

# BEE PREPARED

## EMERGENCY READINESS GUIDE

**Take  
the *Sting*  
out of  
Disaster!**



### **Evacuate Early With Your Pets**

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# Home Security Tips To Follow

**Families move to our mountain communities for a variety of reasons, one of them being a feeling of a safer place to live. But crime still happens, even here in the mountains. Here are a few home security tips gathered from experts in law enforcement and crime prevention.**

Residential burglary often occurs during the day while you are away at work or when you are away from home for an extended period of time. By making your home more difficult to enter or less attractive to a burglar, you can minimize the risk of being victimized.

Here are a few tips from the National Crime Prevention Council for you to consider.

#### **LOCK DOORS AND WINDOWS.**

- Exterior doors are solid wood or metal-clad.
- Lock all your doors at night and every time you leave the house.
- Make sure every window and sliding door has a working key lock or is securely pinned.
- Secure windows and sliding doors with secondary block-

ing devices (such as a stick or wooden dowel).

- Use anti-lift devices to prevent windows and glass doors from being lifted out.
- Windows are always locked, even when they are opened a few inches for ventilation.

#### **CRIME-PROOF OUTSIDE AREAS.**

- Lighting is one of the most cost-effective deterrents to burglary.
- Keep yard, porch, garage doors, pathways and entrances well lit at night.
- Consider motion detecting lights which turn on automatically as someone approaches.
- Trim plants and shrubs that could serve as hiding places for criminals.
- Cut back tree limbs that could help thieves climb into windows
- Consider light timers for exterior lighting to establish a routine and appearance of occupancy.
- Make sure your house number is clearly displayed so emergency responders can find your house quickly.

#### **GET TO KNOW YOUR NEIGHBORS.**

- Start a neighborhood watch program.
- Get to know your neighbors on each side of your home and across the street.
- Ask neighbors to pick up newspapers in front of your home, and park in your driveway

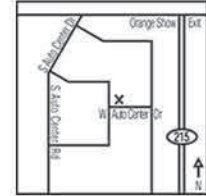
**Security Tips** *continued on 4*

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**Security Tips** *continued from 2*

or on your deck to give the appearance of occupancy while on vacation.

- Get to know each other's schedules so you can spot an unusual pattern.

**CONSIDER AN ALARM.**

- Display alarm company signs and decals on the windows and lawn; burglars will usually bypass a property with visible alarm signs.

- Don't write your alarm passcode on or near the alarm keypad.

- Alarm systems monitor for fire as well as burglary.

- Learn how to use your system properly.

**PROTECT YOURSELF WITH LOCK AND KEY.**

- Don't hide keys. Leave a key with a trusted family member, friend or neighbor.

- Keep a list of everyone you give a copy of your keys to.

- Consider keys with protection against unauthorized duplication (i.e. patent protected).

- All entryways should have a sturdy dead-bolt lock installed into the frame of the door.

- Use high quality Grade 1 or Grade 2 locks with a bolt that extends at least one inch to resist prying open or forceful entry.

- Hardened steel inserts prevents bolts from being sawed off.

**PROTECT YOUR HOME WHEN TRAVELING.**

- Be sure to activate the alarm system (if you have one).

- Inform a trusted neighbor of your travel plans.

- Consider using automatic timers to switch interior lights on and off at preset times. Indoor lighting gives the impression of occupancy.

- For extended absences, consider hiring a trusted housesitter.

- Don't advertise your absence. Never leave a message on your answering machine that tells thieves you are away. Don't announce your vacation on social media by posting the latest photos of your travels.

**PROTECT YOUR VALUABLES.**

- Gate latches, garage doors and shed doors are all locked with high-security, laminated padlocks.

- Grills, bicycles and other valuables left out in the open should be hidden from view with a tarp and securely locked to a stationary point.

- Keep a home inventory of valuables including serial numbers, pictures and sale receipts. Keep a complete copy somewhere out of the house.

**TEACH HOME SAFETY TO YOUR KIDS.**

- Show them how to use the door and window locks, and the alarm system.

- Never let them allow anyone into your home without asking your permission.

- Never let a caller at the door or on the phone know that they're alone. Teach them to say, "Mom can't come to the phone (or door) right now."

- Be sure they carry a house key with them in a safe place. Don't leave it under a mat or on a ledge outside the house.

- Be sure they know how to call 9-1-1.

**HAVE AN EMERGENCY PLAN.**

- Have important phone numbers, including police and fire departments, by the phone.

- Establish a meeting place for family members—one place near your home and one outside your neighborhood.

- If something looks questionable, such as a slit screen, a broken window or an open door, don't go in. Call 9-1-1.

- If you think you hear someone breaking in, leave safely if you can, then call 9-1-1. If you can't leave, lock yourself in a room with a phone and call 9-1-1.

**TAKE A STAND!**

- Join your neighborhood watch group. If one doesn't exist, you can start one with help from the sheriff's Twin Peaks station.

- Work with neighbors and to organize community clean-ups. The cleaner your neighborhood, the less attractive it is to crime.



# Fire Season Is Now Year-Round

**California's fire season historically has been from late September to just after Thanksgiving. But with a five-year drought that shows no sign of easing, over the past few years fire season really has become a year-round cause for concern, especially in our San Bernardino Mountains.**

Conditions across the state are much drier than normal. These dry conditions make it much easier for a wildfire to ignite and to burn hotter and faster than we would normally see this time of year.

As of June, the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (Cal Fire) had already responded to more than 2,400 wildfires in 2016. As we move deeper into the summer months and fall months, conditions will only dry out further, increasing the fire danger even higher.

The ongoing drought has also brought back the bark beetle

problem to the San Bernardino Mountains.

Bark beetles are naturally occurring species in the Southern California forests. Under normal conditions they occur at low population levels, going unnoticed by humans. In recent years conditions have become favorable for bark beetle population growth, which ultimately led to the current outbreak. Several factors have led to this favorable beetle environment.

First, decades of fire suppression have resulted in over-crowded forests. The dense stands of mature trees compete for limited nutrients and water, reducing the health of the stands.

Second, long-term exposure to air pollution, particularly ozone, has reduced the health of conifers in the forest. Excessive ozone exposure causes premature loss of pine needles, reducing the trees' ability to produce food and tissues.

Third, Southern California experienced five continuous years of drought. This long-term water stress further reduced the health of the conifers. The combination of these factors has resulted in a forest full of unhealthy vulnerable trees.

The Forest Service earlier this year released the outcome of its latest aerial surveys over California forestland, finding that over 66 million trees have

now died due to drought and bark beetles since 2010.

That number is up from 29 million dead trees in 2015 and 3.3 million in 2014.

It's important to note that droughts don't cause wildfires, according to a Cal Fire official. They simply make conditions even more prime for wildfires. That's why preventing wildfires in the first place is so important.

With California's serious drought conditions, it's critical that everyone do their part to conserve water so we have it for drinking and emergencies like wildfires.

Approximately 95 percent of all wildfires that firefighters respond to are caused by people, so while Cal Fire is staffed and ready to respond, the public needs to do its part and prevent sparking a wildfire. With the public's help one less spark means one less wildfire.

## EMERGENCY ALERT WARNINGS

One thing the public can do is to sign up for emergency alert warnings.

In an effort to quickly commu-



nicate information on impending dangers, San Bernardino County Sheriff and Fire Departments send high-speed mass notifications via telephone and text messages. This system is known as the Telephone Emergency Notification System (TENS).

The county uses a database of landline telephone numbers, which is updated every six months, to send emergency messages to landline phones only. To find the form to sign up for emergency alerts go to the county's web page at [www.sbcounty.gov/sbcfire/Tens/TensContact.aspx](http://www.sbcounty.gov/sbcfire/Tens/TensContact.aspx).



ANDREA GARCIA

### Fire Season *continued from 5*

By signing up, residents can also receive emergency text messages on their cell phones. Those without Internet connections can sign up by calling 2-1-1 or (888) 435-7565.

TENS alerts do not generally go out to the entire county but instead are targeted to affected areas. You must enter a valid San Bernardino County address. This is the address for which you will receive alerts.

The County of San Bernardino utilizes multiple ways to notify residents of impending danger, but residents should not wait for or rely exclusively on any single notification system. If you are concerned about your safety and welfare, please evacuate.

### BE READY TO GO

Be ready to evacuate should

a wildfire threaten. When the time comes to leave, don't hesitate. County Fire has put together a Ready, Set, Go! personal wildfire action plan to give you the tips and tools to successfully prepare for a wildfire. It will give you guidance on retrofitting your home with fire-resistive features, and show you how you create the necessary defensible space around your home.

This plan will help you prepare your home, yourself and your family so you can leave early, well ahead of a fast-approaching wildfire.

When law enforcement advises of evacuations, leave early. By leaving early, you will give your family the best chance of surviving a wildfire. You also help firefighters by keeping roads clear of congestion, enabling

them to move more freely and do their job.

Leave early enough to avoid being caught in fire, smoke or road congestion. Don't wait to be told by authorities to leave. In an intense wildfire, they may not have time to knock on every door. If you are advised to leave, don't hesitate!

Head to your family's designated meeting site. Remember that during a natural disaster, cell towers may be overburdened with traffic; trying to contact someone about a new location can be too difficult. Going to the designated location safely outside of the fire area is the safest bet.

Take your emergency supply kit containing your family's and pet's necessary items, such as cash, water, clothing, food, first aid kits, medications and toys. Don't forget valuables, such

as your computer, photos and important documents. Remember, most shelters will not allow animals. If you need to take a pet to a shelter or stable, leaving early will give you enough time.

Before you leave, do one last walk through and make sure your home is fully prepared. Gather up flammable items from the exterior of the house and bring them inside (e.g., patio furniture, children's toys, doormats, etc.) or place them in your pool. Connect garden hoses to outside taps, leave exterior lights on, and seal your attic and ground vents with pre-cut plywood or commercial seals.

To learn more on how you can be prepared for a wildfire and create your own Ready! Set! Go! plan, visit [www.sbcfire.org](http://www.sbcfire.org).

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# Fire Education: A Must for Our Children

By Mary-Justine Lanyon

There's something magical about fire. Generations of campers have gathered around the fire at night, roasting marshmallows and telling ghost stories. There's nothing quite like the crackle of a fire in the fireplace on a cold winter's night. And mention the word "barbecue," and you'll have neighbors running to your home from every access road on the mountain.

However, there is absolutely nothing magical about a fire that has been intentionally set. Several years ago, someone lit a magazine on fire and stuffed it under a log off Old Toll Road in Lake Arrowhead. The good news is someone spotted the small fire and called it in. Firefighters responded quickly and extinguished the fire.

Earlier this year, a transient started a fire just off Highway 18. A retired fireman wrestled the man to the ground and put out the fire he had started.

Parents, teachers, Scout leaders: Now is the time to educate our young people about the consequences of such irresponsible acts. While children are naturally curious about fire, we must teach them to be fire smart.

That teaching has to take the form of actions, not just words. Demonstrate care to your children when lighting a fire in the barbecue. Teach your Scouts the proper way to put out a campfire. Store any matches or lighters in safe places in your homes.

The fire departments have

educational programs for schools, Scout troops and parents to both teach children about fire safety and intervene in the case of a child who has been caught lighting fires.

Parents or educators may call the San Bernardino County Fire Juvenile Fire Setter Intervention Program at (909) 386-8400 to arrange for a referral to the program.

The fire marshal has an abundance of educational information on the County Fire website (sb-fire.org). Review this with your children, your students, children, your Scouts.

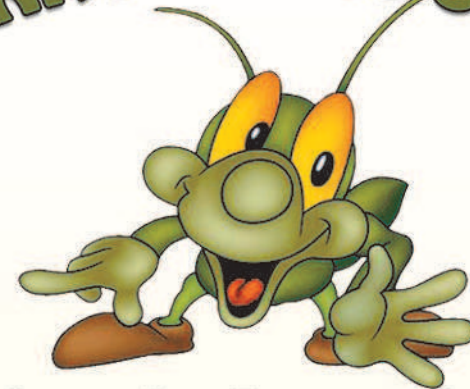
In the Home Fire Safety section, readers learn that fire is fast...hot...dark...and deadly. What is a bonfire? When is one permitted? What are the rules for recreational fires and barbecue pits? Get the answers in the Outdoor Fire Safety section.

What about the risks of candles or portable heaters? How about safety in the kitchen?

The Old Fire of 2003...the Grass Valley and Slide Fires of 2007...this year's Pilot Fire—they are all too fresh in our minds. We need to teach our children that fire can have dire consequences. Talk about how dry this winter was. Look at the hillsides and have your children consider what could happen should someone carelessly drop a match.

Let's all work together so we can enjoy everything our mountain communities have to offer.

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# The Importance of Practicing Drills

Every mountain resident should have plans in place for what to do in case of a home fire or an earthquake.

What to do is completely opposite for the two: For a fire, you want to leave your home; for an earthquake, staying put is in order.

## FIRE DRILLS

Nearly 50 percent of people who die in home fires were trying to escape when they died. A developed exit plan, and practice of a home fire drill, might have saved their lives.

Everyone in the household should take part in planning the family's escape.

Think about how you will escape from every room, starting with bedrooms.

If possible, plan two escape routes from each room. Your second route may be to go out a window or to stand at a window where firefighters can see you.

Decide where you will meet outside.

Plan everyone's role. Who will make sure the children get



out? Plan for special needs. Do you have young children? Older adults? People with temporary or permanent disabilities?

Share your plan with babysitters and frequent visitors.

Keep your floors, hallways and stairs clear of clutter.

Practice your home fire drill. At least twice a year, push the smoke alarm button to start your home fire drill.

Get out fast.

Practice escaping from bedrooms when people are asleep.

Make sure everyone in your household can open all doors and windows. Security bars on windows should have emergency release devices so they can be opened easily from the inside.

Go to your meeting place. In a real fire, get out and stay out. Call 9-1-1 from outside.

Smoke alarms are critical to your safety. Install them on each level of your house, especially outside bedrooms.

Test smoke alarms once a month. Change standard batteries twice a year; County Fire suggests doing this when you change your clocks.

## EARTHQUAKE DRILLS

Federal, state and local emergency management experts and other preparedness organizations agree that "Drop, Cover and Hold On" is the appropriate action to take during earthquakes to help reduce injury and death.

As with anything, practice makes perfect. Be ready to protect yourself immediately when the ground begins to shake:

**DROP** to the ground (before the earthquake drops you!).

Take **COVER** by getting under a sturdy desk or table.

**HOLD ON** to it until the shaking stops.

If there isn't a table or desk near you, drop to the ground in an inside corner of the building and cover your head and neck with your hands and arms. Do not try to run to another room just to get under a table.

Studies of injuries and deaths caused by earthquakes in the U.S. over the last several decades show you are much more likely to be injured by falling or flying objects—TVs, lamps, glass, bookcases—than to die in a collapsed building.

## WHAT NOT TO DO IN AN EARTHQUAKE

**DO NOT** get in a doorway. In modern houses and buildings, doorways are no safer and they do not protect you from flying or falling objects.

**DO NOT** run outside. Trying to run in an earthquake is dangerous as the ground is moving and you can easily fall or be injured by debris or glass.





# Prepare for Earthquake Events



**By Heidi Fron**

Without earthquakes, we would have no mountains. Earthquakes can be a challenge for those living on top of the world. To reduce risks, follow these guidelines to be prepared. Instruct family members on what to do during an earthquake. And know what actions to take afterward.

## **BEFORE**

Keep emergency supplies available. Use the list for an emergency kit in the event of a fire and evacuation (see “Plan Ahead for Evacuation” in this issue). Additional items are needed for a

serious earthquake. Gather everything in one convenient location.

Keep sturdy shoes accessible to avoid injury from broken glass and debris. Sandals and flip flops will not protect your feet.

Keep a first-aid kit and handbook where you can find them easily. If you have not taken first aid and CPR training classes, do so now.

In addition to fire extinguishers already placed around your home, keep one or more extinguishers with your emergency supplies.

Crescent and pipe wrenches

might be needed to turn off gas and water services. Know where shutoff valves are in case of a gas leak, electrical short or broken water pipes. Mature family members must know how to turn off utilities.

A flashlight will be needed to turn off utilities in the dark, as well as being useful for emergency purposes. A portable or wind-up radio will help you stay informed. Have extra batteries and bulbs in the kit.

Consider keeping a tent with the kit in case your home is structurally damaged and road

access to a shelter is cut off.

Store drinking water, at least one gallon for each family member for at least three days, plus water for your pet(s). If the emergency situation lasts more than three days, use purification tablets or chlorine bleach to purify water from other sources.

Keep a supply of medications for family members, rotating fresh medications into the supply to avoid outdated medicine.

Stock canned and packaged foods, and pet food, to last for several days, with durable dishes for all. Include a hand-operated can opener and a couple of pots and pans. A camp stove or barbecue will be useful for outdoor cooking. Don't forget fuel and matches for the stove or barbecue. Waterproof, heavy-duty plastic trash bags are a necessity.

Keep a supply of food and water at work or in your car. Find out if your employer's emergency plan includes enough food and water for employees who might be stranded. Find out about the earthquake plan at your child's school or day care center.

Establish your strategy. Be sure each family member knows what to do wherever they are when an earthquake occurs. Identify meeting places for reuniting afterward if at home, or safe locations to stay if necessary (e.g., a friend's home near the school).

Know locations of the near-

**Earthquake** *continued from 9*

est fire, police and medical facilities. Discuss with neighbors how you can help each other after an earthquake.

**DURING**

If you suddenly feel nauseous and your vision becomes blurred, the chaotic movement of the ground is likely to be a high magnitude earthquake. If you are indoors, stay inside. Do not rush outside where you might be hit by falling debris. Don't run downstairs while there is danger of falling and getting hurt.

Get under a desk or table and hold on to it, move into a hallway or stay against an inside wall. Keep away from the kitchen, appliances, windows, fireplaces, china cabinets and bookcases.

If you are outside when an earthquake occurs, get into

the open, away from buildings, chimneys, trees, power lines and anything that might fall on you.

While driving, do not stop on a bridge or under an overpass. Cautiously get out of traffic and stop carefully, not suddenly. Avoid dry grass.

Stay away from light posts, power lines, trees and signs. Remain in the car until aftershocks stop.

If you resume driving, watch for broken pavement and bumps in the road, especially near bridges. Avoid fallen rocks, trees, landslides and debris.

**AFTER**

Check for injuries. Administer first aid or CPR as needed. Do not move an injured person unless there is a threat of further injury from falling debris or other danger.

Use your phone only for a serious medical or fire emergency.

In case of fire, call for help but don't wait for firefighters to arrive. Attempt to put out a fire in your home or neighborhood without putting yourself in danger. Firefighters, police or paramedics won't be available while handling other serious emergencies.

Do not eat or drink anything from open containers near shattered glass.

Eat perishable foods first. Keep the freezer door closed;

the contents will keep for a couple of days. Consume those next, then use packaged and canned goods last.



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# Evacuate Early With Your Pets

By Heidi Fron

Your pets are members of your family. When making plans for your family in case of a disaster, include plans for pets. “Do not leave your pet alone in an emergency,” said Dr. Patrick Rains of the Arrowhead Animal Hospital. “Evacuate early!”

## PLAN AHEAD

“The best plan for pets is to keep them with you,” Rains emphasizes. “That means identifying your evacuation site in advance and making sure your pets will be welcome.”

Contact a few hotels to arrange for your family and pets to stay there in case of emergency. If disaster arises, let them know you’re coming and confirm your room(s).

SueEllen Knapp, a mountain resident with 38 years of hands-on animal rescue work, urges adopting a policy that no one gets left behind.

Relatives or friends in a safe community might host your family and pets. “Check,” Rains warned, “before you assume your ‘best friend’ or a relative is willing to house your 80-pound, high energy, long haired, usually friendly other best friend.”

Knapp cautions, “Consider the vehicles and drivers you will need. What happens if you’re separated and you are minus a car and driver?”

If you go to an evacuation shelter, know ahead of time whether they allow pets. If not, Rains suggested, “Make a list of boarding facilities, shelters and veterinary offices that may be able to shelter or care for your pets in an emergency.” Check their requirements; they usually expect that vaccines are up to date.

## ASK NEIGHBORS TO HELP

What if children are at school and adults are at work? “Make plans in advance for your pet in case you are not home,” Rains advised. “Arrange with a neighbor or friend who is familiar with your pet, knows where a key to your house is, where the pet food and medicines are kept, and contact information.”

Talk to neighbors now to arrange for someone to evacuate your pets if necessary. Give the neighbor contact numbers, where you plan to be and where you arranged for your pets to be.

Be sure pets always wear a properly fitted collar with tags. “Pets and owners may become separated in stressful situations,” Rains explained.

“Make sure your pets are wearing identification tags with names and numbers. Having your pet microchipped increases chances of being reunited if you become separated. Make sure your microchip registration is up to date.”

## CRATES AND CAGES

Different animals (e.g., birds, hamsters, bunnies) should have their own secure carrier. “Cats do better in plastic airline carriers,” Knapp advised, “and dogs typically do better in open wire carriers.” A light sheet over cages can minimize a pet’s fear.

“An animal who normally jumps right in the car might show signs of stress and erratic behavior when exposed to an emergency, such as the smell of smoke or sirens,” Knapp pointed out. She recommends reading about crate training at [www.humanesociety.org](http://www.humanesociety.org). “The information is simple, invaluable and imperative when teaching your pet that containment is not to be feared.”

Have your pets familiar and comfortable with the carrier, Rains suggested. “Ideally, leave the carrier out and open in their environment. Occasionally put a treat in it or use it to store their toys.”

Both Rains and Knapp said that pets are usually loaded into carriers only for stressful trips to the vet or groomer. Put your pet into a carrier and go for a ride or a walk in a park,



COURTESY SUEELLEN KNAPP

*SueEllen Knapp recommends having sufficient space in your vehicle and roomy crates for all of your pets, along with a disaster preparedness kit and supplies.*

and then home again. “Turn a stressful moment into a rewarding one,” Knapp said.

## PREPAREDNESS KIT

Put together a kit, keep everything in one location with records and vet contact information, proof of ownership and a current photo. Have a first-aid kit, medications and dosage instructions. Leashes, collars and harnesses are necessities.

Keep a two-week supply of food and water, along with familiar bowls, treats, toys and a favorite blanket.

Bring cat litter and box for kitty, pee pads for the dog. Use plastic bags, paper towels and disinfectant for waste disposal and cleaning messes.

A dog tie-out cable is useful if doors, windows and fences are broken.

## HOME ALONE

During the 2003 and 2007 fires, Knapp heard that folks ran out of time or didn’t have room to take pets along. Planning and early evacuation will eliminate both situations.

If something unexpected comes up, Cal Fire advises bringing pets indoors. Never tie pets up. Put them in a room without windows, but with adequate ventilation such as a utility, bath or laundry room. Leave dry food and fresh water in non-spill containers. For more information, see [www.fire.ca.gov](http://www.fire.ca.gov).

# Local Fire Stations

Lake Arrowhead and Crestline communities are served by the Mountain Division of the San Bernardino County Fire Department.

## STATION 91

301 S. Highway 173  
P.O. Box 130

Lake Arrowhead, CA 92352  
(909) 336-4186

Station 91 protects the south shore of Lake Arrowhead. Specialized equipment: heavy res-

cue, snow loader, Sno-Cat and paramedic ambulance.

## STATION 92

981 N. Highway 173  
P.O. Box 130

Lake Arrowhead, CA 92352  
(909) 337-3002

Station 92 protects the north-

east shore of Lake Arrowhead. Specialized equipment: fire boat, snow loader, Sno-Cat and water tender.

## STATION 93-INACTIVE

200 N. Highway 173  
P.O. Box 130

Lake Arrowhead, CA 92352  
No phone

Station 93 is a unique glass fire station located in Cedar Glen on the east shore of Lake Arrowhead.

## STATION 94

27470 North Bay Road  
P.O. Box 130

Lake Arrowhead, CA 92352  
(909) 337-3004

Station 94 protects the west shore of Lake Arrowhead. Specialized equipment: paramedic ambulance, snow loader, brush engine, Office of Emergency Services (OES) engine and structure engine.

## STATION 95

33596 Green Valley Lake Road  
Green Valley Lake, CA 92341  
(909) 867-2176

Station 95 is an all-volunteer department.

## STATION 24-INACTIVE

21945 Crest Forest Drive  
Cedarpines Park, CA 92322  
(909) 338-0624

## STATION 25

23407 Crest Forest Drive  
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(909) 338-0625

Station 25 is a 24-hour fire station with two ambulances, a brush engine, fire engine and support services van.

## STATION 26

737 Grandview Road  
Twin Peaks, CA, 92391  
(909) 337-8326

Station 26 is manned 24 hours a day and has a Sno-Cat, an OES engine, fire engine, loader, rescue unit and backup ambulance.

## STATION 28-INACTIVE

23003 Waters Drive  
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(Valley of Enchantment)  
(909) 338-0628

## STATION 29

24538 Lake Drive  
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(909) 338-0629

Station 29 houses the division's fleet maintenance shop. It has a fire engine and a Sno-Cat.

## STATION 30

26330 Highway 18  
Rimforest, CA 92378  
(909) 337-6138

Station 30 has a water tanker and an additional engine.

Running Springs residents are served by the Running Springs Fire Department which has two stations.

## STATION 50

32151 Hunsaker Way  
P.O. Box 2206  
Running Springs, CA 92382  
(909) 867-2630

Station 50 is equipped with a Type 1 fire engine, two ambulances and a squad truck.

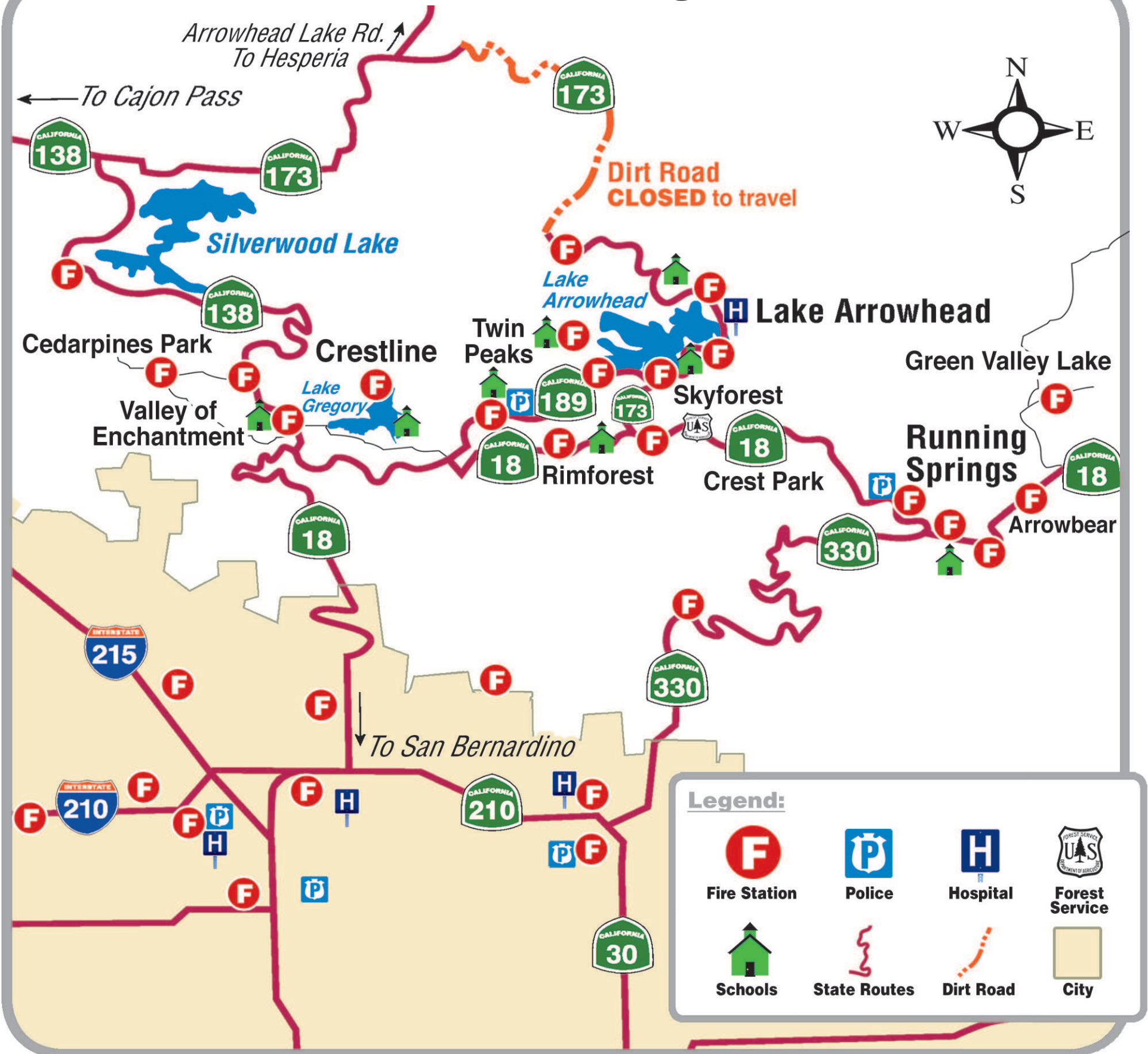
## STATION 51

31250 Hilltop Blvd.  
P.O. Box 2206  
Running Springs, CA 92382  
(909) 867-2630

Station 51 is the fire department's office. Equipment: Type 1 fire engine, Type 3 brush engine, ambulance, utility pickup truck, three Sno-Cats and two command vehicles.



# Mountain Area Emergency Routes



**Legend:**

			
Fire Station	Police	Hospital	Forest Service
			
Schools	State Routes	Dirt Road	City

# Living with Fire in California

By Heidi Fron

More than eight million Californians own homes and businesses in wild lands, where brush fires and forest fires threaten lives, property and natural resources. As the population grows, cities, suburbs and towns spread into wild areas. These conditions make it clear that the challenge of living in a fire-prone state is everyone's responsibility.

The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (Cal Fire) does more than suppress wildfires once they start. That's one aspect of Cal Fire's work. Reducing the risk of wildfires, lowering costs of fighting wildfires, minimizing the loss of property and protecting natural resources are the goals of Cal Fire's prevention and planning

programs. These programs were mandated by the state for the benefit of citizens and visitors.

Cal Fire coordinates with local, state and federal agencies to achieve the programs' goals. For example, the National Weather Service (see [www.weather.gov](http://www.weather.gov)) issues Red Flag Warnings and Fire Weather Watches to alert fire departments and residents of critical weather and dry conditions that could lead to rapid wildfire activity.

When fire danger is high, Cal Fire places additional firefighters on duty, staffs more fire engines and keeps more equipment available 24 hours a day to respond quickly to new fires.

A Red Flag Warning is for weather events that might result

in extreme fire within 24 hours. A Fire Weather Watch is issued when weather conditions could develop in 12 to 72 hours.

The Red Flag Warning is the highest alert, when Cal Fire urges residents to use extreme caution because one spark can cause a major wildfire. A Fire Weather Watch is one level below a Red Flag Warning, but fire danger is still high.

Weather patterns that could cause a watch or warning include low relative humidity, strong winds, dry fuels, dry lightning strikes, or a combination of these.

Working with Cal Fire, the Board of Forestry and Fire Protection developed a California Fire Plan as an approach toward meeting these goals. Cal Fire is a leader in emphasizing community involvement and implementing management solutions before fires occur.

Management activities include creating fuel breaks, promoting fire-safe landscaping, removing hazardous vegetation, and inspecting for clearance around homes. These activities reduce the risk of wildfires and protect evacuation routes.

Cal Fire's communications program leads statewide efforts to educate communities and homeowners. The Internet, print media, television and radio make fire safety information accessible to everyone.

Another program, Volunteers in Prevention (VIP), includes more than 2,600 citizen volunteers statewide. Under Cal Fire supervision, VIPs teach children and adults fire and life safety measures. A valuable aspect of the program is making fire prevention

part of every child's education.

Most Cal Fire units have local fire safe councils, such as the Arrowhead Communities Fire Safe Council and the Mountain Rim Fire Safe Council, to bring together citizens, fire agencies, local governments, insurance companies and others.

To lower firefighting costs, Cal Fire has a Civil Cost Recovery Program. Since wildfires cost taxpayers millions of dollars per year, the legislature determined that someone who causes a fire through willfulness, negligence or violation of law may be liable for fire suppression costs. Further, that person can be charged criminally, civilly or both.

After an investigation, fire suppression costs are calculated. Cal Fire sends the responsible person a "Letter of Demand" outlining the negligent act or violation of law, and demanding repayment of costs. If the responsible person ignores the demand or denies responsibility, the matter goes to court.

Cal Fire bills hundreds of people annually, aggressively pursuing those cases to recover the high fire suppression costs. If children are responsible for starting fires, parents may be liable for up to \$25,000 per child in costs associated with suppressing the fire. Monies paid through the Civil Cost Recovery Program return to the state's general fund to offset the burden on the state's budget.

Cal Fire urges everyone to be cautious, especially at times of high fire danger. All residents and visitors must help prevent wildfires. One less spark could mean one less wildfire.

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# Cleaning Your Chimney to Code

By Nolan Calkins *Sweep's Luck Chimney Services*

As mountain residents, we are very fire conscious during fire season. We trim our trees, rake our pine needles, clear the debris from our rooftops. Before you know it, fire season has come and gone and winter sets in.

However, during the cooler months there is another fire danger and that is your fireplace.

When you use a wood-burning appliance, you are putting

a fire inside your home and it is very important you take the proper steps to keep it maintained. With over \$200 million each year in property damage from unsafe fireplaces, it is important to have your wood-burning appliance inspected yearly by a certified and licensed fireplace company and cleaned if necessary.

According to the Chimney Safety Institute of America, the



*Having your chimney inspected and cleaned is an important step to being prepared and eliminating fire danger.*

primary job of a chimney service professional is to aid in the prevention of fires related to fireplaces; wood stoves; gas, oil and coal heating systems and the chimneys that serve them.

Chimney sweeps install, clean and maintain these systems, as well as evaluate unit performance, prescribe changes to improve unit performance, and educate the consumer about the safe and efficient operation of their units.

Having a chimney sweep come out to clean your chimney is only half the job. The other half of the job is fire prevention, which is to detect any defects or hazards that may exist with your system. By having a qualified chimney sweep out to your home, you can rest easy knowing the sweep is educated on all the codes and standards and you can be confident your system will keep you warm and safe during the winter season.

Customers sometimes ask where the codes and laws related to fireplaces come from and

how we know what to look for. There are several places that laws, codes and industry standards come from, including the manufacturer of your appliance, the California Mechanical Code, the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), International Residential Code (IRC), the Chimney Safety Institute of America (CSIA), the National Fireplace Institute (NFI), Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Air Quality Management District (AQMD) and insurance companies.

In addition to all the state and federal agencies listed above, you also have your local city and county codes and often HOA codes and standards as well.

So the next time you hire a chimney sweep, do your homework and make sure that you are left in good hands.

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# Flood Safety Tips

By **Andrea Garcia**

With so many risks associated with floods, being prepared and safe is important. A flood is a temporary problem, but can result in permanent damage if not taken care of in a timely manner. A flood can include both water flow and mudflow. The risks with floods are linked to the weather patterns, changes in the environment and development within a community as well.

Floods are said to be one of the most common natural disasters in the United States; you do not necessarily need to live by water to be at risk. Anywhere it rains, it can flood.

Here on the mountain it is important to remember that flood risk increases drastically after a wildfire breakout. Vegetation normally works to absorb rainfall, which in the end reduces the runoff. After a wildfire however, the ground is left burned, charred and unable to absorb any water. These conditions can quickly work negatively with rainfall, and create conditions where flash floods and mudflow occur. According to [www.FloodSmart.gov](http://www.FloodSmart.gov), the risk of floods remains high up until five years after a wildfire.

There are also a lot of flood risks associated with winter, including ice jams and snowmelt. Long cold days are what causes lakes to freeze, which leads to ice jams. When the frozen lake or river begins to thaw or rise, the ice breaks out into large

chunks, which can get stuck, creating obstructions. These blockages caused by the ice jams can cause serious flooding. Snowmelt produces large amounts of runoff and, because the ground may be frozen or hard, it does not absorb the water running off. This runoff flows into properties, rivers and lakes, causing flooding.

Floods can prove to be very dangerous, taking the lives of 176 people in 2015 alone, according to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). That is 38 more people than in 2014, and if precautions are not taken early, the number can continue to rise. Out of the 176 flood-related deaths, 112 of those were killed inside a vehicle. These people were most likely trying to cross a road that was flooded. For more information on weather-related statistics, visit [www.noaa.gov](http://www.noaa.gov). According to NOAA, six inches of fast flood water can knock over an adult, and it takes just 12 inches of rushing water to take away a small car. Remember that it is never safe to drive or walk into a flooded area.

There are some tips to take into account before and during a flood. First, establish a communications plan with your family so everyone knows what to do and where to go in case of a disaster. Secondly, have an emergency kit ready with food, water and any medicine you may need. In the kit you should also include



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**Tip:** Fill sandbags and place them around your home where water flow may come through; the sandbags work as one way to help prevent flooding in or around your property.

batteries, blankets, flashlights and a first-aid kit. Lastly, prepare your home with sandbags which work toward keeping your home safe from flooding. Purchasing some type of flood insurance may be a good idea as well, as some standard homeowners insurance does not cover flooding.

Remember: If you feel a flood threat coming your way, you should be alert at all times and ready to leave if an evacuation order takes place. Plan ahead of time and put in order places to go and people to call in case of an emergency.

# Have These Emergency Supplies on Hand

By Andrea Garcia

Living on the mountain offers a unique blend of possibilities that many people off of the mountain do not have. Along with that, we are also faced with incidents that may require for us to be prepared for emergencies like evacuations or the need to stay indoors for anywhere from three days to two weeks. With these possibilities it is important to have an emergency supply kit not only in your car, but in your home as well.



County Fire recommends practicing your emergency routine at least twice a year.

The first time serves as a trial, keeping what works and knocking out what does not work. By the second time around, things should roll smoothly and your safety plan should be set.

When preparing your vehicle kit a few important things to include are:

- A flashlight with extra batteries and bulbs; a flashlight can help in situations where minimal light is present.
- First-aid kit in case immediate medical attention is not available right away.
- A tire repair kit and jumper cables are a smart idea in case anything were to happen to your car during the emergency evacuation. In addition to the tire repair kit, it would also be a good idea to carry an air pump,



flares and reflectors to ensure other people can see you during dark hours and an accidental breakdown.

- Bottled water and non-perishable food items in case you are stuck inside your car for a long period of time; staying hydrated is very important.

The home kit differs a bit from the car kit because a lot of the supplies you most likely already have in your home. The difference with the home kit is maintaining stock and knowing where everything is located. A tip would be to keep these supplies all together in one place in case you need to get up and leave with no time to prepare.

A home kit should include:

- Food for up to three days, accompa-



To ensure that you and your family are safe during the state of an emergency, San Bernardino County Fire advises families to “plan, prepare and practice,” when it comes to emergencies.

nied with a manual can opener. Aside from food, you should also have water available. It is suggested you have enough water to last three days, and the recommended amount is one gallon per person, per day.



- A flashlight with extra batteries; you never know when the lights will go out. If you don't have a generator, going without lights for a long period of time could be a problem. A good place to keep a flashlight would be in a nightstand so it is easily accessible in case of an emergency at night.

- Copies of identification and important documents should be included in the kit, as well as other special needs items like prescription medication, eye glasses, contact lens solution and hearing aid batteries.

- Sanitation and hygiene items to include are hand sanitizer, toilet paper, moist towelettes, and toothbrushes and toothpaste.

- Lastly, do not forget to include a list

of phone numbers of people you would need to reach out to during an emergency, and a local map.

For us on the mountain, where we are used to a cold climate, it is important to remember that heat may not be available during or after an emergency. A tip would be to include a small kit consisting of a jacket, long pants and long sleeve shirts, sturdy shoes, gloves and scarfs, and a blanket for each person in the household.

For more information visit [www.sbcfire.org](http://www.sbcfire.org); under the "emergency services" tab you will find documents that explain and illustrate emergency preparedness.





Contact your local CAL FIRE office, fire department, or Fire Safe Council for tips and assistance.  
[www.fire.ca.gov](http://www.fire.ca.gov)

# Defensible Space:

## Critical to Your Home's Survival

Creating and maintaining defensible space is essential for increasing your home's chance of surviving a wildfire.

What is defensible space? It's the buffer homeowners are required to create on their property between a structure and the plants, brush and trees or other items surrounding the structure that could catch fire.

This space is needed to slow the spread of wildfire and improves the safety of firefighters defending your home.

There are two zones that

make up the required 100 feet of defensible space:

Zone 1 extends 30 feet out from buildings, decks and other structures.

Within this area remove all dead plants, grass and weeds. Remove dead or dry leaves and pine needles from your yard, roof and rain gutters.

Trim trees regularly to keep branches a minimum of 10 feet from other trees. Remove dead branches that hang over your roof. Keep branches 10 feet away from your chimney.



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Relocate exposed woodpiles outside of Zone 1 unless they are completely covered in a fire-resistant material.

Remove or prune flammable plants and shrubs near windows. Remove vegetation and items that could catch fire from around and under decks.

Create a separation between trees, shrubs and items such as patio furniture that could catch fire.

Zone 2 extends 30 to 100 feet from buildings and other structures.

Within this area, cut or mow annual grass down to a maximum height of four inches. Create horizontal spacing between shrubs and trees. Create vertical spacing between grass, shrubs and trees. Remove all tree branches at least six feet from the ground.

Remove fallen leaves, needles, twigs, bark, cones and small branches. However, they may be permitted to a depth of four inches if erosion control is an issue.

In both zones, mow before 10 a.m. but never when it's windy or excessively dry.

Cal Fire has been conducting defensible space inspections in the mountain communities over the past couple of months. Rather than being punitive, these inspections are intended to be educational, informing the homeowners on how critical defensible space is.

All the fire agencies are in agreement: Creating defensible space around your home can keep a fire on the ground and away from your structure.



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# Risks of Lightning Strikes

By Andrea Garcia

With each lightning strike a potential threat to life and property is present. Knowing the facts of lightning helps make you aware of the danger related to it: Yes it is a sight to see, but more than that it is something to be cautious of, especially on the mountain. Typically if you can see or hear lightning, it can hit you; in this case, your best option is to find shelter immediately.

Cal Fire issues red flag warnings during hazardous weather conditions that can result in dangerous fire behavior; lightning is one of the reasons Cal Fire releases these warnings. The danger of lightning starting a fire on our mountain is very high, so one must stay alert and prepared at all times during a lightning storm.

According to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), there have been 21 deaths related to lightning in 2016 so far—six fewer than the counted deaths in 2015. The deaths in 2016 occurred in places like music festivals, at a beach while standing in water, under a tree while camping and out on a lake. The most dangerous place to be while lightning is striking is outdoors. Whether you are fishing, boating or playing a sport, you are at risk of being struck by lightning.

NOAA states that lightning strikes the United States an av-

erage of 25 million times a year and, although lightning usually strikes more often during the summer, it is a danger to people year round. Statistics from NOAA show that lightning kills an average of 49 people in the U.S. each year, also leaving several hundred injured.

To ensure your safety during a lightning storm, a good tip to follow is the 30-30 rule. The rule says that when you see lightning you should count the time between the strike and the sound of thunder. Thirty seconds or less means a thunderstorm is close enough to be dangerous. After you have taken shelter, wait at least 30 minutes before choosing to leave that location.

Remember that no place outside is safe shelter during a lightning storm; a house or another enclosed building is the preferred place to stay safe. When you are inside safely, stay away from telephones, computers and any other electrical devices. If being inside a home is not an option, your second best bet would be to go inside a car—the metal shell of the car will protect you.

Lastly, if a person is struck

by lightning, call 9-1-1 to get immediate medical care. Check if the person is breathing, check

their heartbeat and pulse; in some situations, CPR may be needed.



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# Make Your Home More Fire Safe

Mountain homeowners can take several steps to help make their homes more fire resistant and the best time to make preparations is before danger appears. For example, flying embers can destroy homes up to a mile from wildland areas. Prepare your home now before fire starts.

Here are some suggestions for you from the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (Cal Fire) to make your home more fire resistant.

**Roof:** The roof is the most vulnerable part of your home. Homes with wood or shingle roofs are at high risk of being destroyed during a wildfire. Build your roof or re-roof with materials such as composition, metal or tile. Block any spaces between roof decking and covering to prevent embers from catching.

**Vents:** Vents on homes create openings for flying embers.

- Cover all vent openings with 1/8-inch to 1/4-inch metal mesh. Do not use fiberglass or plastic mesh because they can melt and burn.

- Protect vents in eaves or cornices with baffles to block embers. (Mesh is not enough.)

**Eaves and Soffits:** Eaves and soffits should be protected with ignition-resistant or non-combustible materials.

**Windows:** Heat from a wildfire can cause windows to break even before the home ignites. This allows burning embers to enter and start fires inside. Sin-

gle-paned and large windows are particularly vulnerable.

- Install dual-paned windows with one pane of tempered glass to reduce the chance of breakage in a fire.

- Consider limiting the size and number of windows that face large areas of vegetation.

**Walls:** Wood products, such as boards, panels or shingles, are common siding materials. However, they are combustible and not good choices for fire-prone areas.

- Build or remodel your walls with ignition resistant building materials, such as stucco, fiber cement, wall siding, fire retardant, treated wood or other approved materials.

- Be sure to extend materials from the foundation to the roof.

**Decks:** Surfaces within 10 feet of the building should be built with ignition-resistant, non-combustible or other approved materials. Ensure that all combustible items are removed from underneath your deck.

**Rain Gutters:** Screen or enclose rain gutters to prevent accumulation of plant debris.

**Patio Cover:** Use the same ignition-resistant materials for patio coverings as a roof.

**Chimney:** Cover your chimney and stovepipe outlets with a non-combustible screen. Use metal screen material with openings no smaller than 3/8-inch and no larger than 1/2-inch

to prevent embers from escaping and igniting a fire.

**Garage:** Have a fire extinguisher and tools such as a shovel, rake, bucket and hoe available for fire emergencies.

- Install weather stripping around and under the garage door to prevent embers from blowing in.

- Store all combustible and flammable liquids away from ignition sources.

**Fences:** Consider using ignition-resistant or non-combustible fence materials to protect your home during a wildfire.

## Driveways and Access Roads:

Driveways should be built and maintained in accordance with state and local codes to allow fire and emergency vehicles to reach your home. Consider maintaining access roads with a minimum of 10 feet of clearance on either side, allowing for two-way traffic.

- Ensure that all gates open inward and are wide enough

to accommodate emergency equipment.

- Trim trees and shrubs overhanging the road to allow emergency vehicles to pass.

**Address:** Make sure your address is clearly visible from the road.

**Water Supply:** Consider having multiple garden hoses that are long enough to reach all areas of your home and other structures on your property. If you have a pool or well, consider getting a pump.

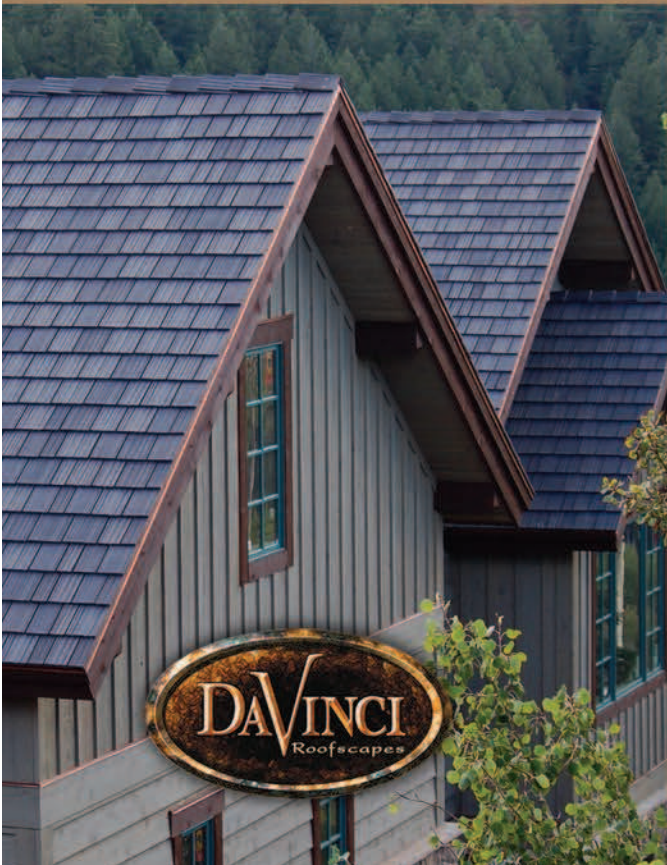




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**PLAN YOUR TRIP**

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End  
Enter your destination  
e.g. Bear Valley Community Hospital

Depart at or Arrive by  
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Get Directions

Read info and terms & conditions. Trip planning is provided using Google Maps.

# A Smoke Alarm May Save Your Life

Smoke alarms that are properly installed and maintained play a vital role in reducing fire deaths and injuries. A properly installed and maintained smoke alarm is the first thing in your home that can alert you and your family to a fire 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Home fire sprinklers can also alert you, but are a few seconds slower than smoke alarms. Whether you're awake or asleep, a working smoke alarm is constantly on alert, scanning the air for fire and smoke.

According to the National Fire Protection Association, almost two-thirds of home fire deaths resulted from fires in properties without working smoke alarms. A working smoke alarm significantly increases your chances of surviving a deadly home fire.

There are many brands of smoke alarms on the market, but they fall under two basic types: ionization and photoelectric.

Ionization and photoelectric smoke alarms detect different types of fires. Since no one can predict what type of fire might start in their home, the U.S. Fire Administration recommends that every home and place where people sleep have both ionization AND photoelectric smoke alarms OR dual sensor smoke alarms, which contain both ionization and

photoelectric smoke sensors.

There are also alarms for people with hearing loss. These alarms may have strobe lights that flash and/or vibrate to alert those who are unable to hear standard smoke alarms when they sound.

Alarms that get power from your home's electrical system—that are “hardwired”—usually have a back-up battery that will need to be replaced once a year.

## WHERE TO PLACE SMOKE ALARMS

Smoke alarms should be put on every floor of



Smoke alarms are powered by battery or by your home's electrical system. If the smoke alarm is powered by battery, it runs on either a disposable 9-volt battery or a non-replaceable 10-year lithium battery.

your home and in every bedroom and in the hallway outside of each sleeping area.

Choose smoke alarms that communicate with each other, so that if one alarm sounds they all will.

Place smoke alarms on the ceiling or high on the wall. Check the manufacturer's instructions for the best place for your alarm.

Only qualified electricians should install hardwired smoke alarms.

A smoke alarm only works when it is properly installed and regularly maintained. A smoke alarm with a dead or missing battery is the same as having no smoke alarm at all.

## MAINTENANCE TIPS

- Test the alarm monthly.
- Replace the batteries in an alarm powered by a 9-volt battery at least once every year. Those powered by a lithium battery should be replaced according to the manufacturer's instructions.
- Replace the entire smoke alarm every 10 years.

If the smoke alarm sounds while you are cooking, do not disable the alarm. Instead, open a window or door and press the “hush” button. Wave a towel at the alarm to clear the air. Move the entire alarm several feet away from the kitchen.

## CARBON MONOXIDE DETECTOR

While the installation of a carbon monoxide alarm is no substitute for the proper use

**Smoke Alarm** *continued from 29*

and upkeep of appliances that can produce carbon monoxide, it will alert you and your family to the presence of this odorless, poisonous gas.

Symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning include headache, fatigue, shortness of breath, nausea and dizziness.

Carbon monoxide alarms, like smoke detectors, should be placed in the hallway near every sleeping area of the home.

Should the alarm sound, immediately move outside to fresh air and call 9-1-1.

As of July 1, 2011, the Carbon Monoxide Poisoning Prevention Act requires all single-family homes with an attached garage or a fossil fuel source to install carbon monoxide alarms within the home.

Combination smoke and carbon monoxide alarms and detectors are available.





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# Plan Now for Evacuation

Review now the procedures for evacuation, and prepare now...because doing so later might be too late.

The Mountain Rim Fire Safe Council (MRFSC) offers some policies and procedures that you can modify for your family, home and circumstances. Just don't omit any important items.

Depending on your children's ages, include them in the planning. Making them feel like they are part of the process will

Keep at least half a tank of gas in your car at all times during fire season. Gas might be in short supply, stations might not operate if power goes out, and you might not be able to evacuate by the shortest route.

Park the car facing outward for best visibility when you must leave.

Identify two or more ways out of your neighborhood in case the usual route is blocked

be seen. No one should spend time looking for items already collected.

Keep containers ready for collecting these things.

Have a corded phone in the house. Cordless land lines don't work when power is out.

Keep a printed address book in addition to what is stored in your computer or cell phone, which might not work if power is out.

## PREPARE A SUPPLY KIT

Shopping or searching for supplies might be impossible when fire threatens. Assemble a 72-hour emergency kit with necessities. Store them in lightweight plastic crates and backpacks. Include the following:

- Cash. ATMs won't work if power goes out.
- One gallon of water per person for three days.
- Three-day supply of food that won't spoil and a manual can opener. (Check this supply periodically for expiration dates. Consume and replace foods before they expire.)
- Three-day supply of pet food and water, bowls, leash, harness, bedding and carrier.
- One change of clothing and shoes per person.
- One blanket or sleeping bag per person.
- First aid kit including prescriptions and medications.
- Sanitation supplies for everyone plus special items for infants, elderly and disabled persons.
- Spare eyeglasses and sunglasses.
- Emergency tools, battery

powered radio, flashlight, extra batteries.

- Extra set of car keys.
- Work gloves.
- Painter's masks or small filter masks to wear if smoke is thick.
- Update your emergency kit and supplies periodically.
- Be sure there's space in the car for your family, pets, kit and items on your list.

## ACT TIMELY

When evacuation is imminent, don't procrastinate or panic. Put your plan into action with your mind on "automatic pilot." Follow through calmly.

Use your list of essential items. Pack them in easy-to-carry boxes.

Load essential items and your emergency kit into the car.

Plan to load pets when the family leaves.

Close all windows and doors. Close metal window blinds.

Remove light curtains and thin combustibles from windows if you have time.

Leave exterior lights on to help firefighters find the house.

Load pets into the car along with family members.

Lock up the house.

Don't leave garden sprinklers on; they waste critical water pressure.

If there's time, move lawn furniture and anything that might snag firefighters' hoselines or create a trip and fall hazard.

## “Make a list of essential items in your home and where they are located. Keep the list handy.”

familiarize them with procedures so they will react appropriately in an emergency.

If you are not home when a wildfire erupts, authorities might close roads for safety and you won't be allowed access to your home. Arrange with neighbors and nearby friends to look after family members and pets who are likely to be home while you're away.

Plan transportation and care for your pet(s) for a long-term evacuation. If you have large animals, contact San Bernardino County's Animal Care & Control, the Humane Society of the United States or, locally, the Mountains Humane Society for information. Remember: Lives of people and pets always take priority over property.

### PLAN YOUR EVACUATION

Identify two ways to exit the structure from every room in the house.

by fire trucks or other emergency vehicles.

### GET READY

Copy important documents and store them with family, a trusted friend out of the area or in a safe deposit box.

Make a list of essential items in your home and where they are located. Keep the list handy. The list usually includes prescriptions and medications; eyeglasses; photos, art and jewelry; a child's favorite toy for comfort.

Keep in one place documents such as birth certificates, passports, insurance policies, home inventory, personal phone and address books, tax and personal finance records, child's school and vaccination records.

Write these items on an index card for each room. When the items have been collected from the room, place the index card on the floor where it can

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