



## Fire Recovery Series - | If Fire Comes Your Way- How to Prepare for Evacuation – Part 7

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This is the final installment in the Fire Recovery series.

Wildfire is a part of our lives here in the Sierra Foothills. We can learn to live more safely with the threat of wildfire. Hardening your home and property is a proven strategy to protect from partial to total loss. Working together with your neighbors and larger community is another important factor in increasing the odds of wildfire survival.

The website *Living with Fire* <https://www.livingwithfire.com/get-prepared/> is a valuable resource that takes you through 6 steps of preparedness:

Make My House Fire Safe

Improve My Defensible Space

Easy Access to My Neighborhood & Home

My Evacuation Plan

Making My Community Safer

What Do I Do After the Fire?

It is worth it to take a few minutes to check out the site, download the checklists and start your own plan of Fire Preparedness.



Here are a few highlights from the section on *Preparing your Home and Family for Evacuation*:

- **Meet with household members:** Work as a team to prepare for emergencies. Discuss what to do during power outages and personal injury. Teach members how to turn off

gas and electricity in your home. Identify escape routes from the home and property. List safe places to meet up if you get separated.

- **Develop an emergency contact list:** Include school, work, and friends' numbers. Include some out-of-town contacts too.
- **Create a photo record:** Take pictures or video of the main property structures and landscape. Video tape a room-by-room catalog of home contents.
- **Design an EVACUATED sign:** Select a site to post where it will be visible from the street.
- **Post a visible address sign:** Recommended size is 3" tall with reflective, metal lettering/numbering.
- **Download an evacuation checklist:** Keep the list in a central location. Create a GO Bag for each member of the family. Decide on clothes to wear.
- **Register for local emergency alerts:** <https://www.mariposacounty.org/list.aspx>
- **Prepare your vehicle:** Keep your gas tank full. Have a dry run of how to pack your car for evacuation. Have an extra set of keys in a central location. If your car is parked in the garage learn how to disconnect the garage door opener in case of electricity cut off.
- **Stage your home:** Close all interiors doors, leave a light on in each room, remove as much furniture, curtains, etc. away from windows to center of the room, turn off pilot light, close fireplace damper, close or block doggie-doors, lock up firearms and valuables.
- **Arrange the outside:** Remove all combustible furniture, BBQs, wood piles, etc. away from the house. shut off propane tank, turn on outside lights, turn off irrigation system, close all exterior vents, doors and windows, leave doors and gates unlocked.
- **Ready Pets:** Have identification on your animal, have a GO bag for your pet with vet info, food, bedding, leash, water and have a crate for each animal.
- **Set up livestock, horses, other large animals:** Have a livestock trailer and reliable vehicle for towing the trailer, dry run loading your animals. If you must leave animals behind, notify your local animal services agency: <https://www.mariposacounty.org/1475/DisasterEmergency-Animal-Evacuation>
- **Assemble lighting:** Evacuation might not happen during the day. Make sure to have flashlights centrally located for night evacuations.
- **Power Up:** Keep cell phones, laptops, etc. charged.

Being prepared is your best defense against wildfire. Remember that if evacuation is required, it possibly will be dark, smoky, windy, and hot with no power or telephone and poor water pressure. Having a plan in place can help lessen the stress of a scary situation. Evacuate immediately when asked. There are no belongings worth your life and the life of your household members and animals.

*UC Master Gardeners of Mariposa County are located in Mariposa at 5009 Fairgrounds Rd. Visit our website at <http://cemariposa.ucanr.edu/MasterGardener/> and Facebook page (UC Master Gardeners of Mariposa County) for more gardening information and events. UC Master Gardeners staff a Helpline serving Mariposa County, including Greely Hill, Coulterville and Lake Don Pedro (209-966-7078 or [mgmariposa@ucdavis.edu](mailto:mgmariposa@ucdavis.edu)). Listen to us on the radio at KRYZ 98.5 Mariposa on Wednesdays at 2:00 and Saturdays at 5:00.*