



## 1. BEFORE –Prepare for Evacuation

### *Around your home*

- Make sure you have a defensible space around you house and property:  
<http://www.readyforwildfire.org/>
- Clear leaves and other debris from gutters, eaves, porches and decks. This prevents embers from igniting your home.
- Remove dead vegetation and other items from under your deck/porch and within 10 feet of the house.
- Remove flammable materials (firewood, propane tanks, furniture, door mats, toys, trash cans) within 30 feet of your home's foundation and outbuildings, including garages and sheds. Place them inside the house if necessary.
- Connect garden hoses to outside water valves for use by firefighters. Fill any pools, hot tubs, garbage cans, tubs, or other large containers with water and place them around the house.
- Seal attic and ground vents with pre-cut plywood or commercial seals.
- Install dual-sensor smoke alarms on each level of your home, and in each bedroom. Be sure to test the alarms monthly and change the batteries at least once each year.
- Have charged fire extinguishers available close to the kitchen and other fire sources (BBQ, fireplace). Teach each family member how to use a fire extinguisher and show them where they are located.
- Review your homeowner's insurance policy and also prepare/update an inventory of your home's contents.
- Back your car into the driveway/garage with vehicle loaded and all doors and windows closed. Carry car keys with you.
- Have a ladder available and place it at the corner of the house for firefighters to quickly access your roof.
- Patrol your property and monitor the fire situation. Don't wait for an evacuation order if you feel threatened.
- Check on neighbors and make sure they are preparing to leave.
- Place lawn sprinklers on the roof and near aboveground fuel tanks. Use sprinklers to wet these structures as long as possible. Don't leave sprinklers on or water running when you have evacuated; they can affect critical water pressure.
- If you have gas-powered pumps for water, make sure they are fueled, operational, and ready.
- Disconnect any automatic garage door openers so that doors can still be opened by hand if the power goes out, but keep the door closed.
- Clear driveway access to your house (at least 20 feet wide) to insure safe access and exiting for fire apparatus.

### *In your home*

- Shut all windows and doors, leaving them unlocked (if you are comfortable). This allows emergency personnel to easily enter the structure in an emergency situation.
- Move flammable furniture to the center of the room, away from windows and doors.
- Remove flammable window shades, lightweight curtains, and close metal shutters.
- Turn off propane tanks; turn off pilot lights.
- Leave your lights on so firefighters can see your house under smoky conditions.
- Shut off the heating and air conditioning.
- Close all doors inside the house to prevent drafts. Open the damper on your fireplace, but close the fireplace screen.

### *Creating an emergency plan*

- Stay aware of the latest news and updates from local media and fire department. Have family, home and pets prepared to evacuate. Monitor social media.
- Sign up for notifications from the San Mateo County Alert System: <http://hsd.smcsheriff.com/smcalert>
- Assemble an emergency supply kit and place it in your car.
- Develop an emergency evacuation plan and practice it with everyone in your home.
- Plan two ways out of your neighborhood and designate a meeting place outside of the hazard area.
- Arrange temporary housing at a friend or relative's home outside the threatened area in case you need to evacuate.
- Wear protective clothing when outside – sturdy shoes, cotton or wool clothes, long pants, a long-sleeved shirt, gloves and a handkerchief to protect your face.

## *Animals*

- Locate your pets and keep them nearby.
- Prepare farm animals for transport and think about moving them to a safe location early.
- Have a To-Go bag for your pets, to include a separate animal carrier for each animal.

## **2. DURING - Immediate Evacuation Required**

### *Communication*

- You may be advised or ordered to evacuate via a reverse 911 telephone call, directly by emergency first responders, a neighbor, radio/TV, social media, or notification via the San Mateo County Alert System (text/e-mail). Check San Mateo County Zonehaven for most up-to-date evacuation orders and map [https://www.smco.community.zonehaven.com/?utm\\_source=Coastside+CERT&utm\\_campaign=634cfdc859-EMAIL\\_CAMPAIGN\\_2020\\_08\\_19\\_01\\_40&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_term=0\\_c7d68472db-634cfdc859-374221061](https://www.smco.community.zonehaven.com/?utm_source=Coastside+CERT&utm_campaign=634cfdc859-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2020_08_19_01_40&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_c7d68472db-634cfdc859-374221061)
- If advised to evacuate, do so immediately. Take your emergency kit, pets, and choose an escape route away from the fire hazard. You may be advised of the escape route with your evacuation orders.
- You may be directed to temporary assembly areas to await transfer to a safe location.
- Stay informed of weather and fire conditions <http://forecast.weather.gov/MapClick.php?lat=37.450246791984696&lon=-122.33814438110352>. This may impact your evacuation timing and escape route. Watch for changes in the speed and direction of the fire and smoke.
- Inform someone of when you left and where you are going.
- If you see a wildfire and haven't received evacuation orders yet, call 911. Don't assume that someone else has already called. Describe the location of the fire, speak slowly and clearly, and answer any questions asked by the dispatcher.

### *Evacuation*

- Leave as early as possible, before you're told to evacuate. Do not linger once evacuation orders have been given. Promptly leaving your home and neighborhood clears roads for firefighters to get equipment in place to fight the fire.
- Ensure your emergency kit is in your vehicle.
- Cover-up to protect against heat and flying embers. Wear long pants, long sleeve shirt (100% cotton preferable), heavy shoes/boots, cap, dry bandanna for face cover, and goggles or glasses.
- Locate your pets and take them and their To-Go kit with you.
- Evacuation driving visibility may be significantly reduced. Be prepared for multiple hazards (emergency vehicles, downed trees, downed power lines, other vehicles, pedestrian traffic).
- Do not block the roadway. Keep clear for other evacuees and emergency vehicles.
- If it is not safe to evacuate, shelter in-place in your home. Advise 911 of your status.

### **AFTER – Returning Home**

- Continue to listen to news updates for information about the fire.
- Return home only when authorities say it is safe to do so.
- Be alert for downed power lines and other road hazards. Avoid damaged or fallen power lines, poles and downed wires.
- Use caution when entering burned areas as hazards may still exist, including hot spots, which can flare up without warning.
- Check propane tanks, regulators, and lines before turning gas on. If you are not sure or qualified to turn on propane and re-light pilot lights, do not turn on gas until a qualified service representative provides a service visit.
- Check your residence carefully for hidden embers or smoldering fires.
- For several hours after the fire, maintain a "fire watch." Re-check for smoke and sparks throughout the house, including the attic.
- If you detect heat or smoke when entering a damaged building, evacuate immediately and call 911.
- Watch for ash pits and mark them for safety – warn family and neighbors to keep clear of the pits also.
- Watch animals closely and keep them under your direct control. Hidden embers and hot spots could burn your pets' paws or hooves.
- Remain calm, pace yourself, and listen carefully to what people are telling you, and deal with urgent situations first.
- Contact your insurance company if there is any damage.