

WILDFIRE BASICS

Wildfires can occur anywhere and can destroy homes, businesses, infrastructure, natural resources and agriculture.

What

A wildfire is an unplanned, unwanted fire burning in a natural area, such as a forest, grassland or prairie. As development expands into these areas, homes/businesses can be situated near areas susceptible to wildfires. This is called the "wildland urban interface."

When

Wildfires can occur at any time, but the potential is always higher during periods with little or no rainfall. High winds can contribute to spreading the fire.

Where

Wildfires can start in remote wilderness areas or your backyard. Most are human caused from cigarettes, campfires, outdoor burning, or arson. Some are caused by natural forces such as lightning.

Wildland Fire Terms

Fires need fuel, oxygen and heat to burn. The easiest of the 3 to eliminate is fuel.

"Fire-Lines" are trenches dug to create a "fuel-break" around the fire. Firefighters dig a "fire-line" around the fire circumference. (If 3 miles of fire line have been built around a fire that is 10 miles in circumference, then 30% of the fire is "contained").

"Fire-lines" can also include "natural" barriers such as roads, rock bluffs, or streams. Once a fire is fully "contained" firefighters work on "controlling" it by battling it inside the containment line.

A "controlled" fire is one that has no risk of expanding beyond the "fire-line."



How Prepared is Your Family for an Evacuation?

30-Minute Exercise

Step 1-Gather all members of the family.

Step 2-Ask this question of each family member:

"If you were given a 30-minute notice to evacuate, what would be most important for you to take?"

Step 3-Make a list of the items each member suggests should be taken.

Step 4-Review the list, make priorities and assign family members to gather the items.

Step 5-Post the "Evacuation List" on the refrigerator or Family Message Center so it is ready when needed.

EVACUATION LEVELS

Level 1 - Alert - Danger exists in the area

Level 2 - Be Ready. Significant danger exists. Voluntarily relocate or be ready at a moment's notice.

Level 3 - Leave Immediately!

Visit these websites for more preparedness tips:
www.Ready.gov/ or www.RedCross.org/prepare

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WILDFIRE . . .

What You Should Know



- * 90% of US wildfires are human caused.
- * 10% are started by lightning or lava.
- * Human caused fires result from campfires left unattended, burning of debris, negligently discarded cigarettes, fireworks, sparks from equipment and arson.
- * Smoke from wild forest fires contain particulate matter, carbon monoxide, atmospheric mercury, ozone-forming chemicals and volatile organic compounds.

You can make a difference -
follow recommended fire safety
recommendations.



BEFORE

- Register to receive alerts by Lewis County's Emergency Warning System, "CodeRED" at: www.lewiscountywa.gov
- Have an Evacuation Plan -
 - * include 2 routes
- Develop a transportation plan
 - * If by car, keep it fueled and ready to go
- Have a family Communications Plan
- Practice using an ABC fire extinguisher
- Learn First Aid and CPR
- Build "Grab-and-Go" Kits/Bags

Consider the 5 Ps of Evacuation:



People

People, Pets, Livestock

Prescriptions

Prescriptions, medical equipment, batteries, eyeglasses and hearing aids

Papers

Important documents - saved on hard copies, electronic hard drives or portable thumb drives

Personal Needs

Clothes, food, water, cash, phone/chargers

Priceless Items

Priceless items, such as: pictures, irreplaceable mementos, other valuables

DURING

When Wildfire Threatens

If you are warned that a wildfire is threatening your area:

- Back your car into the garage or park it in an open space facing the direction of escape. Shut doors and windows. Leave the key in the ignition. Close garage windows and doors, but leave them unlocked. Disconnect automatic garage door openers in case you lose power.
- Confine pets to one room.
- Arrange temporary housing outside the threatened area.

If advised to evacuate, do so immediately!

Follow the instructions of local officials to evacuate:

- Wear protective clothing, sturdy shoes, long pants, gloves and a handkerchief to protect your face.
- Take your Disaster Supplies Kits.
- Leave the lights on, and lock your home.
- Tell someone when you left and where you are going.
- Choose a route away from fire hazards. Watch for changes in the speed and direction of fire and smoke.

AFTER

Use caution when returning to your home. Wear thick-soled shoes and leather gloves. Look out for unstable power lines, check roofs and gutters and follow health department recommendations for safe water sources.

MITIGATION

For Evacuation

- Store supplies conveniently to grab quickly. Know what else you want to take, see "30 minute Evacuation Exercise" on back of this brochure.
- Learn First Aid and CPR.

For Home

- Design & landscape your home with wildfire safety in mind. Select materials and plants that contain fire rather than fuel it.
- Create a 30' to 50' safety zone around your home.
- Plan your water needs. Have garden hoses long enough to reach every area of the home and other structures.
- Contact local fire districts for additional information.

BE READY

... GRAB-and-GO BAGS

Pre-plan your exit by building a variety of supply kits that are conveniently placed for use:

Grab-and-Go Bag

A backpack for each member of the family

Vehicle Emergency Kit

Packed and stored in the truck of the car

Pet Disaster Kit

Include food, leashes, toys, and pictures

Bucket Disaster Supply Kit

3 day family supply kit

Under-the-Bed Kit

Store sturdy shoes, hard hat, gloves, and flash light for access in the middle of the night

For more kit information see: www.ready.gov