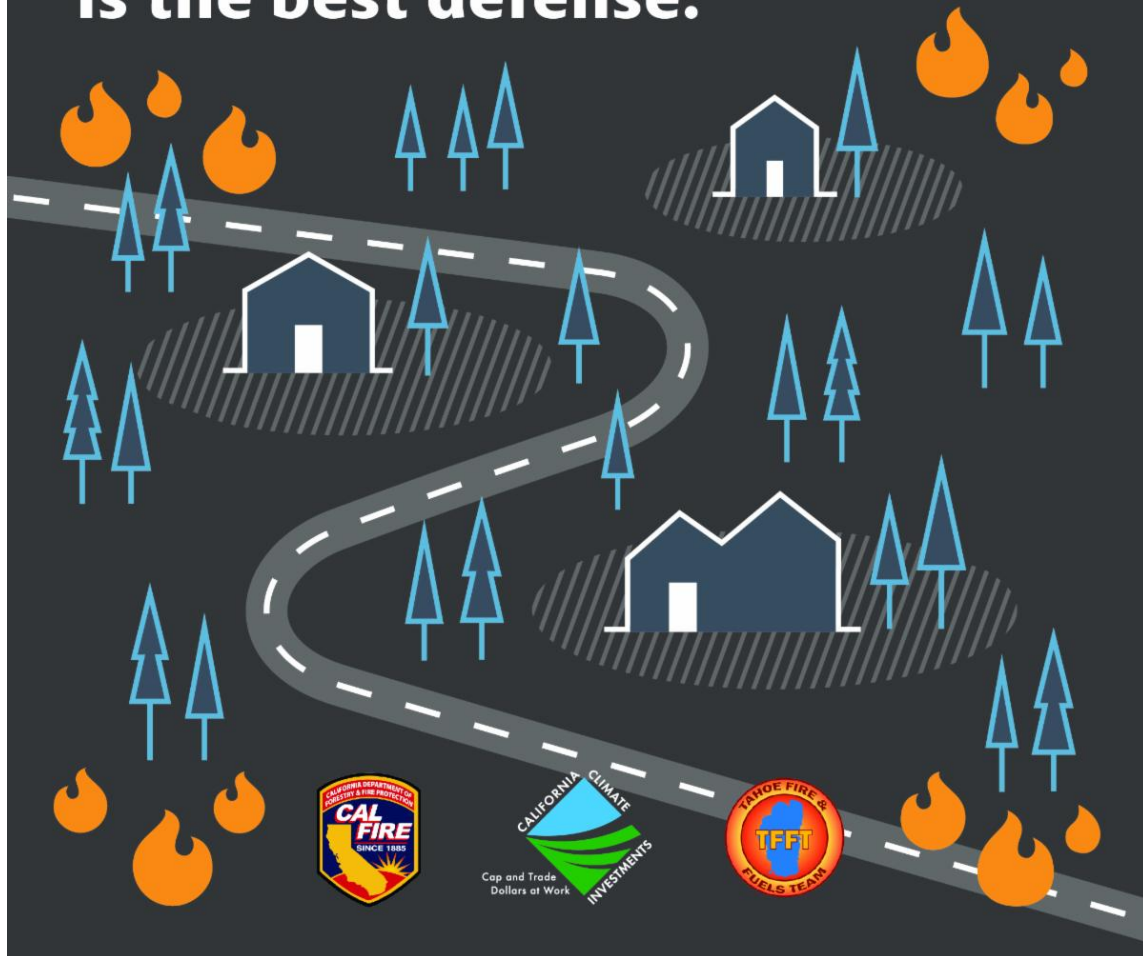




August 2022 Newsletter

Wildfire Preparedness and Evacuation

**Working together as neighbors
is the best defense.**



"When it comes to evacuation, planning ahead is always a good idea," said Fire Marshal, Eric Guevin, from Tahoe Douglas Fire Protection District. "Be prepared to act fast because time matters, and it could be a matter of life and death or loss of property."

How to Prepare for Evacuation

As record drought and elevated wildfire conditions persist, residents and visitors should develop evacuation plans and pack a Go-Bag before the next wildfire.

Plan for a Potential Evacuation

Evacuating can be stressful and scary, so you should have a plan. Familiarize yourself with your neighborhood, identify potential escape routes, and build relationships with your neighbors, especially if you do not have a car. Learn how to turn off the gas and electricity at your home, designate a family meeting point, and identify an out-of-town contact. Prepare to address the special needs of vulnerable family members and neighbors, including the elderly and those with medical problems or disabilities. In the event that you have to evacuate, use this [Wildfire Evacuation Checklist](#) for guidance. Practice the plan with your family, pets and neighbors. Muscle memory will help in times of real emergency.



Wildfire Evacuation Checklist

Review this information now to prepare yourself for a quick and safe evacuation.

PEER
REVIEWED

FS-06-07 | Updated 2022

GO BAG ESSENTIALS:

- ☐ Important documents (bank, IRS, trust, investment, insurance policy, birth certificates, medical records)
- ☐ ATM, credit and debit cards and cash in small bills
- ☐ Medications, Rx numbers and vaccination records for humans and pets
- ☐ Non-perishable food and water for 72 hours
- ☐ Driver's license, passport
- ☐ Computer backup files & passwords
- ☐ Inventory of home contents (consider making a video inventory now, prior to an emergency)
- ☐ Photographs of the exterior of the house and landscape
- ☐ Address book including medical and veterinarian contact information
- ☐ Cell phone charger, car charger and battery packs
- ☐ Personal toiletries
- ☐ Enough clothing for 3-5 days
- ☐ Family heirlooms, photo albums and videos
- ☐ Batteries

PREPARE FAMILY MEMBERS:

- ☐ If possible, evacuate all family members not essential to preparing the house for wildfire
- ☐ Plan several evacuation routes from your home
- ☐ Designate a safe meeting place and contact person
- ☐ Relay your plans to a contact person
- ☐ Designate a "safe area" where people can wait out a wildfire (i.e., ballfields, irrigated pastures or parking lots)
- ☐ Register for a local emergency notification system such as "reverse 911" or "CodeRED"
 - » Ask your county emergency management for details
 - » Update personal information and cell phone numbers in databases

WHAT TO WEAR:

- ☐ Wear only cotton or wool clothes, including long pants, long-sleeved shirt or jacket, a hat, and boots
- ☐ Carry gloves, water to drink, and goggles
- ☐ Keep your cell phone, a flashlight, and portable radio with you at all times
- ☐ Tune in to a local radio station and listen for instructions
- ☐ NIOSH N95 or P100 mask

PREPARE VEHICLE:

- ☐ Keep your vehicle's gas tank full
- ☐ If you can lift your garage door manually, place vehicle in the garage pointing out with the keys in the ignition and disconnect the electric garage door opener. If not, park in your driveway facing out
- ☐ Roll up the car windows
- ☐ Close the garage door
- ☐ Place essential items in the car
- ☐ If you do not drive, make other arrangements for transportation in advance
- ☐ Close garage door when you leave

INSIDE THE HOME:

- ☐ Close all interior doors
- ☐ Leave a light on in each room
- ☐ Remove lightweight, non-fire-resistant curtains and other combustible materials from around windows
- ☐ Close fire-resistant drapes, shutters, and blinds
- ☐ Turn off all pilot lights
- ☐ Move overstuffed furniture, such as couches and easy chairs, to the center of the room
- ☐ Close fireplace damper
- ☐ Close or block off any doggie-doors
- ☐ Lock-up firearms or valuables

Be prepared! It will likely be dark, smoky, windy, and hot. There may be airborne burning embers, no power or telephone, and poor water pressure. Remember, there is nothing you own worth your life! Please evacuate immediately when asked.



Go-Bags

Emergency responders follow carefully designed evacuation plans that consider all factors when implementing evacuation orders. When asked to leave, it's crucial to evacuate quickly and safely — preparing for evacuation ahead of time is the best way to ensure a safe, successful evacuation. One way to prepare is to pack a Go-Bag.

Choose a Go-Bag(s) that can be easily lifted into your vehicle and has room for necessary items to last a minimum of 72 hours up to two weeks. Rolling suitcases, backpacks and cloth shopping bags are good choices. Once packed, practice loading the Go-Bags into your vehicle and drive potential evacuation routes with family and pets to ensure you're prepared and able to evacuate quickly.

Some essential items to pack into evacuation Go-Bags include:

- Enough medication for a minimum of 72 hours up to two weeks
- Lists of prescriptions and their dosages, prescription numbers, medication names, prescribing physicians, and pharmacy names and contact information

- Bottled water for a minimum of 72 hours up to two weeks
- Non-perishable foods that don't require preparation or refrigeration such as nuts, trail bars, jerky, and cereal
- NIOSH N95 or P100 masks for wildfire smoke
- Important documents
- Cell phone chargers
- Supplies, water, food and medications for pets, including pet carrier(s)



Emergency Notifications

A great way to prepare is to register for local emergency notifications. These notifications deliver emergency messages to individuals located in impacted regions, such as a specific neighborhood or community. These messages can be received via text, voicemail, email, social media, and more, depending on the notification system and ways that you would like to be notified. ** Please note** that when it is safe to go home and the area can be repopulated, you will be notified via social media and other media outlets.

Placer Alert, El Dorado County Code Red, Douglas County Code Red, and Washoe County Code Red allow individuals to register up to five addresses for notifications. Those who often travel around Lake Tahoe should sign up for all four counties.

To register, check out your county's emergency notification link below:

Douglas County: doughascounty.onthealert.com

El Dorado County: ready.edso.org

Placer County: placer-alert.org

Washoe County: washoecounty.us/em/RegionalAlerts.php

Home Inventory

Prior to an evacuation, consider documenting your important items in the event you need to file an insurance claim. [Document your home inventory here](#) or use the [home inventory](#)

[app here](#). Take photos and/or videos of your most important items.

Visit tahoelivingwithfire.com and follow [@tahoelwf](#) on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter for more wildfire preparedness and prevention information.

Other Ways to Prepare for Wildfire

Home Hardening

Home hardening is the process of preparing your home for wildfire embers by addressing its most vulnerable components and retrofitting them with fire-resistant building materials.

- **Roof** - Replace wood shake and shingle roofs with a [class A roof covering](#).
- **Eaves** - Fill gaps in open eave areas with durable caulk, and enclose eave areas to create [soffited-eaves](#).
- **Siding** - Replace wood shake or shingle siding with [noncombustible siding](#) such as stucco, steel or fiber cement.
- **Vents** - Cover attic, eave, and foundation vents with [1/8-inch noncombustible metal mesh screening](#).
- **Windows and Skylights** - Install or upgrade windows and skylights to [multi-pane tempered glass](#).

For more information on home hardening, see: [Wildfire Home Retrofit Guide](#).

Defensible Space

Defensible space refers to the managed landscape surrounding your home that reduces the threat of a wildfire.

- Create an **ember resistant/ non-combustible zone** by removing pine needles, leaves, firewood, and combustible vegetation from the first 5' of your home.
- Create a **lean, clean, and green zone** within 30' of your home with well-separated, healthy and irrigated vegetation.
- Ensure that the **wildland fuel reduction** zone beyond 30' of your home has horizontal and vertical separation between trees and shrubs and no pine needle accumulation exceeding 3 inches.

[Contact your local fire district](#) for a free defensible space inspection to get specifics on how to address and maintain the vegetation on your property. You can find more information and resources about how to improve your home's defensible space on the [tahoelivingwithfire website](#).



Learn More About Preparing For Wildfire

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