to go in the event of a wildfire. Post fire protection district or fire department numbers by all phones and program these numbers into family cell phones as well. Most schools will have an evacuation plan for students. Find out what it is ahead of fire season.

Designate emergency contacts. Choose off-site emergency contacts that are accessible to everyone in



Evacuation planning should be done well ahead of fire season.

Photo from <https://www.rt.com/usa/156200-los-angeles-fires-evacuation/>

your household. Program their numbers and address into all family phones.

Have a way to get out. Prepare and maintain two escape routes in the event one access is not passable.

Have a place to go. Make arrangements for a place to go in the event of a wildfire. This is the place everyone in your household will go if you have to leave or cannot return to your home. Make sure everyone in your household knows how they will get to the designated shelter location.

Prepare an emergency kit. An emergency kit should be packed and easy to access. Your kit should include:

- Prescription medicines, medical equipment, and important medical records
- Food and water for three days for each person in

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- your household
 - Special dietary foods
 - Baby supplies including special food, sanitary items, and play items
 - Pet supplies, including medications, food, leashes, collars with tags, and carriers
 - Toilet articles (soap, toothbrush, toothpaste, shampoo, etc.)
 - Clothing for several days. Include socks, boots or close-toed shoes, long-sleeved shirts and long pants. You could add leather gloves, a bandana and a hat as well
 - Blankets, pillows, and towels
 - A battery-powered radio
 - Flashlights with extra batteries
 - Phone chargers and extra phone batteries

Prepare a list of what you want to take with you. List important documents and valuables and place them where they are easily accessible. Have containers ready to pack items into. Documents and items to include:

- Identification, driver's license, cash, debit and credits cards
- Wills, living wills, power of attorney, insurance

- policies, contracts, deeds, stocks, bonds, and tax returns
- Passports, social security cards, immunization records
- Bank account numbers
- Credit card account numbers and companies
- An inventory of household goods – pictures are best
- Photo albums, external hard-drives
- Jewelry
- Important phone numbers/address book
- Family records (birth, marriage, death certificates)

Animals need a plan too. Make arrangements for the evacuation of pets and livestock. Many counties have emergency evacuation plans for pets and livestock in place. Find out what they are. If no plan is in place, contact your local veterinarian for locations to bring your pets and/or livestock.

Keep a fire extinguisher and fire tools accessible at all times. A shovel, rake, ladder, and 100 feet of attached garden hose can be used to extinguish spot fires on and around your home. Protect yourself too. Wear leather gloves, sturdy boots, and wool or cotton clothing.



Chimney Complex fire.

Photo by Robert Barkley, Idaho Department of Lands