

# Wildfires

Forest fires and wildfires threaten lives and destroy homes and natural resources. You can take action now that can help save lives and help prevent or reduce damage caused by wildfires.

## What to do before a wildfire

- Have an evacuation plan. You may need to leave your home to go to a safe place. Know where you are going and the possible routes to get there.
- Designate a “safety zone” in case all evacuation routes are burning.
- If you have special physical or medical needs, be sure to have an ample supply of medication and supplies to take with you if you evacuate. People with heart and lung diseases must be especially careful around wood smoke. Discuss your emergency plans with your medical provider.
- Make emergency plans for your pets and livestock.
- Family members should have an out-of-area contact they can call to let them know they are safe when they are separated. Prepare wallet cards with the contact’s information.
- Put together a 72-hour emergency supply kit. Include water, food, protective clothing—sturdy shoes, cotton or wool clothing, long pants, long-sleeved shirt, gloves and a handkerchief. Store in easy-to-carry packs.
- Store copies of your vital records and lists/photos/videotapes of valuable items in a safety deposit box. Include updated insurance policies.
- Identify local radio and television stations. They will have the latest information about fires in your area.
- Prepare your home for a wildfire. Clearly mark all driveways with names/addresses. Remove firewood, shrubs and other combustibles away from the home. Call your local fire, forestry or natural resources office, or go to [www.firewise.org](http://www.firewise.org) for more ideas on home design and landscaping.
- Talk to your neighbors about wildfire safety and working together during a wildfire.

- Always call your local fire department before burning. Be careful when cooking outdoors or using gas-powered equipment on dry, windy days.

## When wildfire threatens

- Remain calm. Listen to the radio and television for fire reports and evacuation information. Follow the advice given by authorities. (However, if you feel threatened, do not wait to leave.)
- Phone/tell your family and friends you may need to evacuate and let them know where you are going. Use your out-of-area contact card.
- Pre-load your car with emergency supplies, vital records and other valuables. Face your vehicle in the direction of escape. Keep pets confined nearby.
- Put on protective clothing to protect your body, face and lungs.
- Prepare a note to post at your home that tells when you left and where you are going.
- Set up a ladder, garden hoses and sprinklers on the roof. To conserve water, wait until the embers start falling.

## If advised to evacuate, do so immediately

- If there is time—close all windows, vents and doors, and remove lightweight curtains. Shut off gas utilities.
- Turn on your home’s lights.
- Post your prepared note on main entrance.
- Lock your doors.
- Choose a route away from fire hazards. Drive with your lights on and watch for emergency vehicles.
- If your evacuation route(s) are burning—go to your designated “safety zone.”
- **Do not attempt to re-enter the area until firefighters have declared it safe.**



WASHINGTON  
MILITARY  
DEPARTMENT

Emergency Management Division

Camp Murray, WA 98430-5122

Web site: [www.emd.wa.gov](http://www.emd.wa.gov)

253-512-7000; (800) 562-6108



PO Box 47890

Olympia, WA 98504-7890

Web site: [www.doh.wa.gov](http://www.doh.wa.gov)

360-236-4027; (800) 525-0127