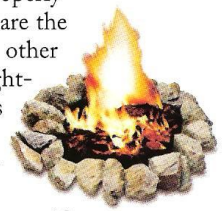
Did You Know...

More than four out of every five forest fires are started by people. Negligent human behavior such as smoking in forested areas or improperly extinguishing campfires are the cause of many fires. The other cause of forest fires is lightning. A prescribed fire is a fire that is purposely ignited by land management agencies under controlled conditions for specific management objectives.

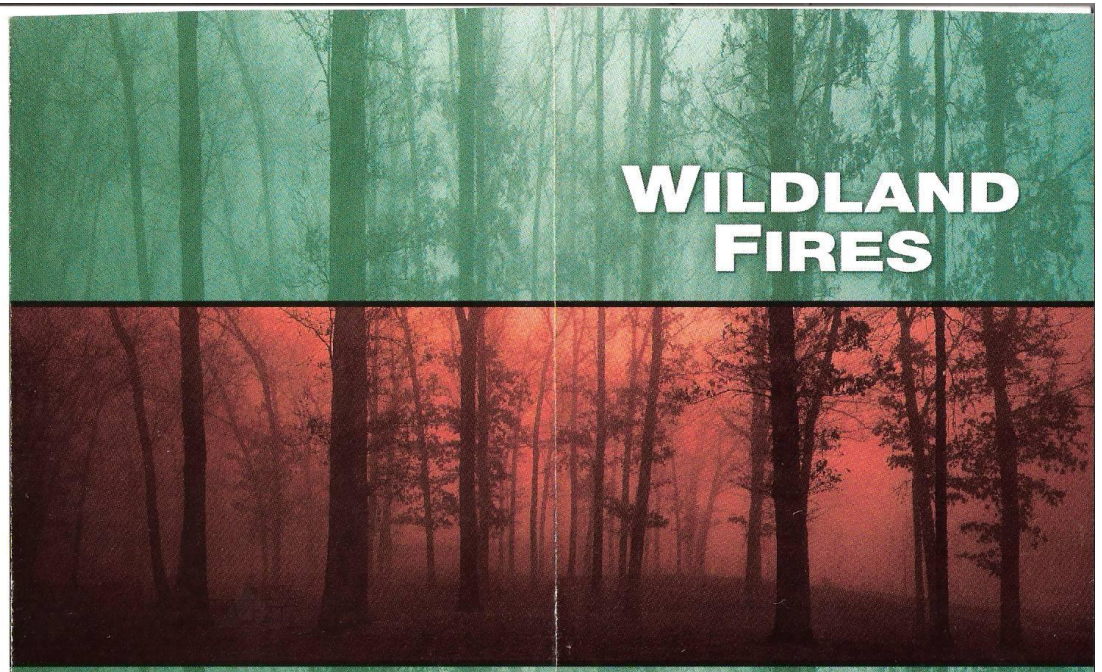


The 1991 wildland fires in Oakland California, caused 26 deaths and 148 injuries. The fire destroyed over 3,000 structures, left over 5,000 people homeless and resulted in $1.5 billion in damages.

Reducing the Risk of a Wildland Fire

Reducing the risk includes any activities that will prevent an emergency, reduce the chance of an emergency happening, or lesson the damaging effects of unavoidable emergencies.

Investing in preventive steps, such as installing a spark arrestor on your chimney, cleaning roof surfaces and gutters regularly, and using only fire resistant materials on the exterior of your home, will help reduce the impact of a wildland fire in the future.



Be Aware, Be Prepared, Know The Facts!

For more information on wildland fires, contact your local emergency management office.

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WILDLAND FIRES

DANGER ZONES!

Helping To Divert Disaster.

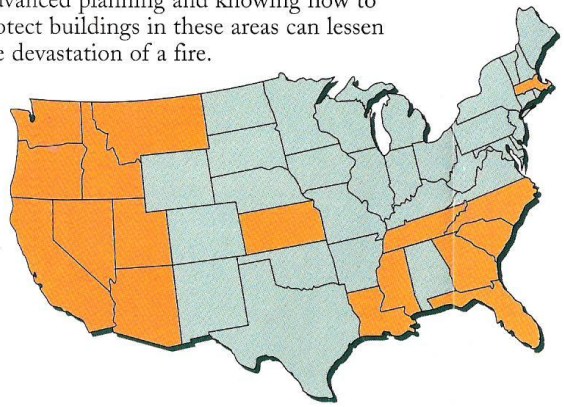
What Is A Wildland Fire?

There are three different classes of wildland fires.

1. A surface fire is the most common type and burns along the floor of a forest, moving slowly and killing or damaging trees.
2. A ground fire is usually started by lightning and burns on or below the forest floor.
3. Crown fire spreads rapidly by wind and moves quickly by jumping along the tops of trees. Wildland fires are usually signaled by dense smoke that fills the area for miles around.

Danger Zones

Danger zones include all wooded, brush, and grassy areas—especially those in Kansas, Mississippi, Louisiana, Georgia, Florida, the Carolinas, Tennessee, California, Massachusetts, and the national forests of the western United States. The threat of wildland fires for people living near wildland areas or using recreational facilities in wilderness areas is real. Advanced planning and knowing how to protect buildings in these areas can lessen the devastation of a fire.



Before A Wildland Fire

Learn and teach safe fire practices. Build fires away from nearby trees or bushes. Always have a way to extinguish the fire quickly and completely, never leave a fire or even a cigarette—burning unattended. Obtain local building codes and weed abatement ordinances for structures built near wooded areas. Use fire-resistant material when building, renovating, or retrofitting structures. Create a safety zone to separate the home from combustible plants and vegetation. Stone walls can act as heat shields and deflect flames. Swimming pools and patios can be a safety zone. Install smoke detectors in your home and keep spare batteries on hand.

Plan Ahead

Have disaster supplies on hand:

- Flashlight with extra batteries.
- Portable, battery-operated radio and extra batteries.
- First aid kit and manual.
- Emergency food and water.
- Non-electric can opener.
- Essential medicines.
- Cash and credit cards.
- Sturdy shoes.

Develop An Emergency Communication Plan!

In case family members are separated from one another during a wildland fire (a real possibility during the day when adults are at work and children are at school), have a plan for getting back together. Ask an out-of-state relative or friend to serve as the "family contact." After a disaster, it is often easier to call long distance. Make sure everyone knows the name, address, and phone number of the contact person.

Fire-Resistant Building Materials

Avoid using wooden shakes and shingles for a roof. Use tile, stucco, metal siding, brick, concrete block, rock, or other fire-resistant materials. Use only thick, tempered safety glass in large windows and sliding glass doors.

After A Wildland Fire

Take care when re-entering a burned wildland area. Hot spots can flare up without warning.

- Check the roof immediately and extinguish any sparks or embers.
- Check the attic for hidden burning sparks.
- For several hours afterward, re-check for smoke and sparks throughout the home.

Before Wildfire Threatens

- Post emergency phone numbers by each telephone in the house.
- Install Smoke Detectors in all living spaces.
- If you smoke, use your ashtray.
- Use and store flammable liquids properly.
- Don't keep combustible materials under decks or elevated porches.
- Keep doors and windows clear as a means of escape in each room.
- Your address should be prominently posted at the driveway entrance so it is visible from BOTH directions of travel.

Landscaping Maintenance

- Clear at least a 30 foot area around your house as a defensible zone.
- Space newly planted trees carefully.
- Create "Fuelbreaks"-- using driveways, gravel walkways, or lawns.
- Thin and prune trees and shrubs regularly.
- Remove leaf clutter from your roof and yard.
- Mow regularly.
- Remove dead or overhanging branches.
- Store firewood away from your house.

Have A Fire Escape Plan

- Have a family meeting to make a plan.
- Practice your plan:
  - Plan two exits from every room.
  - Keep calm.
  - Close the door.
  - Don't go back.
  - Keep necessities in a suitcase/luggage, ready to go located near your exit.
  - Decide on a meeting place so you will know if everyone has gotten out safely.

When Wildfire Threatens

SEND THE ALARM

- Dial 911 to report a fire. Listen to your battery operated radio for reports and evacuation information.

WALK QUICKLY, DO NOT PANIC

- Feel the door on your way out with your hand. If the door is hot, DO NOT open. Close the door behind you to slow the spread of fire.

STAY LOW AND GO

- If there's smoke, escape by staying very low to the ground where the air is cooler.

DO NOT GO BACK

- Do not go back into a fire for any reason! Your life is the MOST valuable possession.

Pets/Livestock And Wildfire

- First and foremost, you are responsible for the safety and care of your pets and livestock.
- Contact hotels, motels or friends outside your immediate area to plan for an alternate shelter for your pets/livestock.
- Develop a buddy system with a neighbor in case you or your neighbor are not home when fire threatens. Make sure a neighbor is familiar with your pets and has access to them.
- Assemble a portable pet disaster supplies kit including:
  - Medications and medical reports
  - Sturdy leashes & harnesses
  - Current photos
  - Food and water
  - Carriers to transport pets
  - Information on feeding schedules, medical conditions, behavior problems and the name and phone number of your veterinarian.
- Make sure each pet has a collar, harness or halter that has your name, address and phone number. Add an alternate phone number if possible.
- Even a trusted pet can bite or scratch when frightened.
- Once away from danger keep all animals securely leashed or tied.
- Don't leave animals unattended anywhere.
- When you return home, give your pets time to settle back into their routines.