

Your Wildfire Checklist

Any plan is only as good as the information backing it up. Start by studying the historical occurrence of wildfires in your area to get a better idea of how often they happen, how long they last, and where the ["Hot Spots"](#) are. The [Federal Fire Occurrence Map Viewer](#) maintained by the US Geo-sciences and Environmental Change Science Center is a good place to start.

- ☐ 1. Make sure that your house address, number and driveway entrances are marked in a clear manner. This will assist local firefighters who tend to operate in extremely hazy conditions while protecting your property.
- ☐ 2. Identify and maintain a source of water outside of your home that can act as a backup in case your supply is cut off or diverted for use in municipal firefighting efforts. This could be a swimming pool, a small pond or even a cistern, as long as it's accessible.
- ☐ 3. Make sure that certain fire fighting tools are available and accessible within your home. We don't advise remaining behind in the event of an impending fire emergency, but it's possible that you might be in a position to tackle hot spots or conduct last-minute prep before an evacuation order is issued. Keep at least one of each the following:
 - ☐ 4. A **rake** or some other instrument to move leaves and other ignitable debris away from your house.
 - ☐ 5. An **axe** or **chainsaw** for cutting away nearby branches or brambles .
 - ☐ 6. A **bucket** for moving water from your outdoor faucet or alternative water source, as needed.
 - ☐ 7. **Smoke protection** in the event the smoke arrives before the fire does. In terms of what kinds of mask for smoke are most effective at protecting your respiratory health, a particulate filter should do the trick. Remember, a respirator will provide protection, but not oxygen. If you can see the smoke, evacuate!
- ☐ 8. Clean the gutters and roofs of your house on a regular basis, but at the very least before wildfire season and during times of extended dryness. Rake dry leaves and bramble away from your yard.
- ☐ 9. Have at least two alternative ways to escape from your neighborhood in the case of your primary escape route is blocked. Make sure that you practice these escape drills in advance with your entire family.
- ☐ 10. Always select a place that is known to your family and is set as the place to meet in the case your loved ones evacuated before you or you weren't able to reach your home before they were forced to leave.
- ☐ 11. Keep the number of your local fire station in a prominent place, bookmark websites that provide real-time status updates, and sign up for emergency alerts. Here are a few notification websites and services we recommend: [Federal Wireless Emergency Alerts](#) , [Your local alert program](#) , and [Wildfire Alert \(App\)](#) .
- ☐ 12. Agree on an outside contact who does not live in the neighborhood. This person should be someone that you can get in touch with in case local phone lines are down and/or cell phone service is disrupted. They can help you coordinate, or provide evacuation-related information in the event you lose access.
- ☐ 13. Before finalizing your checklist, there's one more item you should add: educate every member of your household regarding the steps to take in case of a wildfire and how to prevent one. Don't wait until there's smoke in the air... sharing your plan now and making sure your children and family know what to do is the most important step you can take!