

# WILDFIRE PREPAREDNESS & EVACUATION CHECKLIST

**Protect your home. Prepare your family. Be ready to leave.**

Use this checklist before wildfire season and again when fire danger increases. Local evacuation orders and instructions from fire, law-enforcement and emergency-management officials always take priority.

## 1. HOME & DEFENSIBLE SPACE

- ☐ Clear leaves, pine needles and combustible debris from the roof and gutters
- ☐ Keep the first approximately 5 feet around the home as ember-resistant as practical
- ☐ Remove dead vegetation and accumulated plant debris near structures
- ☐ Move firewood, lumber and combustible storage away from the house
- ☐ Keep decks, porches and areas beneath them clear of combustible debris
- ☐ Inspect exterior vents, eaves, soffits, roof edges and openings for ember vulnerabilities
- ☐ Trim and maintain vegetation according to local fire-agency guidance
- ☐ Keep appropriate home fire extinguishers accessible and maintained
- ☐ Review how fences, sheds and other combustible structures connect to the home

## 2. GO-BAG & IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS

- ☐ Pack drinking water and shelf-stable food
- ☐ Pack necessary medications and basic first-aid supplies
- ☐ Include flashlights or headlamps and charging equipment
- ☐ Keep N95 respirators accessible for smoke and ash exposure
- ☐ Pack sturdy footwear, work gloves and a change of clothing
- ☐ Keep identification, insurance information and key records organized for quick departure
- ☐ Maintain digital backups of important documents where appropriate
- ☐ Keep cash, spare keys and essential contact information with evacuation supplies
- ☐ Review go-bags periodically and replace expired or depleted supplies

## 3. WILDFIRE SMOKE

- ☐ Monitor local air-quality and public-health information
- ☐ Close windows and doors when advised and reduce unnecessary outdoor exposure
- ☐ Use appropriate indoor air filtration if available
- ☐ Keep NIOSH-approved particulate respirators available for necessary outdoor activity
- ☐ Do not treat cloth face coverings or bandanas as equivalent to an N95 for fine smoke particles
- ☐ Use vehicle ventilation on recirculate when appropriate during smoky conditions

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## Evacuation readiness and safe return

### 4. VEHICLE & EVACUATION READINESS

- ☐ Maintain adequate fuel or EV charge during elevated wildfire danger
- ☐ Check tires, battery and basic vehicle condition
- ☐ Keep drinking water and basic emergency supplies in the vehicle
- ☐ Keep phone charging cables and a power bank available
- ☐ Know at least two evacuation routes when the road network allows it
- ☐ Drive alternate routes before an emergency and note gates, closures or unsuitable roads
- ☐ Sign up for local emergency alerts and know the evacuation terminology used in your area
- ☐ Keep a battery-powered emergency radio ready
- ☐ Know how to manually open the garage door if power fails

### 5. FAMILY, PETS & SPECIAL NEEDS

- ☐ Choose a family meeting location and an out-of-area contact
- ☐ Decide who is responsible for children, pets and evacuation supplies
- ☐ Prepare pet carriers, leashes, food, water, medications and identification
- ☐ Plan transportation for livestock or large animals well before an evacuation
- ☐ Account for older adults, disabilities, mobility needs and medical equipment
- ☐ Plan backup power or transportation for anyone dependent on electrically powered medical equipment
- ☐ Make sure children know basic family contact and meeting information appropriate for their age

### 6. WHEN EVACUATION LOOKS LIKELY

- ☐ Monitor official alerts and fire information closely
- ☐ Charge phones and portable power banks
- ☐ Put on sturdy clothing and closed-toe footwear
- ☐ Gather medications, documents and go-bags
- ☐ Load pet supplies and carriers
- ☐ Move vehicles into a position for prompt departure
- ☐ Confirm your destination and planned route
- ☐ Leave early when conditions or official guidance indicate it is time to go
- ☐ Do not delay departure for last-minute property-saving projects

### 7. WHEN ORDERED TO EVACUATE

- ☐ Leave promptly and follow official instructions
- ☐ Use official evacuation routes whenever possible
- ☐ Do not drive around barricades or road closures
- ☐ Do not return for forgotten property
- ☐ If trapped and unable to evacuate safely, call 911 when service is available, provide your location and follow emergency instructions
- ☐ Once out, stay out until authorities say reentry is safe

## 8. RETURNING HOME & CLEANUP

- ☐ Wait for official clearance before returning
- ☐ Watch for downed power lines, unstable trees, damaged structures and hot spots
- ☐ Keep children and pets away from ash and debris
- ☐ Use appropriate protective equipment for cleanup tasks
- ☐ Avoid unnecessarily stirring wildfire ash into the air
- ☐ Check drinking-water advisories and private-well guidance before using affected water
- ☐ Photograph and video property damage before major cleanup when practical
- ☐ Keep receipts for emergency expenses and temporary repairs
- ☐ Contact your insurance provider for claim and repair instructions

**REMEMBER:** Property can be replaced. Your evacuation window may not be. When authorities tell you to leave, go.

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