

Forest Fire Evacuation: What To Do

Don't panic. People make better judgment calls during crisis when calm. If you start to feel anxious and scared, take a few deep breaths.

Stay Informed. Listen to the radio, TV or Internet for fire updates. You may have to evacuate in a moment's notice.

Wait for instruction from law enforcement personnel. Usually law enforcement personnel will contact when you need to evacuate. If you do not receive a call, you can call them just to make sure it is still safe to stay in your home.

Defend your home for as long as it is safe to do so. It is best to leave your home as soon as possible. However, if you must stay behind and defend your home, please use precautions. The following is a list of some of the protective and defensive measures against an approaching forest fire:

Close all doors inside and outside but do not lock them.

Close all windows.

Position garden hoses all around the house. These are readily available to fight against the approaching fire. Also, you can keep a ladder on the side of the house. It should be placed on the side furthest away from the direction of the fire.

If you have an outside **propane tank**, turn it off.

Keep your **car in the garage** with the key in the ignition. Close the garage door, but do not lock it.

Fill all bathtubs and sinks in the house with water. Wet area rugs, burlap sacks, dishrags, and towels with water. In addition, use a spray bottle to distribute water on every surface and wall in your house. The dampness will help resist the flames as they approach.

Place portable **water pumps** by creeks, swimming pools, water faucets, and other sources of water.

Turn on a light in each room, and all outside lights.

Arrange for a place to **stay temporarily**, and leave your contact information in plain sight at your house. Others may need to communicate with you about your house.

Have your **Family and Pets Moved immediately**. Also, send your family members and any pets to a pre-planned emergency destination. This could be a friend or relative's

house, or a public shelter. Make sure you find out if your emergency shelter or destination takes in pets.

Wear Protective Clothing. Wear long pants and shirts, sturdy shoes, boots, or thick lined tennis shoes. Do NOT wear flammable material such as polyester. Instead, wear cotton clothes, which are more flame resistant. Bring gloves along and a handkerchief to protect your face.

Travel away from the Fire. Keep on the lookout. Make sure you are not traveling in the direction of the fire. Keep your battery operated radio on to hear alerts. You may need to change travel directions in a matter of minutes.

Take along a disaster supply kit. A pre-made disaster kit can be stored in a bag, suitcase, or security safe. Inside you would store supplies that you have set aside in the event of any disaster. The contents of this kit should include the following items:

- An extra sets of clothes
- First Aid kit
- Radio, and flashlight, and extra batteries
- Cell phone and battery charger
- An extra valid credit or debit card
- A secure cash box with money,
- Extra checks
- A blanket
- Important government documents and legal papers
- Title deeds
- Copies of birth certificates and Social Security cards
- Address book and emergency contacts list
- A few prescription medication doses, anti-allergic medications, cough medicines
- Personal items such as deodorant, razors, toothpaste, and soap
- Be sure to also include bath towels, underclothes, hats, gloves, and scarves
- Extra supply of drinking water
- Extra pairs of glasses, contacts, or items needed for infants and elderly people

Leave your House immediately when told to do so. After you have sent your family to a safe destination, you may stay to defend your home. However, if you decide to stay behind and defend your home, only stay for as long as it is safe. Please be sure to leave as soon as the law enforcement personnel tell you to leave. Do not waste any unnecessary time. Your life and your family's life are more important than your personal belongings.

Contact **local emergency personnel** for more information. If you follow the above steps, you are sure to survive a forest fire. Also, be sure to contact local emergency personnel for more information on what to do in case of a forest fire.