

How to Survive a Wildfire

The threat of wildland fires for people living near wildland areas or using recreational facilities in wilderness areas is real. This article will tell you what do facing the threat of a wildfire.

Survival in a Vehicle

This is dangerous and should only be done in an emergency, but you can survive the firestorm if you stay in your car. It is much less dangerous than trying to run from a fire on foot.

Roll up windows and close air vents. Drive slowly with headlights on. Watch for other vehicles and pedestrians. Do not drive through heavy smoke.

If you have to stop, park away from the heaviest trees and brush. Turn headlights on and ignition off. Roll up windows and close air vents.

Get on the floor and cover up with a blanket or coat.

Stay in the vehicle until the main fire passes.

Stay in the car. Do not run! Engine may stall and not restart. Air currents may rock the car. Some smoke and sparks may enter the vehicle. Temperature inside will increase. Metal gas tanks and containers rarely explode.

If You Are Trapped at Home

Stay calm.

As the fire front approaches, do not go inside the house.

You should have a fire plan already to go.

Run to the meeting point and stay away from the fire.

Do not run into fire to save something.

Call 911 and wait for them to save things.

If Caught in the Open

- The best temporary shelter is in a sparse fuel area. On a steep mountainside, the back side is safer. Avoid canyons, natural "chimneys" and saddles.
- If a road is nearby, **lie face down along the road** cut or in the ditch on the uphill side. **Cover yourself** with anything that will shield you from the fire's heat.
- If hiking in the back country, **seek a depression with sparse fuel**. Clear fuel away from the area while the fire is approaching and then lie face down in the depression and cover yourself. Stay down until after the fire passes!

What to do after a wildfire

After a wildfire.

Check the roof immediately. Put out any roof fires, sparks or embers. Check the attic for hidden burning sparks.

If you have a fire, get your neighbors to help fight it.

Find alternatives. The water you put into your pool or hot tub and other containers will come in handy now. If the power is out, try connecting a hose to the outlet on your water heater.

For several hours after the fire, maintain a "fire watch". Re-check for smoke and sparks throughout the house.