



# READY! SET!GO!

YOUR PERSONAL  
WILDFIRE ACTION PLAN



[fire.lacounty.gov](http://fire.lacounty.gov)

# MESSAGE FROM FIRE CHIEF DARYL L. OSBY



Dear Residents,

Los Angeles County is one of the most beautiful places to live, but for those living in “wildland urban interface areas,” it does not come without risks.

Climate change has made fire season year-round and increased our ever-growing number of wildfires. Firefighters and residents alike are now constantly on heightened alert for the threat of wildfires.

The Los Angeles County Fire Department, along with our partnering agencies, stand ready to quickly respond to contain wildfires, utilizing our firefighting resources from the air and ground to help protect you and your property from wildfire.

But, we can’t do this without your cooperation. Preparation and prevention go hand-in-hand. This *Ready! Set! Go!* brochure was designed to provide you with critical information on creating defensible space around your home, retrofitting your home with fire-resistant materials, and preparing you to safely evacuate well ahead of a wildfire. Please protect yourself, your family, and your property from a devastating wildfire by taking the time to learn about *Ready! Set! Go!*

In Los Angeles County, wildfires will continue to be fueled by a build-up of seasonal dry vegetation and driven by dry conditions and locally strong winds, making them extremely dangerous and challenging for firefighters to control. Yet, many homeowners don’t consider how a wildfire could affect them, and very few residents have properly prepared for evacuation until it is too late.

You play the most important role in protecting yourself, family, and property. Through planning and preparation, we can all be ready for the next wildfire. I hope you find the information in this brochure helpful as you prepare your home and family for a wildfire.

As always, if you need additional information about preparing for a wildfire or any other natural disaster, please contact your nearest fire station or visit us at [fire.lacounty.gov](http://fire.lacounty.gov).

**Daryl L. Osby**  
Los Angeles County Fire Chief

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The *Ready!Set!Go!* program is supported by the following partner agencies:





# READY!



## Living in the Wildland Urban Interface

Ready! Set! Go! begins with a house that firefighters can defend.

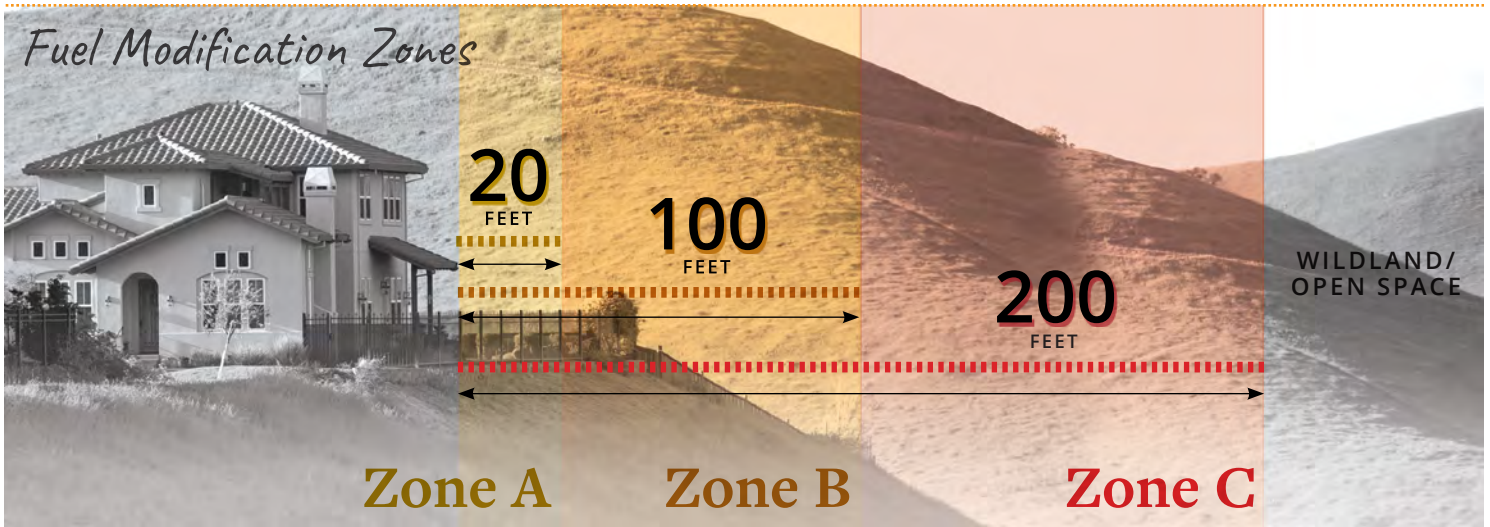
### Create a Defensible Home

A defensible home is a home that has the greatest potential for surviving a wildfire. Defensible homes are those that are in compliance with the Los Angeles County Fire Department's Defensible Space requirements or have been through the Fire Department's Fuel Modification Plan Review Program, and have been constructed in accordance with the latest building standards for the fire zones.

### What Is Fuel Modification?

The Fuel Modification Plan Review Program affects new structures and developments built in the fire hazard severity zones. A Fuel Modification Plan, submitted by applicants, reviews landscaping plans and identifies areas of defensible space within all fuel modification zones around structures.

For further information please visit: [bit.ly/fuelmod](http://bit.ly/fuelmod)



#### Zone A EXTENDS 20 FEET FROM STRUCTURE

- Vines and climbing plants shall not be allowed on any combustible structure.
- Irrigated area consisting of low-growing, small herbaceous plants with high-moisture content immediately around structures.
- Occasional accents of woody shrubs or an occasional small patio tree ten feet from structure, if widely spaced and zone appropriate as well as eliminating annual grasses and leaf litter help prevent direct-flame impingement on the structure.

#### Zone B EXTENDS UP TO 100 FEET FROM STRUCTURE

- Also irrigated with an approved slightly dense planting avoiding woody plant species larger than 3 feet at maturity beneath any tree canopy.
- Introducing shade trees that are zone appropriate with adequate spacing by eliminating continuous canopy coverage and continuous fuels to minimize fire transmission.
- Screen plantings can be used; however, continuous hedging is discouraged as it promotes the accumulation of dead litter inside the live hedge.

#### Zone C EXTENDS FROM ZONE B OUTER EDGE UP TO 200 FEET FROM STRUCTURE

- Thinned to remove dead vegetation and prevent overgrowth.
- Designed to slow the fire's progress and reduce its intensity by decreasing the availability of continuous fuels.
- Native vegetation thinned 30 to 50 percent in Zone C.



#### Ideal Fuel Modification Landscape:

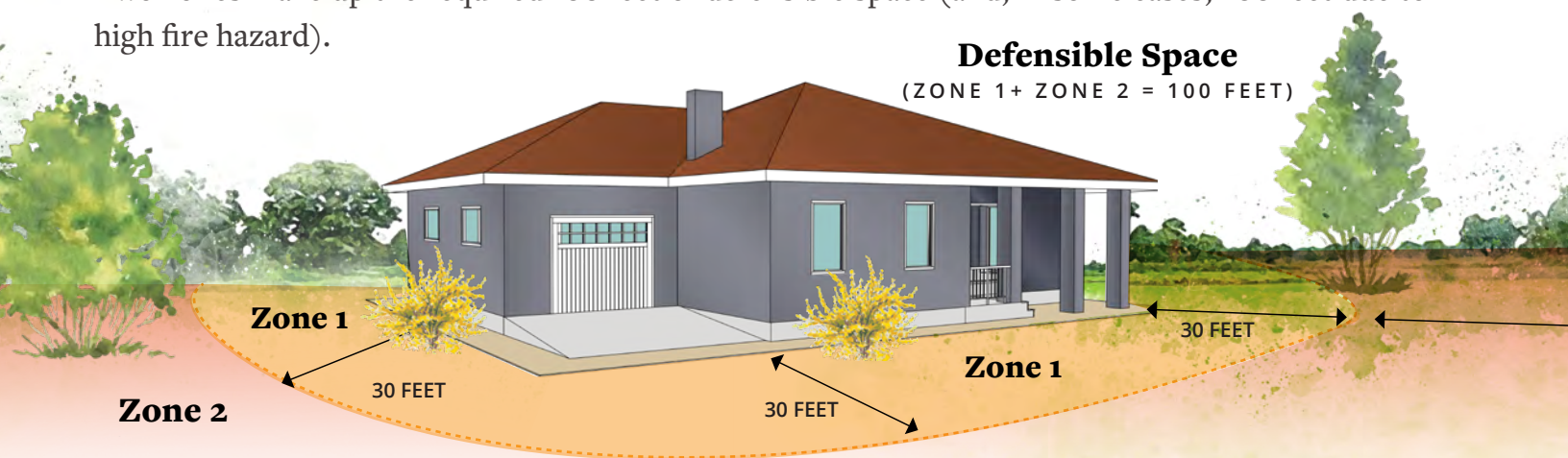
Limited woody plant material, high moisture content, adequate spacing and inorganic mulch throughout Zone A.



## Defensible Space

Creating and maintaining defensible space are essential for increasing your home's chance of surviving a wildfire. It's the buffer that homeowners are required to create on their property between a structure and the plants, brush, and trees or other items surrounding the structure that could catch fire. This space is needed to slow the spread of wildfire and improves the safety of firefighters defending your home. The defensible space for each structure varies, depending on the type of vegetation and topography.

Two zones make up the required 100 feet of defensible space (and, in some cases, 200 feet due to high fire hazard).



### Zone 1

**Extends 30 feet out from buildings, structures, decks, etc.**

- Remove all dead or dying vegetation.
- Remove dead or dry leaves and pine needles from your yard, roof, and rain gutters.
- Trim trees regularly to keep branches a minimum of 10 feet from other trees.
- Remove dead branches that hang over your roof. And, keep branches 10 feet away from your chimney.
- Relocate exposed woodpiles outside of Zone 1 unless they are completely covered in a fire-resistant material.
- Remove vines and climbing plants from combustible structures (e.g. bougainvillea, wisteria)
- Remove or prune vegetation near windows.
- Remove vegetation and items that could catch fire from around and under decks.
- Create a separation between trees, shrubs, and items that could catch fire, such as patio furniture, swing sets, etc.

### Zone 2

**Extends 30 to 100 feet from buildings and other structures.**

(Note: The inspecting officer may require an additional 100 feet of thinning or removal, for a total of 200 feet due to high-fire hazard.)

- Cut or move annual grass down to a maximum height of four inches.
- Create horizontal spacing between shrubs and trees.
- Create vertical spacing between grass, shrubs, and trees.
- Remove fallen leaves, needles, twigs, bark, cones, and small branches. However, they may be permitted to a depth of 4 inches if erosion control is an issue.

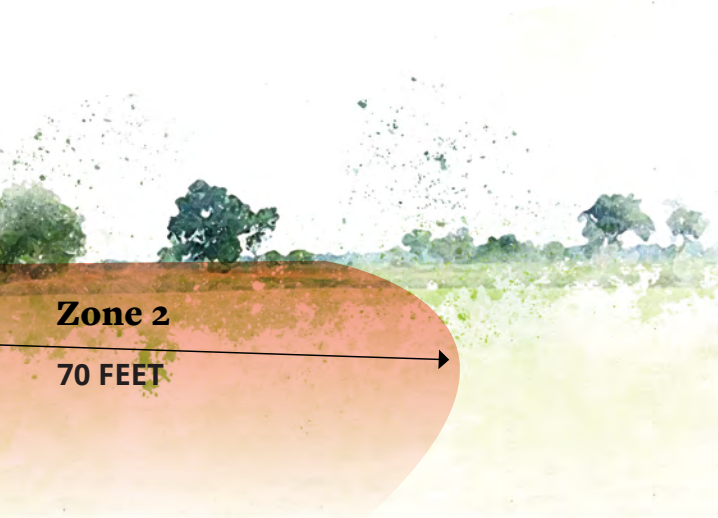
**Note:** Special attention should be given to the use and maintenance of ornamental plants known or thought to be high-hazard plants when used in close proximity to structures. Examples include Acacia, Cedar, Cypress, Eucalyptus, Italian Cypress, Juniper, Palms (remove all dead fronds), Pine (removal within 20' of structures) and, pampas grass. These plantings should be properly maintained and not allowed to be in mass plantings that could transmit fire from the native growth to any structure.



# READY!

## HAZARDOUS ORNAMENTAL LANDSCAPE

Preventing conditions where fire can travel from adjacent fuels, through an ornamental landscape to your structure, is the key to creating defensible space. Fire spreads through convection, conduction, radiation, or embers. Proper maintenance of ornamental vegetation reduces ember production, fire propagation, intensity, and duration of the approaching flames.



### HIGH-HAZARD PLANTS



Acacia (Shrub)



Eucalyptus



Juniper



Palm



Pine



Pampas Grass



This home provides a good example of defensible space.



Firefighters in defensible space during a wildfire.



# READY!

## Safeguard or “Harden” Your Home

The ability of your home to survive a wildfire depends on its construction materials and the quality of the “defensible space” surrounding it. Windblown embers from a wildfire will find the weak link in your home’s fire protection scheme and gain the upper hand because of a small, overlooked or seemingly inconsequential factor. However, there are measures you can take to safeguard your home from wildfire. While you may not be able to accomplish all of the measures listed below, each will increase your home’s - and possibly your family’s - safety and survival.

### *Tour a Wildfire-Ready Home*

#### Address 1

- Make sure your address is clearly visible from the road.

#### Chimney 2

- Cover your chimney and stovepipe outlets with a non-flammable screen of ¼-inch wire mesh or smaller to prevent embers from escaping and igniting a fire.
- Make sure that your chimney is at least 10 feet away from any tree branches.

#### Deck/Patio Cover 3

- Use heavy timber or non-flammable construction material for decks and patio covers.
- Enclose the underside of balconies and decks with fire-resistant materials to prevent embers from blowing underneath.
- Keep your deck clear of combustible items, such as baskets, dried flower arrangements, and other debris.
- The decking surface must be ignition-resistant if it’s within 10 feet of the home.

#### Driveways and Access Roads 4

- Driveways should be designed to allow fire and emergency vehicles and equipment to reach your home.
- Access roads should have a minimum 10-foot clearance on either side of the traveled section of the roadway and should



allow for two-way traffic.

- Ensure that all gates open inward and are wide enough to accommodate emergency equipment.
- Trim trees and shrubs overhanging the road to a minimum of 13-½ (or 13.5) feet to allow emergency vehicles to pass.

#### Garage 5

- Have a fire extinguisher and tools, such as a shovel, rake, bucket, and hoe, available for fire emergencies.
- Install a solid door with self-closing hinges between living areas and the garage. Install weather stripping around and under the doors to prevent ember intrusion.
- Store all combustibles and flammable liquids away from ignition sources.

#### Home Site and Yard 6

- Ensure you have at least a 100-foot radius of defensible space (cleared vegetation) around your home. This means looking past what you own to determine the impact a common slope or neighbor’s yard will have on your property during a wildfire.
- Cut dry weeds and grass before noon when temperatures are cooler to reduce the chance of sparking a fire.
- Landscape with fire-resistant plants that are low-growing with high-moisture content.
- Keep woodpiles, propane tanks, and combustible materials away from your home and other structures, such as garages, barns, and sheds.
- Ensure trees are far away from power lines.





# READY!

## Inside



- Keep working fire extinguishers on hand and train your family how to use them (check expiration dates regularly).



- Install smoke alarms on each level of your home and near bedrooms. Test them monthly and change the batteries twice a year.

## Non-Combustible Boxed-In (Soffit) Eaves

- Box-in eaves with non-combustible materials to prevent accumulation of embers.



## Non-Combustible Fencing 7

- Make sure to use non-combustible fencing to protect your home during a wildfire.

## Rain Gutters

- Screen or enclose rain gutters to prevent accumulation of plant debris.



## Roof 8

- Your roof is the most vulnerable part of your home because it can easily catch fire from windblown embers.
- Homes with wood shake or shingle roofs are at a higher risk of being destroyed during a wildfire.
- Build your roof or re-roof with fire-resistant materials that include composition, metal, or tile.
- Block any spaces between roof decking and covering to prevent ember intrusion.
- Clear pine needles, leaves, and other debris from your roof and gutters.
- Cut any tree branches within 10 feet of your roof.

## Vents

- Vents on homes are particularly vulnerable to flying embers.
- All vent openings should be covered with 1/8-inch or smaller metal mesh. Do not use fiberglass or plastic mesh because they can melt and burn.
- Attic vents in eaves or cornices should be baffled or otherwise prevent ember intrusion (mesh is not enough).



## Walls 9

- Wood products, such as boards, panels, or shingles, are common siding materials. However, they are combustible and not good choices for fire-prone areas.
- Build or remodel with fire-resistant building materials, such as brick, cement, masonry, or stucco.
- Be sure to extend materials from foundation to roof.

## Water Supply 10



- Have multiple garden hoses that are long enough to reach any area of your home and other structures on your property.
- If you have a pool or well, consider a pump.

## Windows 11

- Heat from a wildfire can cause windows to break even before the home ignites. This allows burning embers to enter and start internal fires. Single-paned and large windows are particularly vulnerable.
- Install dual-paned windows with an exterior pane of tempered glass to reduce the chance of breakage in a fire.
- Limit the size and number of windows in your home that face large areas of vegetation.

## Utilities

- Ensure that your family knows where your gas, electric, and water main shut-off controls are and how to safely shut them down in an emergency.



# SET!

## Create Your Own Wildfire Action Plan

Now that you have done everything you can to protect your home, it's time to prepare your family. **Your Wildfire Action Plan must be prepared with all members of your household well in advance of a wildfire.** Each family's plan will be different, depending on their situation. Once you finish your plan, practice it regularly with your family, and post in a safe and accessible place for quick implementation.



### 1 Important Phone Numbers

- A family communication plan that designates an out-of-area friend or relative as a point-of-contact to act as a single source of communication among family members in case of separation.
- Maintain a list of emergency contact numbers posted near your phone and in your Emergency Supply Kit.

### 2 What to Take

- Assemble an Emergency Supply Kit (see page 10 in this guide).
- Keep an extra Emergency Supply Kit in your car in case you can't get to your home because of fire.
- Have a portable radio or scanner, so that you can stay updated on the fire.

### 3 Prepare to Evacuate

- Designate an emergency meeting location, outside the fire or hazard area. It is critical to determine who has safely evacuated from the affected area.
- Several different escape routes from your home and community. Practice these often so everyone in your family is familiar in case of emergency.
- Necessities and boarding options for your pets and large animals, such as horse and other livestock.







# Your Personal WILDFIRE ACTION PLAN



During High Fire Danger days in your area, monitor your local media for information on wildfires and be ready to implement your plan. Hot, dry, and windy conditions create the perfect environment for a wildfire.

## 1 IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS

### EMERGENCY CONTACTS

\_\_\_\_\_ Name

(      ) \_\_\_\_\_ Phone

\_\_\_\_\_ Name

(      ) \_\_\_\_\_ Phone

### SCHOOLS

\_\_\_\_\_ Name

(      ) \_\_\_\_\_ Phone

\_\_\_\_\_ Name

(      ) \_\_\_\_\_ Phone

### FAMILY & FRIENDS

\_\_\_\_\_ Name

(      ) \_\_\_\_\_ Phone

\_\_\_\_\_ Name

(      ) \_\_\_\_\_ Phone

## 2 WHAT TO TAKE

 Insurance Papers

 Photos

 Emergency Supply Kit

 Prescriptions

 Important Documents

\_\_\_\_\_

## 3 EVACUATION

### WHEN TO GO

\_\_\_\_\_

### WHERE TO GO

\_\_\_\_\_

### HOW TO GET THERE

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

### DESTINATION

\_\_\_\_\_

### WHO TO TELL (BEFORE AND AFTER)

\_\_\_\_\_

### ANIMAL SHELTER

\_\_\_\_\_ Name

(      ) \_\_\_\_\_ Phone

\_\_\_\_\_ Phone



**LOS ANGELES COUNTY FIRE DEPARTMENT**  
**IF YOU HAVE AN EMERGENCY, CALL 9-1-1**

Public Information Office: (323) 881-2411  
fire.lacounty.gov

# SET!

## Assemble Your Emergency Supply Kit

Put together your emergency supply kit long before a wildfire or other disaster occurs, and keep it easily accessible, so you can take it with you when you have to evacuate. Plan to be away from your home for an extended period of time. Each person should have a readily accessible emergency supply kit.

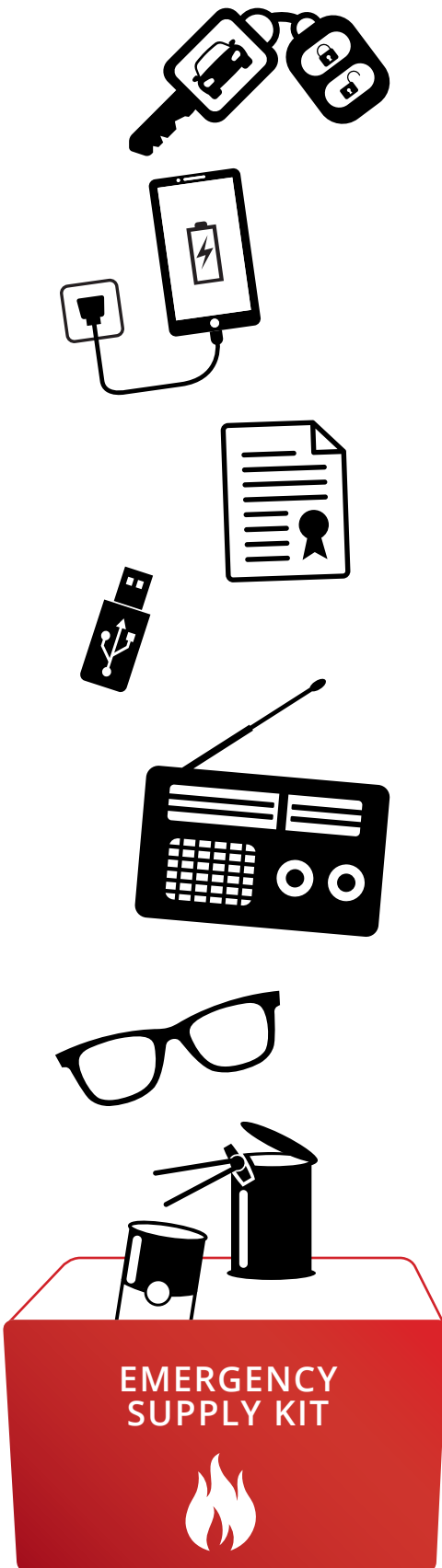
Backpacks work great for storing these items (except for food and water) and are easy to grab. Storing food and water in a tub or chest on wheels will make it easier to transport. Keep it light to be able to easily lift it into your car.

### Essential Supplies

- Three-day supply of non-perishable food and three gallons of water per person.
- Map marked with at least two evacuation routes
- Prescriptions or special medications
- Change of clothing
- Closed-toe shoes
- Extra eyeglasses or contact lenses
- An extra set of car keys, credit cards, cash, or travelers checks
- First aid kit
- Flashlight
- Battery-powered radio and extra batteries
- Sanitation supplies
- Copies of important documents (e.g., birth certificates, passports, etc.)
- Don't forget pet food and water!

### If Time Allows

- Easy-to-carry valuables
- Family photos and other irreplaceable items
- Personal computer information on hard drives and flash drives
- Chargers for cell phones, laptops, etc.



# SET!

## Pre-Evacuation Preparation Steps

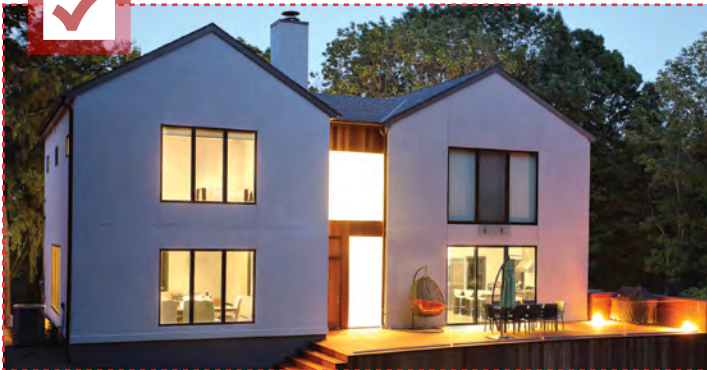
When an evacuation is anticipated and if time permits, follow these checklists to give your home the best chance of surviving a wildfire:

### Animals



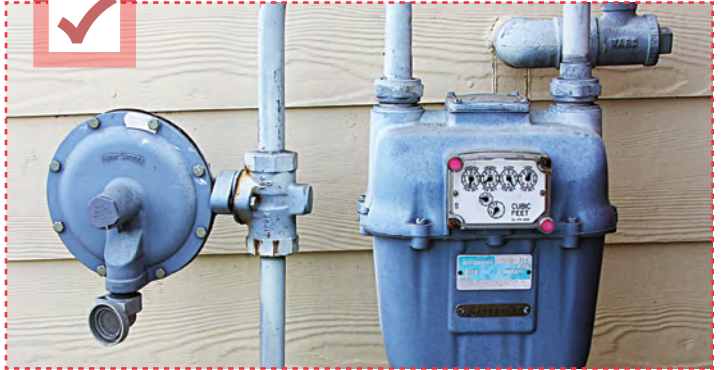
- Locate your pets and keep them nearby.
- Prepare farm animals for transport and think about moving them to a safe location early.

### Inside



- Shut all windows and doors, leaving them unlocked.
- Remove flammable window shades, lightweight curtains, and close metal shutters.
- Move flammable furniture to the center of the room, away from windows and doors.
- Leave your lights on so firefighters can see your home under smoky conditions.
- Shut off the air conditioning.
- Shut off the gas meter. Turn off pilot lights.

### Outside



- Gather up flammable items from the exterior of the house and bring them inside (e.g., patio furniture, children's toys, doormats, etc.) or place them in your pool.
- Turn off propane tanks. Move propane BBQ appliances away from structures.
- Connect garden hoses to outside water valves or spigots for use by firefighters. Fill water buckets and place them around the house.
- Don't leave sprinklers on or water running. They can affect critical water pressure.
- Leave exterior lights on.
- Put your emergency supply kit in your vehicle.
- Back your loaded vehicle into the driveway with all doors and windows closed. Carry your car keys with you.
- Have a ladder available.
- Seal attic and ground vents with pre-cut plywood or commercial seals, if time permits.
- Monitor your property and the wildfire situation. **Don't wait for an evacuation order, if you feel threatened and need to leave.**
- Check on neighbors and make sure they are preparing to leave.

# Remember the Six P's

People and pets



Papers, phone numbers,  
and important documents



Prescriptions,  
vitamins, and  
eyeglasses



Pictures and  
irreplaceable  
memorabilia



# P

Plastic

(e.g., credit cards, ATM cards)

and cash



Personal computer  
hard drives  
and flash drives



# GO!

## TAKE ACTION IMMEDIATELY WHEN WILDFIRE STRIKES

### Go Early

By leaving early, you will give your family the best chance of surviving a wildfire. You also help firefighters by keeping roads clear of congestion, enabling them to move more freely and do their job.

### When to Evacuate

Leave as soon as evacuation is recommended by emergency personnel to avoid being caught in fire, smoke, or road congestion. Don't wait to be ordered by authorities to leave. In an intense wildfire, they may not have time to knock on every door. If you are advised to leave, don't hesitate! Go!

- Emergency personnel will determine the areas to be evacuated and escape routes to use, depending upon the fire's location, behavior, winds, terrain, etc.
- Emergency personnel make every effort to advise you of potential evacuations as early as possible. You must take the initiative to stay informed and aware. Monitor social media and listen to your local radio/TV for announcements from law enforcement and other emergency personnel.
- You may be directed to temporary assembly areas to await transfer to a safe location.

The terms "Voluntary" and "Mandatory" are used to describe evacuation orders. However, local jurisdictions may use other terminology such as "Precautionary" and "Immediate Threat." These terms are used to alert you to the significance of the danger. All evacuation instructions provided by emergency personnel should be followed immediately for your safety.

### Where to Go

Leave for a pre-determined location. It should be a low-risk area, such as a well-prepared neighbor or relative's house, a Red Cross shelter or evacuation center, Motel, etc.

### How to Get There

Have several travel routes in case one route is blocked by the fire or by emergency vehicles and equipment. Choose an escape route away from the fire.



*Follow these steps as soon as possible to get ready to GO!*

- Review your Wildfire Action Plan evacuation checklist.



- Ensure your Emergency Supply Kit is in your vehicle.



- Cover up to protect against heat and flying embers. Wear long pants, a long-sleeve shirt, heavy shoes/boots, a cap, dry bandanna (for face cover), goggles, or glasses. 100% cotton is preferable.



- Locate your pets and take them with you.



## Survival Tips if You Become Trapped

### In Your Home

- Stay calm and keep your family together.
- Call 9-1-1 and inform authorities of your location.
- Fill sinks and tubs with cold water.
- Keep doors and windows closed, but unlocked.
- Stay inside your home.
- Stay away from outside walls.



### In Your Vehicle

- Stay calm.
- Park your vehicle in an area clear of vegetation.
- Close all vehicle windows and vents.
- Cover yourself with a wool or cotton blanket or jacket.
- Lie on the vehicle floor.
- Use your cell phone and call 9-1-1 to inform authorities of your location.



### On Foot

- Stay calm.
- Go to an area clear of vegetation, a ditch or depression on level ground if possible.
- Lie face down and cover up your body.
- Use your cell phone and call 9-1-1 to inform authorities of your location.



## Returning Home After a Wildfire

Do not return home until emergency officials determine it is safe. You will receive proper notification to do so as soon as it is possible, considering safety and accessibility.

### When You Return Home

- Be alert for downed power lines and other hazards.
- Check propane tanks, regulators, and lines before turning gas on.
- Check your residence carefully for hidden embers or smoldering fires.





Preparing for a wildfire starts with three simple steps:



Please keep this plan on hand as a quick reference for helping your family and property be safe in the event of a wildfire.

### OFFICIAL

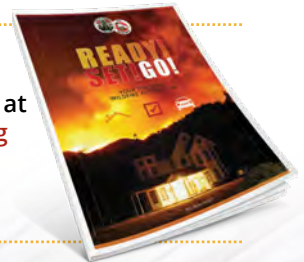
- facebook.com/LACoFD
- twitter.com/LACoFD
- instagram.com/lacountyfd
- youtube.com/user/LosAngelesCountyFD
- vimeo.com/user4029934

### PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICE

- twitter.com/lacofdpio
- twitter.com/lacofdespanol



Download the *Ready! Set! Go!* Wildfire Action Plan at [fire.lacounty.gov/rsg](http://fire.lacounty.gov/rsg) or by scanning this QR code with your smart phone.



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**READY!**



**SET!**



**GO!**



**LOS ANGELES COUNTY  
FIRE DEPARTMENT**

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[fire.lacounty.gov](http://fire.lacounty.gov)

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