

Wildfire Preparedness Resources

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Session 4: Personal and Family Preparedness Before a Disaster | Monday, August 10, 2026

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Do these five things now, before there is a fire

- **Sign up** for your county or borough alerts (links by state below).
- **Look up** your evacuation zone and learn its name before you ever need it.
- **Build a go-kit** for every person and every pet.
- **Write a family communication plan** with one out-of-area contact.
- **Clear Zone Zero**, the first five feet around your house.

Know the evacuation levels

Every state in the Pacific Region uses the Ready, Set, Go framework. Do not wait for the last level. If your instincts say leave, leave.

- **Ready (green).** Danger exists. Get informed, prepare, and leave early if you need extra time (older adults, people with disabilities, families with kids, anyone with animals).
- **Set (yellow).** Significant danger. Be ready to go at a moment's notice. Leave now if you feel unsafe; you do not need another notice.
- **Go (red).** Leave immediately. Do not gather belongings or try to protect the house.

Wording varies by state. Oregon and Washington number them **Level 1, 2, 3**. Alaska standardized these terms and colors in state law in 2026. California uses an **Evacuation Warning** (be ready to go) and an **Evacuation Order** (go now). The words differ; the actions do not.

Alerts and notifications by state

Sign up before fire season. Use more than one method, because power and cell service can fail.

Oregon

OR-Alert, one place to find your county's system: <https://oralert.gov>. Delivers calls, texts, and email.

California

No statewide portal; find your county's system through your county or fire agency. CAL FIRE Ready for Wildfire: <https://www.readyforwildfire.org> and the firePLANNER checklist and text alerts: <https://plan.readyforwildfire.org>.

Washington

Evacuation levels and county alert links: <https://mil.wa.gov/alerts>. Sign up through your county emergency management.

Arizona

Arizona Emergency Information Network, statewide news and county notification links: <https://ein.az.gov>. Ready, Set, Go: <https://ein.az.gov/ready-set-go>.

Nevada

Sign up through your county; Washoe and Clark counties run their own systems. Nevada Office of Emergency Management: <https://www.oem.nv.gov>.

Alaska

Alerts are run by boroughs and communities rather than one statewide portal. Nixle is widely used; text your ZIP code to **888777** to start, or sign up through the Alaska State Troopers at <https://dps.alaska.gov>. Statewide wildfire updates and evacuation notices: <https://akfireinfo.com>. Preparedness guidance: <https://ready.alaska.gov>. Road closures: <https://511.alaska.gov>. If your community is off the road system, know its evacuation plan in advance.

Tools that work across the region

- **Genasys Protect** (look up your evacuation zone and get zone-based alerts). Used by most counties in California, Oregon, Washington, and Nevada, and some in Arizona. Search "Know Your Zone" plus your county.
- **Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEA).** Automatic alerts to your phone, no sign-up needed. Keep them enabled, but they cover broad areas, so do not rely on them alone.

- **Watch Duty** (<https://www.watchduty.org>). Real-time fire location and updates, excellent for situational awareness. Your county or borough's official alert is still the authority on when to leave.
- **NOAA Weather Radio**. A reliable backup when power and cell networks go down. Program it for your county.
- **Ready.gov wildfires**: <https://www.ready.gov/wildfires>.

Build a go-kit (one per person, one per pet)

Keep it packed and ready. Include:

- Medications, eyeglasses, and copies of key documents
- Phone and charger, a backup battery, and some cash
- Water and non-perishable food; flashlight and a small first-aid kit
- A full set of evacuation clothing and protective gear (see below)
- For pets: carrier, leash, food, water, and vaccination records. Practice getting your pet into the carrier now. In past fires, residents died going back for animals they could not find.

Fire Safe Marin go-kit guide: <https://firesafemarin.org/prepare-yourself/evacuation-guide/evacuation-go-kit/>

Dress for evacuation

Most people evacuate in whatever they were wearing on a hot day. Keep a full set of this clothing packed in your go-kit year-round so you are not hunting for it in August. Cotton and wool only; synthetic fabrics can melt onto skin. Size the gear for each person: an adult mask or goggles will not seal on a child's face.

- **Long-sleeved cotton or wool shirt and long pants**. Natural fibers resist ignition and will not melt.
- **Heavy leather boots**. Sturdy soles and uppers protect against heat, embers, and debris.
- **Leather gloves**. You may be moving hot or sharp material, opening gates, or clearing a path.
- **Goggles**. The most overlooked item on this list and one of the most important. A single ember or piece of ash in your eye during a wind-driven fire can take your vision at the exact moment you need it, and losing your ability to see during an evacuation can cost you your life.
- **N95 mask**, or a bandana if that is all you have. Filters smoke and particulate and shields your face from radiant heat.
- **Floppy cotton hat with a brim**. Keeps embers off your scalp, out of your hair, and from going down your collar.

Do this ahead of time

- Photograph or scan your IDs, insurance policies, deeds, and financial records and store them in the cloud.
- Decide in advance what you will take if you can only take one carload, or one box.
- Make a family communication plan: one out-of-area contact everyone calls, a meeting point, and a plan for when you are split across home, work, and school.
- Keep at least half a tank of gas at all times during fire season.
- Set up battery backups for your garage door opener, phone, and internet. You will likely lose power.

Fire Safe Marin evacuation checklist: https://firesafemarin.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/FIRESafe_MARIN_Evacuation_Checklist.pdf

If you have to evacuate

- Leave early. Every extra minute of warning you give yourself is safety you keep.
- Stay in your car. It protects you from heat and embers. Drive to pavement and keep going until you reach a designated evacuation center.
- Do not evacuate uphill, onto unpaved roads, or on foot. You cannot outrun a fire.
- If you have no car, shelter inside a hardened building rather than being outside.

Harden your home and clear Zone Zero

Your house is fuel. Embers are the main way homes ignite, and the first five feet decide a lot.

- **Zone Zero (0 to 5 feet)**: keep it clear of anything that burns. No bark mulch, firewood, dead leaves, door mats, cushioned furniture, or combustibles against walls or under decks.
- Clean roof and gutters. Install ember-resistant vents. Keep a Class A roof clear of debris.
- Maintain defensible space all season, not once a year, and especially before hot, dry, windy weather.

Fire Safe Marin (home hardening, Zone Zero, defensible space, and more): <https://firesafemarin.org>

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