

WILDFIRE EVACUATION • QUICK CARD

LEAVE EARLY. GO NOW.

YOUR LIFE IS THE PRIORITY

If you feel unsafe, see nearby flames, receive an Evacuation Order, or responders tell you to leave: leave immediately. Do not wait to finish packing. Do not wait for a second alert.

1

DRESS FOR ESCAPE

Long pants + long sleeves (natural fibers if available), sturdy closed-toe shoes/boots, gloves, eye protection, and a well-fitting N95. A bandanna does not filter wildfire smoke.

2

LOAD PEOPLE + ANIMALS

People first. Pets into carriers or on leashes. Bring essential mobility, communication, medical, infant, and service-animal equipment.

3

TAKE THE CORE 6

Keys • phone + power bank • wallet/ID • medications • go-bags • water. If it is not staged, do not search for it during an order.

4

TEXT YOUR STATUS

Send one short message to your out-of-area contact: "Evacuating from [address] to [destination] via [route]. People/pets accounted for: [yes/no]."

5

DRIVE OUT SAFELY

Use one vehicle if practical. Windows up; outside vents closed; air on recirculate; headlights on. Follow officials. Expect your usual route to be blocked—use the fastest safe route away from the fire to a major road.

6

CHECK IN—DO NOT RETURN

At safety, report to your meeting place/contact. Do not re-enter until authorities say it is safe. Fire conditions can change faster than alerts.

WARNING DOES NOT MEAN WAIT

An Evacuation Warning means get ready; people needing extra time should leave now. An Evacuation Order means leave now. You may receive little or no warning in a fast-moving fire.

PRIMARY ROUTE

MEETING PLACE

BACKUP ROUTE

OUT-OF-AREA CONTACT



DECIDE BEFORE THE FIRE DECIDES FOR YOU

Evacuation triggers + the time ladder

A written trigger removes debate under stress. Leaving early is a safety action—not an overreaction. Traffic, smoke, power loss, closed roads, failed alerts, and frightened animals all consume time.

LEAVE IMMEDIATELY IF...

- ☐ Ordered by authorities
- ☐ You feel unsafe
- ☐ Fire or embers are nearby
- ☐ Your only route may close
- ☐ A household member needs extra time
- ☐ You cannot reliably receive updates

5 MINUTES OR LESS	ABOUT 15 MINUTES	30+ MINUTES / WARNING
Take only: ☐ People + pets ☐ Core 6 ☐ Essential medical/access gear ☐ Leave now	Do the 5-minute list, then: ☐ Protective clothing ☐ Documents/irreplaceables box ☐ Pet kit ☐ One bag each ☐ Load vehicle facing out	Do the 15-minute list, then: ☐ Move combustibles from windows/house ☐ Close windows/doors ☐ Turn off HVAC ☐ Turn lights on ☐ Alert neighbors—without delaying

BEFORE FIRE SEASON

- ☐ Enroll in local emergency alerts and know your evacuation zone. Keep a battery AM/FM/NOAA radio.
- ☐ Map at least two vehicle routes and one contingency destination. Download offline maps; keep a paper map.
- ☐ Keep the vehicle at least half full or sufficiently charged. Park facing out during Red Flag conditions.
- ☐ Practice loading children, pets, mobility devices, and go-bags. Time the drill; fix the bottleneck.
- ☐ Photograph every room, exterior, vehicles, and valuables. Store encrypted/cloud copies of IDs, insurance, prescriptions, and contacts.
- ☐ Arrange a specific evacuation partner for anyone who may need transportation, physical assistance, interpretation, or extra time.
- ☐ Create a home “last-out” checklist, but treat it as optional. Never delay evacuation to defend or prepare property.

MY LEAVE-EARLY TRIGGER



PACK ONCE. REFRESH TWICE A YEAR.

Go-bag system that scales

Base layer: one wearable bag per person. Household layer: one shared crate/duffel. Vehicle layer: a compact backup kit. Keep bags light enough to carry without help.

ONE BAG PER PERSON

- ☐ Water + ready-to-eat food
- ☐ 7+ days essential medications + copies of prescriptions
- ☐ N95s (several), goggles, gloves
- ☐ Headlamp + spare batteries
- ☐ Phone cable + charged power bank
- ☐ First-aid kit + personal medical supplies
- ☐ Change of clothing + warm/rain layer
- ☐ Hygiene + menstrual supplies
- ☐ Cash in small bills
- ☐ Whistle, marker, notepad
- ☐ Paper contacts + local map
- ☐ Copies of ID/insurance
- ☐ Spare keys
- ☐ Comfort item

ONE HOUSEHOLD MODULE

- ☐ Original documents/secure drive
- ☐ Radio + batteries
- ☐ Larger first-aid kit
- ☐ Extra water/snacks
- ☐ Sanitation bags + wipes
- ☐ Blankets
- ☐ Laptop/backup drive if staged
- ☐ Irreplaceable items box
- ☐ Home inventory
- ☐ Shelter/destination list

Rule: Stage it. Label it. Date it. If you must search for an item during an order, leave without it.

ADD THE MODULES YOUR HOUSEHOLD NEEDS

PETS / SERVICE ANIMALS

Carrier per animal; leash/harness; 3+ days food/water; bowls; medications; waste supplies; vaccination/microchip records; current photo; familiar blanket. Practice carriers before fire season.

CHILDREN / INFANTS

Diapers, wipes, formula/feeding supplies, medications, hearing protection, comfort item, ID/contact card. Assign one adult to each child—never assume “someone has them.”

ACCESS + MEDICAL

Mobility and communication devices, backup batteries/chargers, oxygen plan, written care instructions, medication list, support contacts, repair tools, and a transport partner. Leave at the Warning stage.

VEHICLE

Water, snacks, N95s, goggles, blanket, first aid, flashlight, paper map, charger, sturdy shoes, extinguisher, and seasonal clothing. Keep fuel/charge above half when fire weather is forecast.

ASSIGNED ROLES

Driver: _____

Children: _____

Pets: _____

Bags/medical gear: _____

SURVIVE THE CONDITIONS, NOT THE PROPERTY

Smoke, blocked routes + urgent first aid

CALL 911

Call 911 for trapped people, severe burns, trouble breathing, confusion, fainting, chest pain, blue/gray lips, facial burns, or suspected smoke inhalation. Tell dispatch your exact location, people/pets present, and the safest known access route.

IN SMOKE

- ❑ Wear a well-fitting N95 or P100. It reduces particles but does not supply oxygen or protect against all gases. Do not rely on a wet cloth or bandanna.
- ❑ In a vehicle: windows up, vents closed, recirculate on, headlights on. Drive slowly and watch for responders, pedestrians, debris, and disabled signals.
- ❑ If sheltering from smoke (not an evacuation order): close doors/windows, turn HVAC to recirculate, use HEPA/appropriately rated filtration, and avoid activities that create indoor particles.
- ❑ Children, older adults, pregnant people, and people with heart/lung disease may need to relocate earlier. Follow their clinician's plan.

IF ESCAPE ROUTES ARE BLOCKED — LAST RESORT

Do not improvise a dangerous on-foot escape through vegetation. Call 911 and follow instructions. A substantial building or vehicle in a large, cleared area may provide more protection than being outside.

- ❑ In a building: close doors/windows; gather everyone in the area farthest from exterior fire; keep keys, phone, lights, water, and extinguishers with you; stay low if smoky; make your location visible.
- ❑ In a vehicle: park in a large cleared area away from vegetation; windows/doors closed; vents and fan off; lights and flashers on; get below window level; cover with wool blankets if available; call 911.
- ❑ Do not leave a vehicle or solid structure unless it becomes more dangerous or responders direct you. Conditions can be lethal outside.

BURN FIRST AID

1 • STOP	Move away from heat/smoke. Extinguish burning clothing: stop, drop, and roll.
2 • COOL	Cool a thermal burn with clean, cool running water for 20 minutes when available. No ice. Avoid chilling the whole person.
3 • REMOVE	Remove jewelry and loose clothing near the burn before swelling. Do not pull off material stuck to skin.
4 • COVER	Cover loosely with a sterile, non-stick dressing or clean plastic wrap. No butter, oils, creams, toothpaste, or adhesive directly on the burn.
5 • GET CARE	Call 911 for large/deep burns; burns to face, airway, hands, feet, genitals, or major joints; electrical/chemical burns; or any breathing symptoms.

Note: This field guide supports—not replaces—official instructions, professional training, or medical care.



ONLY IF TIME ALLOWS — NEVER DELAY EVACUATION

Prepare the property for firefighters

PEOPLE FIRST. PROPERTY SECOND.

Do these steps only after every person and animal is ready to leave, your vehicle is loaded, and you still have safe time. Stop immediately if conditions change or an order is issued.

MAKE THE PROPERTY LEGIBLE + ACCESSIBLE

- ☐ Make the street address visible from both directions. Turn on interior and exterior lights so responders can find the structure through smoke.
- ☐ Close the garage door. Do not leave it open: an open garage can admit embers and expose vehicles, fuel, paint, and other combustibles. If safe, disconnect the automatic opener so the door can be opened manually after a power failure.
- ☐ Close all windows and exterior/interior doors, but leave them unlocked unless local officials direct otherwise. Shut off HVAC and whole-house fans; close the fireplace screen/damper.
- ☐ Unlock gates and remove padlocks or combinations that could delay access. Move vehicles off narrow streets and do not block hydrants, gates, turnarounds, or apparatus access.
- ☐ Connect garden hoses and place them where visible, but do not leave sprinklers or hoses running; that can waste pressure needed for firefighting.
- ☐ Remove nearby fuel if it is truly quick: bring doormats, patio cushions, brooms, trash cans, and lightweight furniture inside; move propane cylinders, firewood, and other combustibles away from the structure.
- ☐ Move combustible curtains and furniture away from windows. Close metal blinds or noncombustible window coverings. Do not waste time on this if evacuation is urgent.
- ☐ Shut off propane at the tank if you know how and can do it safely. Shut off natural gas only when instructed by authorities/your utility or if your emergency plan specifically calls for it.

LEAVE A SIMPLE RESPONDER CARD

Place a large, weather-protected card where it can be seen from the front approach. Use factual language—never write “all clear” unless you personally verified every room immediately before leaving.

RESPONDER INFORMATION

EVACUATED: _____ AM / PM on _____
KNOWN PEOPLE INSIDE: 0 / _____ PETS REMOVED: YES / NO
WATER SOURCE: pool / cistern / hydrant — location: _____
ACCESS: rear-yard gate on _____ side; gate is unlocked
HAZARDS: propane / oxygen / solar battery / generator / other: _____
CONTACT: _____ PHONE: _____

BEST PRACTICE

Share pool/cistern location, gate access, solar/battery systems, oxygen cylinders, propane, and other hazards with your local fire department before fire season if it offers pre-incident planning. A last-minute card is only a backup.

DO NOT

Do not leave the garage open. Do not remain to hose the roof or defend the home after an order. Do not leave sprinklers running. Do not block roads. Do not assume firefighters will be able to reach or defend every structure.

If it is too late to evacuate

DO NOT DRIVE INTO FLAMES OR EVACUATE ON FOOT THROUGH VEGETATION

If routes are blocked or the flame front is at the property, call 911. A substantial building can offer more protection than a vehicle or being outside. This is an extreme last resort—not a substitute for leaving early.

1

CALL 911 + REPORT YOUR EXACT LOCATION

Give the address, number of people and animals, disabilities or medical needs, where you are sheltering, visible fire conditions, and the safest known access point. Keep the phone charged and audible.

2

CLOSE THE BUILDING

Close windows, exterior doors, interior doors, garage door, vents, and fireplace damper if safely reachable. Turn off HVAC, whole-house fans, and anything pulling outdoor air inside. Do not use an indoor generator, grill, or vehicle.

3

CHOOSE A SURVIVABLE ROOM

Use a ground-floor room away from the fire-facing side, with the fewest windows, minimal combustibles, and ideally two ways out. Do not default to the garage: garages often contain fuel and have vulnerable doors. Never shelter in an attic, shed, or a vehicle inside a garage.

4

BRING SURVIVAL TOOLS INSIDE

Wear long sleeves/pants, sturdy shoes, gloves, eye protection, and an N95. Bring phones, lights, extinguishers, drinking water, wool blankets, first aid, and charged power banks. Fill sinks/tubs and buckets if water is available; bring connected garden hoses inside if possible.

5

MONITOR + EXTINGUISH SMALL IGNITIONS

Stay away from windows and exterior walls; stay low if smoky. Watch rooms, attic access, vents, and windows for embers or spot fires. Extinguish only small fires you can fight without becoming trapped. Keep every exit path clear.

6

MOVE ONLY WHEN THE CURRENT LOCATION FAILS

If the structure ignites or becomes untenable, move to another part of the building or—after the main flame front passes and only if outside is survivable—to a large, already-burned or cleared area. Tell 911 before moving when possible.

ABOUT “SEALING” THE HOUSE

Close vents and doors, and use pre-planned noncombustible vent covers where appropriate. A wet towel at a door gap may reduce smoke briefly, but it will not make the room airtight or safe from toxic gases. N95s filter particles—not carbon monoxide or oxygen-deficient air.

IF SHELTERING IN A VEHICLE IS THE ONLY OPTION

Park in the largest cleared area available, away from vegetation. Close windows/doors; shut vents and fan; keep lights and flashers on; get below window level; cover with wool blankets if available; call 911. Do not leave the vehicle unless it becomes more dangerous or responders direct you.

Medical emergency: Call 911 for trouble breathing, confusion, fainting, chest pain, blue/gray lips, facial burns, or suspected smoke inhalation.



MAKE THIS PAGE SPECIFIC TO YOUR HOUSEHOLD

My wildfire evacuation plan

HOME ADDRESS + EVACUATION ZONE	_____ —
PRIMARY DESTINATION / SHELTER	_____ —
PRIMARY ROUTE	_____ —
BACKUP ROUTE 1	_____ —
BACKUP ROUTE 2	_____ —
OUT-OF-AREA CONTACT (NAME + PHONE)	_____ —
NEIGHBOR / EVACUATION PARTNER	_____ —
LOCAL ALERT SYSTEM + RADIO STATION	_____ —

ACCOUNTABILITY

Household members / animals / essential equipment:

DRILL + REFRESH

Last drill date: _____ Time to load: _____ min Next bag refresh: _____ Vehicle fuel/charge check: _____

Bottleneck to fix: _____

THE SIMPLE MESSAGE

"We are out. We are going to _____ via _____. Everyone is accounted for: YES / NO. Next check-in: _____."