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### **Forest Fire As a Military Weapon - US Dept. of Agriculture - PDF File**

(see file on [goodpatriot.com](http://goodpatriot.com) "info/downloads" page)

#### **Added Notes after video:**

- + Remember that you can evacuate on your own. You don't need someone to tell you to leave. If the fire is two miles from your home, it's a good idea to leave voluntarily - this could also help avoid traffic.
- + A lot of local fire departments are willing to do an evaluation of your home for free.
- + There are roof sprinkler systems that you can have installed on your home. You would turn them on before you leave.

## **HOW TO PROTECT YOUR HOME & YOURSELF FROM WILDFIRES**

### **FIRST THINGS FIRST:**

#### **1. Document your entire house (plus the garage and outdoors) including the contents of closets, drawers and furniture by video, photos, or written list (preferably all three)**

A. Make a written inventory the items with purchase dates, proof of value and descriptions for each and include proof of these things with paper receipts, credit card statements, appraisals, and/or warranty information - if possible.

B. Store this information in a fireproof safe, in Cloud storage or in a file away from your home - doing all three options is best. If you keep the file at home, make sure to include it in your evacuation list.

#### **2. Make your "Emergency Fire List" which includes items that need to be evacuated with you. Be specific as it will be tough to think clearly under high stress.**

##### **Example items include:**

Important documents (proof of insurance, numbers, banking info...), photos, heirlooms, weapons, Bibles, books, medicines and needed medical supplies, precious metals and jewelry, clothing you will need, shoes, pets and their needs (food, water bowl, leash, meds, kennels), phones, computers...

(If you have larger animals like horses, make transfer/destination plans beforehand)

#### **DO NOT FORGET to have a good filtered mask, protective goggles and headlamp flashlight for each member of your family.**

*+ If fire is close, have these things ready to go before you need to evacuate, as you may only have a few short minutes to leave.*

### **WHAT CAN WE DO TO HELP PREVENT OUR HOMES FROM CATCHING ON FIRE:**

- 1. KEEP ROOFS AND GUTTERS CLEAN OF DEBRIS** - Keep them cleared of flammable things like pine needles and leaves. Or, install gutter guards so these items can't get into gutters at all.
- 2. INSTALL** spark arrestors on chimneys and stovepipes to prevent embers from entering your home.

**3. SECURE ENTRY POINTS** - make sure all areas that embers can get into are sealed. These can include: vents, soffits, eaves, crawlspaces and roof joints.

**4. CREATE A DEFENSIBLE SPACE** - You want to remove flammable materials like firewood piles, propane tanks, and other fuel sources from within 30 feet of your home.

**Maintain Landscaping -**

+ Make sure that any bushes or landscaping around your home are at least 3 feet from your house and clear away any dead leaves and plant life away from these spaces as well.

+ Trim all tree branches to at least 6-10 feet off the ground.

+ Keep grass short and all well-watered.

+ Keep ground areas free of leaves and debris.

+ Keep flammable patio items like cushions away from the house or put them inside.

+ Consider fire-resistant plants - the most popular include:

Ice Plant, Aloe Vera, Lavender, Rockrose, Rosemary, Sage, California Lilac, Manzanita, Western Redbud and Blue Oatgrass

**5. HARDEN YOUR HOME** - retrofit your home with fire-resistant materials and structures designed to withstand wildfires, like fire-resistant roofing, siding, decks, ember-resistant vents which have small openings preventing embers from getting through, and non-combustible fences.

+ If possible, consider using less flammable materials like stucco, metal, or brick.

**6. WINDOWS** - clear your windowsills of flammable items like wood planters or older, dry wood shutters. Double-paned or tempered glass windows are also less likely to shatter in extreme heat.

**7. HAVE WATER SOURCES** - having an accessible water supply, such as a swimming pool, well, or large water storage tank can aid firefighters or be used by you for emergency irrigation.

**8. ORGANIZE WITH YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD & COMMUNITY** - organize or participate in local community efforts to create defensible spaces and promote fire-safe practices, *especially* with your immediate neighbors.

**9. HAVE A COMMUNICATION PLAN** - such as a text group of neighbors and relevant people that could help you if fire does come *or* who can even help you evacuate.

+ Keep in mind that some people may not be able to access your neighborhood if it's blocked off by the sheriff's dept or fire department for safety reasons.

**10. STAY INFORMED** - Stay updated on weather and fire conditions in your area through local news and official sources. This will help you make informed decisions about when to evacuate. Your local area should have an alert system.

**IMPORTANT SAFETY TIPS:**

+ If fire is threatening your area, have your emergency fire list items in one place and your pet items ready to go.

+ Keep your cell phone charged and don't forget it and your charger if you have to leave.

+ Know where you're going to go.

Keep track of where the fire is at and know the best and quickest escape routes with a destination - this could be a friend or family member's house that is out of danger or an evacuation location that is set up by local authorities.

+ Have your filter masks, protective goggles and headlamp flashlights with your evacuation kits for everyone in your family, ready and organized - consider putting each set in a bag with the person's name labeled on the bag.

*The electricity often goes out during wildfires and things may get serious during the night. Also, the smoke may be suffocating or blinding and having a good mask and goggles can save your life.*

+ Realize that fires can be rekindled for days after they have been "put out." Be careful to watch your area and property for flare-ups, especially if it's windy.

## **FIRE INSURANCE TIPS**

**1. KNOW YOUR COVERAGE** - Make sure you are knowledgeable of your coverage limits, deductibles, and specific terms of your insurance policy. Does your coverage cover all that you would need it to?

**2. DOCUMENT EVERYTHING** - You want to save receipts, invoices, and any other documentation that can prove the ownership and value of your belongings, especially the more expensive ones.

**3. IF YOU DO HAVE A FIRE** - take detailed photographs and videos of the damage before any cleanup or repairs are initiated. This documentation can serve as crucial evidence for your claim.

**4. KEEP TRACK** - keep inventory of any additional expenses incurred due to the fire, such as temporary housing costs, meals, and transportation. These can be reimbursed by your insurance provider depending on your policy.

**5. GET AN OFFICIAL REPORT** - be sure to obtain an official report from local authorities or fire departments detailing the cause of the fire because this can also be important for validating your claim.

**6. PROVE IT** - document that you implemented fire safety measures around your property, such as creating defensible spaces, using fire-resistant building materials, and following local fire safety guidelines. This may demonstrate your commitment to fire safety to the insurance company and give you a stronger claim.

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God bless your preparedness with wisdom and discernment,

- Katie & Rick

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