Planning for an emergency evacuation, such as to escape a rapidly-moving wildfire, should take place **long before an actual evacuation is needed**. Make sure that you and your family are well prepared for an evacuation or to shelter-in-place at any time by following the STEPS TO PREPARE »

**HAVE A PLAN FOR YOURSELF AND FOR YOUR FAMILY**

You should have a family emergency plan in place that includes having emergency supplies such as go-bags and flashlights, along with emergency evacuation procedures such as knowing potential escape routes, knowing what to take with you and how you will meet up with other family members after you evacuate. Document, review and practice this plan regularly!

For additional information refer to OCP&R Guides:

- #01 - Neighborhood Organization
- #02 - Notifications and Warnings
- #03 - Preparedness: Before a Disaster
- #06 - Emergency Evacuations

**STEPS TO PREPARE**

- Know your neighbors and consider the needs of those nearby who may be elderly or have difficulty moving. Be part of an organized neighborhood that maintains a roster of all neighbor’s contact information and emergency phone numbers.

- Study your neighborhood streets and know in advance which routes (by vehicle and by foot) could be your best potential evacuation options — understand that you may encounter hazards such as wildfire or impassible roads so **be prepared to alter your route if needed.**

- Keep copies of important papers and documents handy so that you can grab them quickly.

- Have necessary pet supplies on-hand and easy to access (leashes, pet carriers, water, food, etc.).

- Identify the location of your home’s external gas shut-off valve. Have a gas shut-off wrench near your external gas shut-off valve and know how to turn it off.

- If your garage door is electrically operated, **be sure you know how to open it manually** from the inside and/or outside (and how to manually lock it when closed). Consider installing a garage door opener battery back-up for when the power is out.

- Always keep at least 1/2 tank of gas in your vehicle and park facing out toward the street.

- Be trained and up-to-date on emergency preparedness and response by taking local CORE/CERT classes and by participating in emergency exercises and drills.

- During a wildfire or other disaster, cell phone/internet service may not be available as cell towers may be damaged or the system overloaded. A 2-way radio can be a good option to communicate with neighbors.
DRESS FOR SURVIVAL

Have personal protective clothing at the ready and put them on at the first sign of trouble:

- FULL COVERAGE GOGGLES
- SAFETY MASK
- HEAVY DUTY WORK GLOVES
- LONG SLEEVE SHIRT wool or cotton/denim, not synthetic
- HEAVY DUTY WORK GLOVES
- HANDKERCHIEF or BANDANA
- LONG PANTS wool or cotton/denim, not synthetic
- STURDY BELT
- STURDY BOOTS
- HANDKERCHIEF or BANDANA
- FLOPPY HAT

CREATE EMERGENCY GO-BAGS

Pre-packed emergency "go-bags" are personal kits that you grab when there is an emergency such as a wildfire or earthquake, or you are told to evacuate immediately. You should have a go-bag for each family member. These bags should include items like flashlights, lifesaving tools, AM/FM radio, prescriptions, food, water and extra clothing to get you through the first few critical days.

Put items in a backpack or other easy-to-carry bag such as a duffel bag with a shoulder strap. Keep go-bag(s) in a quick-to-reach location such as an entry-hall closet or near a door in a garage. You could also keep them outside your home in a waterproof box or trash can with a lid. Make sure each bag has a tag with your name and address.

It is a good idea to also have emergency go-bags in all your vehicles and at work.

For more info refer to: OCP&R Guide #07 - Evacuation and Go-Bag Checklists

PLAN TO SHELTER-IN-PLACE IF NEEDED

Wildfires are unpredictable and spread quickly. Even if you’ve prepared in advance, you may be required to "shelter in place" if ordered or if you find yourself trapped by a wildfire.

As with knowing your neighborhood streets to identify alternate escape routes, also locate in advance nearby places that may be best able to withstand a wildfire. These may be your home, another building made of more resistant materials or that is less exposed to burning vegetation, or an open outdoor area like playing field or parking lot away from vegetation.

Prepare yourself for darkness (even during the day), noise, chaos, and the natural urge to flee the safety of your shelter. It is important to remain calm and keep together — practicing emergency evacuations on a regular basis will build confidence!

OCP&R is a program of the Oakland Firesafe Council.
Contact OCP&R for more information and assistance with evacuation planning.