

HAZARDS AND THREATS

WILDFIRES – HOMEOWNERS CHECKLIST

INSIDE THE HOME

KITCHEN

- Keep a working extinguisher in the kitchen.
- Maintain electric and gas stoves in good operating condition.
- Keep baking soda on hand to extinguish stove-top grease fires.
- Turn the handles of pots and pans containing hot liquids away from the front of the stove.
- Install curtains and towel holders away from burners on the stove.
- Store matches and lighters out of reach of children.
- Make sure that electrical outlets are designed to handle appliance loads.

LIVING ROOM

- Install a screen in front of fireplace or wood stove.
- Store the ashes from your fireplace (and barbecue) in a metal container and dispose of only when cold.
- Clean fireplace chimneys and flues at least once a year.

HALLWAY

- Install smoke detectors between living and sleeping areas.
- Test smoke detectors monthly and replace batteries twice a year, when clocks are changed in the Spring and Fall.
- Install child safe plugs (caps) on all electrical outlets.
- Replace electrical cords that do not work properly, have loose connections, or are frayed.

BEDROOM

- If you sleep with the door closed, it is recommended by fire experts to install a smoke detector in the bedroom.
- Turn off electric blankets and other electrical appliances when not in use.
- Do not smoke in bed.

- If you have security bars on your windows or doors, be sure to have an approved quick-release mechanism so you and your family can get out in the event of a fire.

BATHROOM

- Disconnect appliances such as curling irons and hair dryers when done, store in a safe location until cool.
- Keep items such as towels away from wall and floor heaters.

GARAGE

- Mount a working fire extinguisher in the garage.
- Have tools such as shovel, hoe, rake, and bucket available for use in a wildfire emergency.
- Install a solid door with self-closing hinges between living areas and the garage.
- Dispose of oily rags in Underwriters Laboratories approved metal containers.
- Store all combustibles away from ignition sources such as water heaters.
- Disconnect electrical tools and appliances when not in use.
- Allow hot tools such as glue guns and soldering irons to cool before storing.
- Properly store flammable liquids in approved containers and away from ignition sources such as pilot lights.

DISASTER PREPAREDNESS

- Maintain supply of drinking water and food that does not require refrigeration and generally does not need cooking.
- Maintain portable radio, flashlight, emergency cooking equipment, portable lanterns and batteries.
- Maintain First Aid supplies to treat the injured until help arrives.
- Keep a list of valuables to take with you in an emergency; if possible, store these valuable items together.
- Make sure that all your family members are ready to protect themselves if they catch on fire by doing the STOP, DROP and ROLL technique.
- For safety, securely attach all water heaters and furniture such as cabinets and bookshelves to walls.
- Have a contingency plan to enable family members to contact each other. Establish a family/friend phone tree.
- Designate an emergency meeting place outside your home.
- Practice emergency exit drills in the house regularly.

- Outdoor cooking appliances such as barbecues should never be taken outdoors for use as a heater.

OUTSIDE THE HOME

DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION

- Consider installing residential sprinklers.
- Build your home away from ridge tops, canyons and areas between high points on a ridge.
- Build your home at least 30-100 feet from your property line.
- Use fire resistant materials.
- Enclose the underside of eaves, balconies, and above ground decks with fire resistant materials.
- Try to limit the size and number of windows in your home that face large areas of vegetation.
- Install only dual-paned or triple-paned windows.
- Make sure that electric service lines, fuse boxes and circuit breaker panels are installed and maintained as prescribed by code.
- Contact qualified individuals to perform electrical maintenance and repairs.

ACCESS

- Identify at least two exit routes from your neighborhood.
- Construct roads that allow two-way traffic.
- Design road width, grades and curves to allow access for large emergency vehicles.
- Construct driveways to allow large emergency equipment to reach your house.
- Design bridges to carry heavy emergency vehicles, including bulldozers carried on large trucks.
- Post clear road signs to show traffic restrictions such as dead-end roads, and weight and height limitations.
- Make sure dead-end roads and long driveways have turn around areas wide enough for emergency vehicles.
- Construct turnouts along one-way roads.
- Clear flammable vegetation at least 10 feet from roads and five feet from driveways.
- Cut back overhanging tree branches above roads.
- Construct fire barriers such as greenbelts.

- Make sure that your street is named or numbered, and a sign is visibly posted at each street intersection.
- Make sure that your street name and house number are not duplicated elsewhere in the country.
- Post your house address at the beginning of your driveway, or on your house if it is easily visible from the road.

ROOF

- Remove branches within 10 feet of your chimney and dead branches overhanging your roof.
- Remove dead leaves and needles from your roof and gutters.
- Install a fire resistant roof. Contact your local fire department for current roofing requirements.
- Cover your chimney outlet and stovepipe with a nonflammable screen of ½ inch or smaller mesh.

LANDSCAPE

- Create a defensible space by removing all flammable vegetation at least 30 feet from all structures.
- Never prune near power lines. Call your local utility company first.
- Landscape with fire resistant plants.
- On slopes or in high fire hazard areas remove flammable vegetation out to 100 feet or more.
- Space native trees and shrubs at least 10 feet apart.
- For trees taller than 18 feet, remove lower branches within six feet of the ground.
- Maintain all plants by regularly watering, and by removing dead branches, leaves and needles.
- Before planting trees close to any power lines contact your local utility company to confirm the maximum tree height allowable for that location.

YARD

- Stack woodpiles at least 30 feet from all structures and remove vegetation within 10 feet of woodpile.
- Locate LPG tank (butane and propane) at least 30 feet from any structure and maintain 10 feet of clearance.
- Remove all stacks of construction materials, pine needles, leaves and other debris from your yard.

- Contact your local fire department to see if open burning is allowed in your area; if so, obtain a burning permit.
- When burn barrels are allowed, clear flammable materials at least 10 feet around the barrel; cover the open top with a non-flammable screen with mesh no larger than ¼ inch.

EMERGENCY WATER SUPPLY

- Maintain emergency water supply that meets fire department standards through one of the following:
 - Community water/hydrant system
 - Cooperative emergency storage tank with neighbors
 - Minimum storage supply of 2,500 gallons on your property
 - Clearly mark all emergency water sources
 - Create easy firefighter access to your closest emergency water source
 - If your water comes from a well, consider an emergency generator to operate the pump during a power failure or outage

Information in this section was provided from Fire Safe Council and for additional information, access <http://www.firesafecouncil.org>.

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