

EVACUATION From Wildland Fire

Philosophy of Evacuation Preparedness

Our Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) forest environment is different from typical "urban" settings and creates our most likely type of disaster - **wildland fire**. Preplanning for an evacuation is key to the outcome. The devastating noise and speed of a wildfire will cause some people to become anxious and unable to function effectively. If unprepared to evacuate, it is likely there will be inadequate time to collect all the items you will want to take with you.

Evacuations save lives and allow responding personnel to focus on the emergency at hand. This **EVACUATION** section is intended to inform and assist you with being better prepared for an evacuation, and what you can do to make your home better prepared to survive a wildfire.

Be prepared to evacuate immediately when directed!

The Evacuation Process

1. **Officials of the El Dorado Sheriff's Office/Office of Emergency Services (OES), or their designee, will determine the areas to be evacuated and the routes to use depending upon the fire's location.**
2. Law enforcement agencies are responsible for enforcing an evacuation order. **Follow their directions.**
3. You will be advised of potential evacuations as early as possible. You must take the initiative to stay informed and aware. Monitor your phone for a Reverse 911 evacuation announcement from OES, but do not rely on this as your sole source of evacuation information.
4. You may be directed to temporary assembly areas to await transfer or directions to a safer location.
5. California law authorizes officers to restrict access to any area where a menace to public health or safety exists due to a calamity such as flood, storm, fire, earthquake, explosion, accident or other disaster. Refusal to comply is a misdemeanor. (Penal Code 409.5)

Long Before a Fire Threatens ~ Preplanning, Have an Evacuation Checklist and Get Organized

We are told that in the event of a major disaster you should be prepared to be on your own for a minimum of 72 hours; that means you need to be self-sufficient for at least 3 days. A wildland fire is such a disaster. See Section entitled **72 Hour Emergency Kit List ~ Suggestions** at page 29.

Have a pre-determined plan for your evacuation destination.

If Evacuation is a Possibility

The preparations you make today will save time and lives in the event of an evacuation order.

- Locate your Evacuation Checklist and place your items to be evacuated with you in your vehicle.
- Park your vehicle facing outward; carry your vehicle keys with you. Leave driveway gate open.
- Place connected garden hoses and buckets full of water around the house ... for firefighter use.
- If you have a roof access ladder, place it against the house for firefighter use to access the roof.
- Move propane BBQ appliances and all combustibles away from structures (including deck furniture, wood piles, etc.).
- Leave all interior house lights on.
- Leave all interior doors and windows closed.
- Leave both exterior and interior doors unlocked.
- Close heavy drapes.
- Remove lace, lightweight curtains and window shades.
- Close window blinds (if they exist).
- Close exterior metal shutters (if they exist).
- Move combustible furniture and objects away from windows and exterior walls.
- Turn off air conditioning and other air circulating systems.
- Turn off propane at the tank. The valve is "off" when the knob or handle is perpendicular to the gas line.
- Turn off landscape sprinklers. They can critically affect water pressure.
- Disconnect the mechanical connection of electric garage door openers and leave the door down. A firefighter may need access to control a fire within the structure.
- If you have time ~ Seal attic and foundation vents with pre-cut plywood, commercial sealing materials, or with aluminum foil folded several layers thick and stapled in place. This prevents sparks and embers from invading these spaces.
- Dress to Protect Yourself: Wear cotton or wool clothing, including long pants, long sleeved shirt, gloves, heavy shoes or boots, a cap and a dry handkerchief or bandana to protect your face. Do not wear synthetic or manmade materials as they can melt with sufficient heat.
- Turn TV to a local news station or the radio to KFBK (1530 AM), and listen for updates. Monitor the fire situation. Don't wait for an order to evacuate if you feel threatened and need to leave.
- Meet your neighbors; make a community plan and know who has special needs and who can meet those needs in an emergency.
- If possible, send pets away ahead of an evacuation. Evacuation shelters may not welcome pets.
- If you have Livestock: Pre-arrange with friends/family [in another area], who have livestock pastures and/or corrals which can safely hold your animals. If possible, anticipate an evacuation and move your animals prior to notification to evacuate.
- Pre-plan livestock feed, water, medicine needs, etc. and pack them in the trailer or tow vehicle.

Animal Evacuation Lists

Small Animals (Dogs, Cats, Birds, Reptiles, etc.)

- Locate your pet(s) and keep them nearby. The confusion and excitement of an evacuation has a tendency to cause pets to run away or hide.
- Pet food and water for 3 to 7 days for each pet.
- Pet carrier(s) with an ID label on each, such as a plastic cat carry, portable dog kennel, bird cage (with cover), and a pillowcase for a reptile.
- Pet collars, tags and leashes for each pet.
- Vet documents including vaccination records and medications.
- Pet photos for ease of identification by others.
- Emergency contact list to locate you (the pet owner): Work phone #, Cell #, and your Vet's name and phone #.
- Pet tools: Scissors, duct tape, heavy cord, pocket knife, pet first aid kit, flashlight, leather gloves, stakes and tie outs, muzzle for each pet, newspapers, paper towels, etc.
- Cat litter, disposable pan(s), waste disposal bags, etc.
- Bedding for each pet.

Large Animals (Livestock)

- Plan the transport needs, including extra keys for tow vehicle.
- Halter and lead rope for each animal.
- Large pair of sharp scissors to trim mane(s) and tail(s).
- Livestock crayon, fluorescent spray paint, or duct tape to ID each animal.
- Breed registration papers; Brand, tattoo or microchip info.
- 3 days of feed and water for each animal.
- Fly mask, large DRY bandanna for each animal's nose.
- Tools: Wire cutters and lightweight wire, duct tape, zip ties, hoof pick/knife, flashlight, blankets, first aid kit, etc.
- Emergency contact list to locate you (the animal owner): Work phone #, Cell #, and your Vet's name and phone #.
- List of animals on the property in case you are not home.
- Vet documents including vaccination records and medication.
- Animal photos for ease of identification by others.

Important Documents to Consider Taking With You

You may not be able to return home for several days. While you are away from home, you may need to start insurance claims or pay bills. Consider bringing these documents with you:

- Driver license or similar ID
- Social Security card(s)
- Proof of residence (deed, lease or a PG&E bill)
- Insurance policies (home and medical); including paperwork and other evidence of personal property (photos/videos, receipts)
- Copies of recent tax forms
- Credit card(s), debit card(s), check book, and bank statements

Another option is to scan all of these documents and save them to a disk. Keep one disk for

yourself (in your grab and go bag) and mail another disk to a trusted friend or family member. Another suggestion: Create a Hotmail or Gmail account and send these scanned documents to that email account and let them sit there. This account can be accessed from a library or other public site, thereby allowing you to recreate your financial life.

Evacuation Orders

The terms **Voluntary** and **Mandatory** are used to describe evacuation orders. See **Evacuation Notice** on Divider.

The order to evacuate could be distributed by several methods. The most likely method in our rural community is by a sheriff's deputy, a fire fighter, a Search and Rescue member, a CERT member, or other designated agency representative in a door to door contact. At the same time, it is likely the Sheriff's Office of Emergency Services (OES) will activate their "Reverse 911" (Emergency Mass Notification System). With this system, a phone call to all available land-line phone numbers within a specified geographical area will be automatically dialed and a recorded message delivered.

To get on the OES Emergency Mass Notification System list, contact the OES via their web site: <http://ready.edso.org>

An Evacuation While You Are Not at Home

If you are not home when an evacuation notice is ordered, Law Enforcement will not allow you to enter the community. Your presence at the road block will only impede traffic out of the community and emergency apparatus entering the community. Instead, go to your pre-arranged evacuation location, such as the home of a family member or friend out of the area. Communicate with your family members to let them know where you are.

When to Evacuate

Evacuating early will help keep roads clear and from becoming congested. You may leave before being told to evacuate. Evacuating early may be important if you are responsible for small children, seniors, or handicapped individuals.

When the notice to evacuate is made, you will be told which route to take. **Follow the emergency personnel's instructions.**

Community Road Maps

Road maps are provided at the back of this manual. These maps show several routes out of Grizzly Flats. Two additional copies of these maps have been provided ... keep one in each of your vehicles. If you have more than 2 vehicles, additional maps are available from the GFFSC by email request to: GrizzlyFlatsFSC@gmail.com

Note:

During an evacuation, law enforcement or their designee will direct you as to which road(s) to take out of the community.

*** * * See Maps at back of this Manual * * ***

If You Become Trapped While in Your Vehicle

- Stay calm.
- Park vehicle in an area clear of vegetation and stay in vehicle. *Note: It will get hot in the vehicle, but it is much hotter and more dangerous outside.*
- Close all vehicle windows and vents.
- Lie on the vehicle floor.
- Cover yourself with a cotton or wool blanket or jacket.
- Call 911 on your cell phone and give them your location.

If You Become Trapped While on Foot

- Stay calm.
- Find an area clear of vegetation, and if possible, with a ditch or depression on level ground, **not** in a drainage or water course; these become chimneys in a wildfire.
- Lie face down and cover your body.
- Call 911 on your cell phone and give them your location.

If You Become Trapped While in Your Home

- Stay calm; keep family members together **INSIDE** the house. *Note: It will get hot in the house, but it is much hotter and more dangerous outside.*
- Call 911; give them your location and circumstance.
- Fill sinks and tubs with cold water for drinking and putting out small fires.
- Keep windows and door closed, but unlocked.
- Stay away from outside walls and windows.

After the Fire Passes, and When It is Safe

You will be notified by authorities when it's safe to return home.

- Be alert for downed power lines and other hazards. If a power line is down, keep everyone well away from the line and call **911** and PG&E (see back of this manual for phone #).
- **BEFORE** turning any propane valves on, check the propane tank(s), regulator(s) and accessible gas lines for any sign of a leak.
 - If a leak is detected, **do not** open any gas valves. Call your propane company for assistance.
 - If you don't know how to do a leak check, call your propane company for assistance.

- Check your house for possible smoldering fires or embers, including: the roof, the house exterior, under the decks, the attic and the underfloor area (crawl space).
- Check the yard for burning trees, wood piles, fencing, etc.
- Create a neighborhood SMOKE watch with a phone network to contact each other. Report any smoke via a "911" phone call.