



What To Do When Trapped – In Vehicle or Outside

If you are about to be trapped by approaching flames in your vehicle or out in the open, use these strategies to protect yourself.

Step 1: Remain Calm

- An approaching wildfire will be extremely loud, create extreme heat and smoke, and will likely evoke fear and panic. However, the active flames will pass.

Step 2: Prepare Safe Zones

- **Whether in a vehicle or on foot, select an area that will not burn or an area with the least amount of combustible material. The bigger the area, the better.** Examples include irrigated pastures, golf courses, parking lots, large ponds, depressions in the ground, or any area that will not support combustion.
- If trapped in a vehicle, park the vehicle off the road, if possible.

Step 3: Protect Yourself

- **Use every means possible to protect yourself and your lungs from the extreme heat emitted by the flames.**
- If trapped outside, protect yourself using natural features like boulders, rock outcrops, large downed logs or trees.
- **If trapped in a vehicle, stay inside until the fire has passed.** The car should remain on with windows rolled up and AC recirculation on.
 - Lie on the vehicle floor and cover yourself with a natural fibered blanket or jacket.
 - Avoid direct contact with metal parts of the vehicle if possible as they will be hot.
 - **Evacuate on foot as a last resort.**
- **Call 9-1-1 for help if you need medical assistance and cannot leave the area after the fire has passed.**

Learn more about preparing for evacuation by visiting <https://ucanr.edu/program/uc-anr-fire-network/prepare-evacuation>.