

Living With Fire

If wild fire is threatening your home and you need to evacuate...

Wear only cotton or wool clothes
Proper attire includes long pants, long sleeved shirt or jacket, and boots
Carry gloves, a handkerchief to cover your face, water to drink, and goggles
Keep a flashlight and portable radio with you at all times
Tune in to a local radio station and listen for instructions

Family Members and Pets:

If possible, evacuate all family members not essential to preparing the house for wildfire first
Make sure to designate a safe meeting place and contact person
Relay your plans to the contact person
Evacuate pets
Contact the local Humane Society or Animal Control for pet assistance if needed

Vehicles:

Place vehicles in the garage, pointing out with keys in the ignition
Roll up the windows
Close the garage door, but leave it unlocked
If applicable, disconnect the electric garage door opener so that the door can be opened manually in the event of a power outage

Essential Items:

Important documents (bank, IRS, trust, investment, insurance policy, birth certificates, medical records)
Credit and ATM cards
Medications
Prescription glasses
Driver's license
Passport
Computer backup files
Inventory of home contents (consider videotaping if there's time)
Photograph the exterior of the house and landscape if there's time
Address book
Cell phone and charger
Personal toiletries
Change of clothing
Family photo albums and videos
Family heirlooms
Place essential items in the car

Inside the House:

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 venetian blinds
Turn off all pilot lights
Move overstuffed furniture, such as couches and easy chairs, to the center of the room

Outside the House:

Place combustible patio furniture in the house or garage
Shut off propane at the tank or natural gas at the meter
Close all exterior vents if possible
Prop a ladder against the house to provide firefighters with easy access to the roof
Make sure that all garden hoses are connected to faucets and attach nozzles set on "spray"
Close all exterior doors and windows
Leave exterior doors unlocked
Turn on outside lights
If available and if there's time, cover windows, attic openings, and vents with plywood that is at least one-half inch thick
Wet down wood shake or shingle roofs before leaving
Fill trash cans and buckets with water and place where firefighters can find them
If you have an emergency water source (pool, pond, etc.) and/or portable pump, clearly mark its availability so it can be seen from the street

Source: Adapted from Smith, E.G. and J.A. Skelly. 1999. Living With Fire - A guide for the homeowner (2nd edition).
University of Nevada Cooperative Extension and Sierra Front Wildfire Cooperators.