



Office of
Emergency
Management

www.lakecountyfl.gov
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Learning About

WILDFIRES



BEFORE A WILDFIRE

- Ensure that you have a disaster preparedness kit ready to go and properly maintained. For more information on how to build a kit visit www.ready.gov/build-a-kit.
- Mark the entrance to your property with address signs that are clearly visible from the road.
- Keep lawns trimmed, leaves raked and the roof and gutters clear of debris.
- Stack firewood at least 30 feet away from your home.
- Store flammable materials, liquids and solvents in metal containers outside your home and at least 30 feet away from structures and wooden fences.
- Create a defensible space by thinning trees and brush within 30 feet around your home. Beyond 30 feet, remove dead wood, debris and low tree branches.
- Landscape your property with fire-resistant plants and vegetation to prevent fire from spreading quickly. For example, hardwood trees are more fire-resistant than pine, eucalyptus or fir trees.
- Make sure water resources, such as hydrants, ponds, swimming pools and wells, are accessible to firefighters.
- Use fire-resistant, protective roofing and materials, such as stone, brick and metal to protect your home. Avoid using wood materials as it offers the least protection.
- Cover all exterior vents, attics and eaves with metal mesh screens no larger than ¼-inch thick to prevent debris from collecting and to help keep sparks out.
- Install multi-pane windows, tempered safety glass or fireproof shutters to protect large windows from radiant heat.
- Use fire-resistant draperies for added window protection.
- Have chimneys, wood stoves and home-heating systems inspected and cleaned annually by a certified specialist.
- Insulate chimneys and place spark arresters on top. Install insulation between the chimney and the roof, attic or other flammable materials it might touch. The chimney should be at least 3 feet above the roof.
- Remove branches hanging above and around the house.

DURING A WILDFIRE

- If advised to evacuate, do so immediately. Take your disaster supply kit and choose a route away from the fire hazard.
- **If there is time:**
 - Shut off the gas at the meter. Only a qualified professional can safely turn the gas back on.
 - Seal attic and ground vents with pre-cut plywood or commercial seals.
 - Turn off propane tanks.
 - Place combustible patio furniture inside.
 - Connect garden hose to outside taps. Place lawn sprinklers on the roof and near above-ground fuel tanks. Wet the roof.
 - Wet or remove shrubs within 15 feet of your residence.
 - Gather fire tools such as rakes, axes, handsaws or chainsaws, buckets and shovels.
 - Back your car into the garage or park it in an open space facing the direction of escape. Shut doors and roll up windows. Leave the key in the ignition and the car doors unlocked. Close garage windows and doors, but leave them unlocked. Disconnect automatic garage door openers.
 - Close fireplace screens.
 - Close windows, vents, doors, blinds or noncombustible window coverings and heavy drapes. Remove flammable drapes and curtains.
 - Move flammable furniture into the center of the residence away from windows and sliding glass doors.
 - Close all interior doors and windows to prevent drafts.
 - Place valuables that won't be damaged by water in a pool or pond.
 - Watch for changes in the speed and direction of the fire and smoke.

FOLLOW LOCAL BURNING LAWS

- Before burning debris in a wooded area, make sure to notify local authorities and obtain a burn permit.
- Use an approved incinerator with a safety lid or covering with holes no larger than $\frac{3}{4}$ of an inch.
 - Have a fire extinguisher or garden hose on hand when burning debris.

