



# Cal Fire Guide to Evacuation



The Cal Fire firefighters that performed trimming and vegetation removal along Peninsula Drive, in concert with our maintenance crews, are finished for the year. Their work extended from the Peninsula Gate almost to the south end of Peninsula Drive. A hardy thanks go out to them. Also, Sue McCourt, a fire prevention specialist with Plumas County, has produced an LACC Evacuation Map available to all members. It will be placed on our website and it is on Peninsula Fire Department's Facebook page.

Be prepared to take action during a community fire. Despite taking steps to create and maintain defensible space around your home and despite taking steps to harden your home against wildfire in our community, a fire evacuation order may be issued. The following article provides recommendations for pre-evacuation planning for inside your house, outside your house, and for your animals. It also gives guidelines as to when to evacuate.  
Barbara MacArthur, Firewise Chairperson (v. FireNews16\_7)

## PRE-EVACUATION PREPARATION STEPS

When an evacuation is anticipated, follow these checklists (if time allows) to give your home the best chance of surviving a wildfire.

### Home Evacuation Checklist – How to Prepare for Evacuation:

#### Inside the House

- Shut all windows and doors, leaving them unlocked.
- Remove flammable window shades, curtains and close metal shutters.
- Remove lightweight curtains.
- Move flammable furniture to the center of the room, away from windows and doors.
- Shut off gas at the meter; turn off pilot lights.
- Leave your lights on so firefighters can see your house under smoky conditions.
- Shut off the air conditioning.

#### Outside

- Gather up flammable items from the exterior of the house and bring them inside (patio furniture, children's toys, door mats, trash cans, etc.) or place them in your pool.
- Turn off propane tanks.
- Move propane BBQ appliances away from structures.
- Connect garden hoses to outside water valves or spigots for use by firefighters. Fill water buckets and place them around the house.
- Don't leave sprinklers on or water running, they can affect critical water pressure.
- Leave exterior lights on so your home is visible to firefighters in the smoke or darkness of night.
- Put your Emergency Supply Kit in your vehicle.
- Back your car into the driveway with vehicle loaded and all doors and windows closed. Carry your car keys with you.
- Have a ladder available and place it at the corner of the house for firefighters to quickly access your roof.
- Seal attic and ground vents with pre-cut plywood or commercial seals.
- Patrol your property and monitor the fire situation. Don't wait for an evacuation order if you feel threatened.
- Check on neighbors and make sure they are preparing to leave.

#### Animals

- Locate your pets and keep them nearby.
- Prepare farm animals for transport and think about moving them to a safe location early.

## TAKE ACTION IMMEDIATELY WHEN WILDFIRE STRIKES

When immediate evacuation is necessary, follow these steps as soon as possible to get ready to GO!

### Evacuation: What to Take and Do:

1. Review your [Evacuation Plan Checklist](#).
2. Ensure your [Emergency Supply Kit](#) is in your vehicle.
3. Cover-up to protect against heat and flying embers. Wear long pants, long sleeve shirt, heavy shoes/boots, cap, dry bandanna for face cover, goggles or glasses. 100% cotton is preferable.
4. Locate your pets and take them with you.

### WHEN TO EVACUATE

Leave as soon as evacuation is recommended by fire officials to avoid being caught in fire, smoke or road congestion. Don't wait to be ordered by authorities to leave. Evacuating the forest fire area early also helps firefighters keep roads clear of congestion, and lets them move more freely to do their job. In an intense wildfire, they will not have time to knock on every door. If you are advised to leave, don't hesitate!

- Officials will determine the areas to be evacuated and escape routes to use depending upon the fire's location, behavior, winds, terrain, etc.
- Law enforcement agencies are typically responsible for enforcing an evacuation order. Follow their directions promptly.
- You will be advised of potential evacuations as early as possible. You must take the initiative to stay informed and aware. Listen to your radio/TV for announcements from law enforcement and emergency personnel.
- You may be directed to temporary assembly areas to await transfer to a safe location.

The terms "Voluntary" and "Mandatory" are used to describe evacuation orders. However, local jurisdictions may use other terminology such as "Precautionary" and "Immediate Threat." These terms are used to alert you to the significance of the danger. All evacuation instructions provided by officials should be followed immediately for your safety.

Do not return to your home until fire officials determine it is safe. Notification that it is safe to return home will be given as soon as possible considering safety and accessibility.

### WHEN YOU RETURN HOME:

- Be alert for downed power lines and other hazards.
- Check propane tanks, regulators, and lines before turning gas on.
- Check your residence carefully for hidden embers or smoldering fires.

Source: <http://www.readyforwildfire.org/Go-Evacuation-Guide/>

## NEXT MONTH: *Practical Steps to Vegetation Thinning*