

EXTREME WEATHER PREPARATION: WILDFIRES



Many dry places are becoming hotter, drier, and windier because of climate change. This creates conditions in which wildfires thrive. For instance, in the western U.S., the number of large fires has doubled between 1984 and 2015. Learn how you can respond to the risk of a wildfire.

What to do during a wildfire:

Before

- Create a defensible perimeter to separate your home from flammable materials and vegetation
- Keep trees and shrubs trimmed
- Stack firewood away from home
- Keep roof surfaces and gutters clear of debris
- Keep radios and flashlights, along with batteries, on hand
- Make emergency evacuation plans with family members
- Arrange for temporary housing outside of threatened area if possible
- Pack valuables to be easily transported
- Keep an emergency kit with medications and medical supplies

During

- Stay updated by listening to the news or radio
- Fill buckets with water
- Remove combustible materials from the surrounding area
- Keep a light on in each room for visibility of smoke
- Take down flammable drapes or curtains
- Keep air circulation systems off
- Secure pets if possible
- Back car into garage and leave keys in the ignition
- Be ready to evacuate
- Dress to protect yourself: wear cotton clothing, including long-sleeve clothing, pants, and gloves

After

- Before returning home, check with fire officials
- Check grounds for hot spots, smoldering stumps and vegetation
- Check roof, interior and exterior areas for embers and sparks
- Dispose of any food that has been exposed to heat, smoke, or soot
- Check the stability of nearby trees

Wildfires often start unexpectedly and rapidly get out of control. Follow these steps for the safety of friends, family, and pets.

For more information, visit:

<https://www.redcross.org/get-help/how-to-prepare-for-emergencies/types-of-emergencies/wildfire.html>



If trapped

In vehicle:

- Park vehicle in an area clear of vegetation
- Close all windows and vents
- Cover yourself with wool blanket or jacket
- Lie on vehicle floor
- Call 911

On foot:

- Go to an area clear of vegetation, a ditch, or a depression on level ground
- Lie face down and cover your body
- Call 911

In home:

- Fill sinks and tubs with cold water
- Keep doors and windows closed and unlocked
- Stay inside
- Stay away from walls and windows
- Call 911