

The Wildland/Urban Interface



Part B: The Approaching Wildfire

(Rev. 01/31/2005)

Objectives

Students will learn:

- How to pre-plan for evacuation
- Evacuation notification procedures
- Last minute preparations & when to evacuate
- What to do when trapped
- Other options



Pre-planning your Evacuation

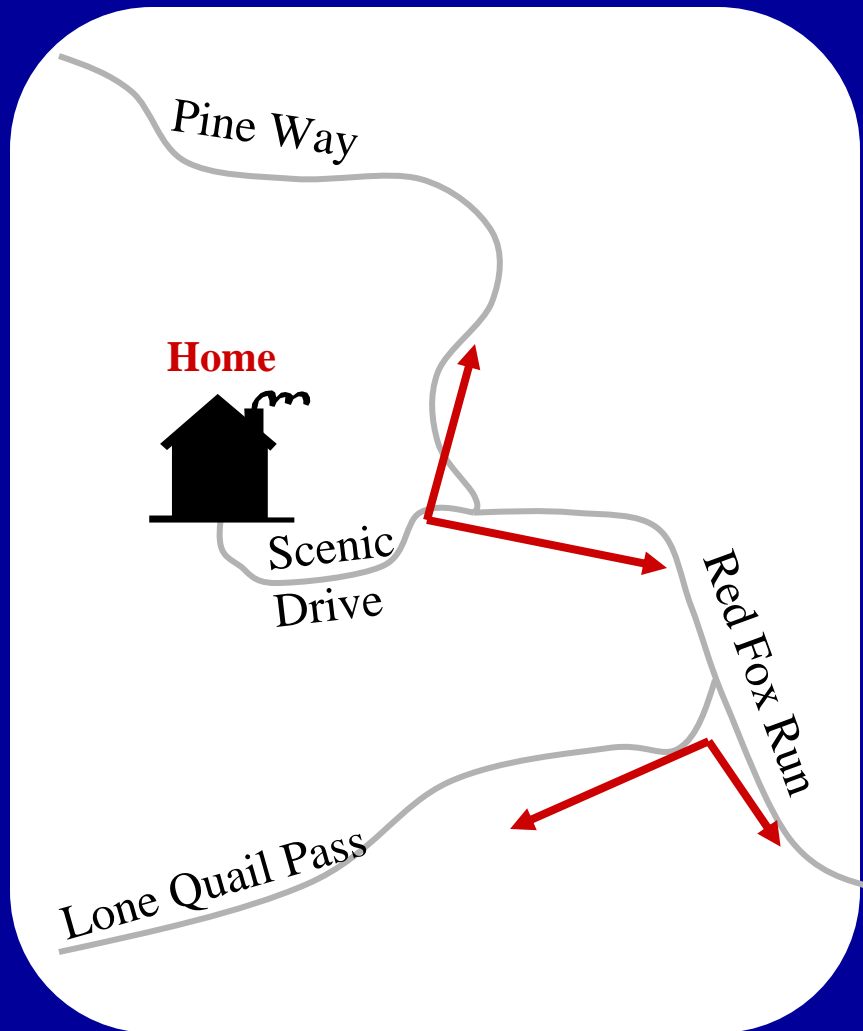


Get Ready...



- Pre-plan your evacuation routes

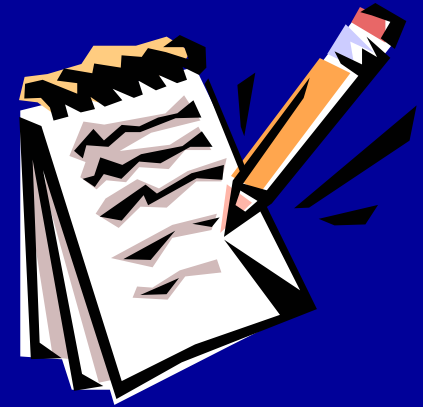
Two Ways Out



Narrow roads can cause traffic congestion, leading to panic for those evacuating.

- Pre-plan at least two evacuation routes out of your neighborhood.
- Roads should accommodate two-way traffic.

Get Ready...



- **Make a list of “Important Items”**
(things that cannot be left behind)
 - Medications, prescriptions, eyeglasses
 - Important documents (birth certificates, tax records, etc.)
 - Photos, art, jewelry and other important mementos
 - Pets, pet food, leash(es), pet carrier(s)
- **Now assemble a “Go Kit” containing the above**
- **Design a Neighborhood “Network”**

Neighborhood "Networks"

**Emergency resources will be limited;
build a network of neighbors to rely on!**

- Develop a neighborhood phone tree
 - This will help expedite evacuation orders, however the phone system may go down. Design a backup!
- Make evacuation pre-plans with those who have special needs in your neighborhood...enlist their help!

Get Ready...

Have an evacuation/transportation plan for horses, livestock, and pets.



Evacuation Procedures



Evacuation Notification

- Fire Service Officials call for evacuations
- Law Enforcement carries out evacuation orders via:
 - Patrol cars
 - Helicopters
 - Door to door
- Depending on location and speed of approaching fire, evacuation orders may not reach everyone.
- Neighborhood phone trees can help expedite evacuation orders



Evacuation Notification

- CERT members may be called upon to activate their local area's evacuation plan – but not always
- Working in pairs, team members should assist area residents in an orderly evacuation.
- Stay tuned to local radio stations for messages from the County's Emergency Alert System (EAS).



When Wildfire Approaches



Evacuation Know when to go...

**When wildfire threatens...
put your plan into *action!***



- Activate your neighborhood phone tree and advise your family contact
- Gather your family, pets & “important items”
- If time permits, prepare your home.
- If at any time you feel threatened... GO!

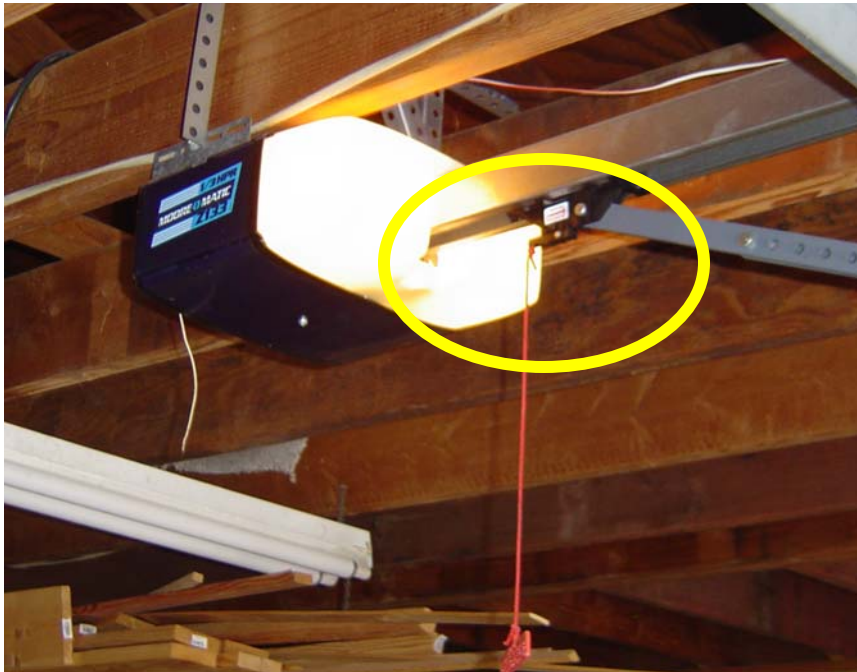
Evacuation Before you go...

IF THERE'S TIME, PREPARE YOUR HOME:

- Close all windows and doors
- Shut off air conditioning & heating units
- Close fireplace doors & damper, if possible
- Move furniture & draperies/curtains away from windows
- Move combustibles & fire wood away from home's exterior
- Shut off the gas meter or propane tank
- Turn all the lights on in your home



Evacuation Before you go...



- Back your car into the garage & turn off the engine
- Leave keys in the ignition
- Keep garage door(s) closed until you are ready to leave
- Disconnect electric garage door(s) from the motor

GATES:

- Disconnect motor on automatic gates
- Leave manual gates open & unlocked



Evacuation Before you go...

IF THERE'S TIME, PREPARE YOUR HOME:

- Fill trash cans and buckets with water, leave around exterior of house
- Soak rags, towels and small rugs in water to help extinguish small embers
- Attach garden hoses to spigots outside
- Place a ladder against the house, opposite from where fire is approaching
- As you are preparing to leave, stay tuned to radio and TV stations for updated instructions & information



Prepare your home...

IF THERE'S TIME:

Use a fire-resistive material (like plywood) to cover up a home's vulnerable areas:

- Eave vents
- Sub-floor vents
- Roof vents
- Windows



Prepare your home...

ONLY if you are TRAINED & EQUIPPED:

Limb-up and/or drop trees.

Remove combustible fencing to prevent fire from reaching buildings.

Placing a sprinkler on your roof does not work in all cases. Take the steps below instead!

Apply “special treatments” (like gel or foam) to buildings right before you evacuate.



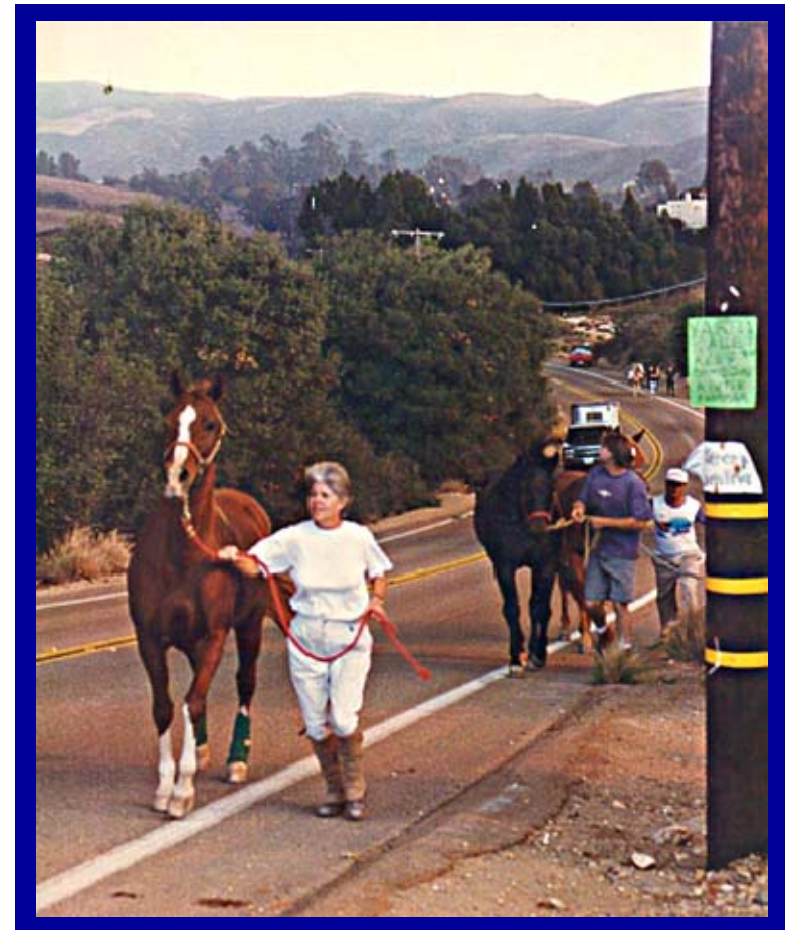
Advanced training is needed!

Consult with your local fire authority to see if they support this training.



Evacuate large animals early!

- If you have horses, be sure you own trailers for them.
- Know how to drive a truck with trailer.
- Trailer-train your horses.



EVACUATE!



A photograph showing a severely damaged, charred car on a road. The car is heavily crushed and appears to be a dark color, possibly black or dark grey, with significant structural damage. The background shows a road lined with trees, some of which are bare and charred, suggesting a wildfire impact. The sky is overcast. A large white text overlay is centered over the image, reading: "Most wildfire-related injuries and deaths occur during evacuation efforts."

Most wildfire-related injuries and deaths occur during evacuation efforts.

Evacuation What to expect...

Heavy smoke

Flying embers/fire brands

High volume of cars and trailers

Panicked drivers

Abandoned vehicles



Get Going!

Evacuate **EARLY**... the earlier the better.

- Review your “special needs” plan
 - Does a neighbor need your assistance?
 - Are your pets ready to go?
- Close your garage door behind you
- Leave all access gates open
- Drive safely and cautiously
- Keep headlights on and windows rolled up



Evacuation **TRAPPED!**

IF YOU CAN NOT EVACUATE:

At home:

- Stay inside your home; it's safer than being outside or in a vehicle.
- Close all exterior doors (including garage door *after* putting the car inside).
- Stay calm, initiate contact with your out-of-state relative.
- Call your local emergency number (i.e., 911) and inform the dispatcher that you can't evacuate.

Evacuation **TRAPPED!**

IF YOU CAN NOT EVACUATE:

At home:

- Fill sinks and bathtubs with water
- Shelter in rooms opposite the approaching fire
- Stay away from perimeter walls
- Close all interior doors, leaving them unlocked
- Stay as calm as you can, keep your family together
- Fire-fronts can take 5 to 15 minutes *or longer* to pass

KEEP IN MIND:



**As hot as it gets inside your home,
it is many times hotter outside!**

Evacuation **TRAPPED!**

In your car:

- Try to drive to an area clear of vegetation, away from wires and trees
- Close all windows and keep doors unlocked
- Turn on A/C in “re-circulation” or “max” mode
- Lie on the floor
- Cover yourself with a wool or cotton blanket or jacket

Evacuation **TRAPPED!**



In your car:

- Attempt to call your local emergency number
- Wait for the fire front to pass

KEEP IN MIND:

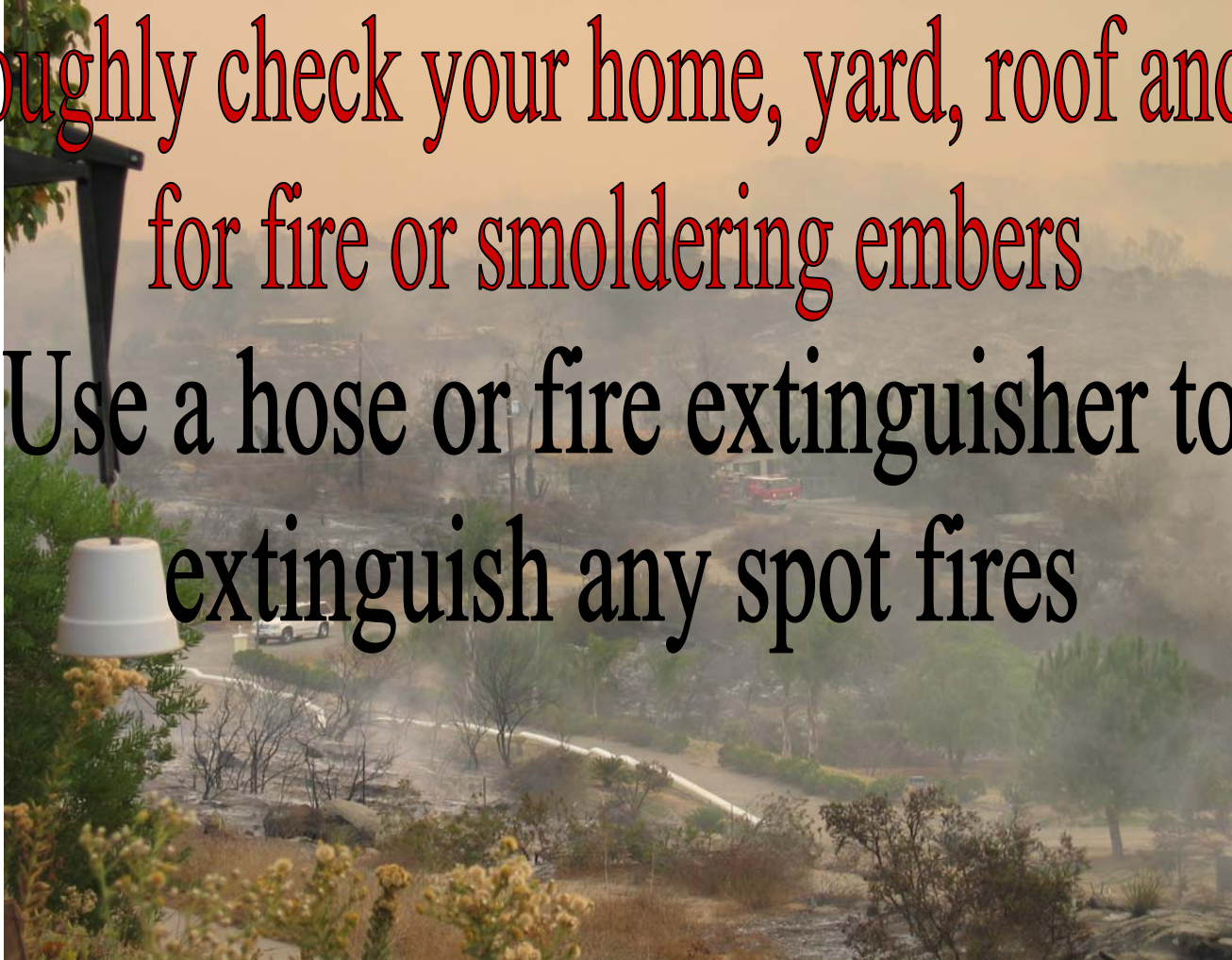
- There will be smoke in your car
- After the fire front passes, if you see flames in your vehicle, wrap yourself in clothing/blankets and exit the vehicle.

Do not attempt to out-run a wildfire!

After the fire passes...

Thoroughly check your home, yard, roof and attic
for fire or smoldering embers

Use a hose or fire extinguisher to
extinguish any spot fires



After the fire passes...

- Keep the doors and windows closed
- Continue rechecking your home and yard for at least 12 hours
- Update your out-of-state family contact of your status



Other Options



"Shelter in Place"

DEFINITIONS:

- **Pre-established “safe zones:”**
 - Areas where residents can safely gather until the emergency subsides
- **Neighborhoods designed to shelter citizens in their homes during a wildfire:**
 - Specific fire-resistive construction and landscape features must be in place

Contact your local Fire Authority to find out if they support shelter in place!

Stay and Defend?

- Each year, professionally trained firefighters are killed while fighting wildfires.
- Citizens also perish during these events.
- If you are considering staying behind, *and your local fire agency supports this*, advanced training is a must!



Stay and Defend?

- **Make an informed decision based on:**
 - Your training
 - Your physical abilities
 - The known fire conditions
 - Past fire history in the area, and
 - The advice of your local emergency services
- **Dress appropriately:**
 - Wear long sleeves, pants (cotton or wool) and closed-toe shoes. **NO SYNTHETICS!**
- **Keep a level head – try to remain calm.**

Summary



An approaching wildfire presents an extremely dangerous situation!

- Have realistic expectations of the capabilities of firefighters and law enforcement
- Design a plan for evacuation; develop a “neighborhood network”
- Practice your evacuation plan in advance and know how to prepare your home before you leave
- Make educated decisions on when to evacuate and how to utilize other options, if available.

The CERT Member

Affects a positive impact on the survivability of themselves, their family, their neighbors and their community!

