



When a Wildfire Nears: Priorities for an Imminent Evacuation

Recent wildfires have proven that threat levels can escalate rapidly, giving those in their path little time to evacuate. So don't ignore a red flag warning; when one is posted for your area, it's time to prepare to leave. Here are the moves to make as you await evacuation orders.

When the initial warning comes:

Priority 1: Safeguarding family members and pets

- **Know where everyone is:** The most crucial first step is to make sure family members are ready to go. Since animals can be difficult to round up at a moment's notice, ensure all pets are nearby and carriers are readily available.
- **Identify evacuation routes:** Because roads may be closed or jammed with traffic, plot at least three possible exit routes. If family members will be leaving from different locations or in other vehicles, also designate a meeting point. This is also a good opportunity to ensure all gas tanks are full.
- **Secure windows and doors:** Check that everything is locked and latched to dissuade looters.
- **Pack medications:** Gather enough for an extended period, as you may not be allowed to return home for a while, even if your property has not been damaged.
- **Assemble a "go bag":** Essential items include non-perishable foods, water, changes of clothes, extra pair of eyeglasses/contact lenses, extra set of car keys, credit cards and cash, pet food, flashlight and battery-powered radio (with extra batteries), and a first aid kit with sanitation supplies.

Priority 2: Protecting your home and important documents

- **Bring combustible outdoor items inside:** Clear flammable debris away from your home. This might seem like a useless endeavor, but it can, in fact, be the difference between your house burning or surviving.
- **Collect important documents:** Place your passports, birth certificates, and other essential papers in an envelope or folder to take with you in case you need to leave.

Priority 3: Salvage select items — but only if time permits

- **Pack pieces of significant value, whether sentimental or otherwise:** Only consider items that will be easy to transport.
- **Also bring Important technology:** This shouldn't encompass much more than personal computers, storage drives, cell phones, and chargers.

When the evacuation order has been issued:

This is no time to hesitate, so do the following only if it doesn't put you at risk.

- **Turn off HVAC systems:** Shutting them down can help prevent smoke from spreading throughout the house in the ductwork.
- **Lock the doors to your home:** This action helps prevent smoke, heat, and embers from entering and provides a safety barrier in case of a threat.
- **Leave gated driveways open:** Keeping them accessible ensures that first responders have access to your house.
- **Keep everyone informed:** Change your outgoing voicemail message to let friends and family members know where you have headed. Please contact Alliant with any relevant updates.

By preparing in advance of evacuation orders, you can help ensure the safety of yourself and your loved ones. Of course, we are here to help you before and after wildfires, as well as in any other stressful situation. If you have any concerns about evacuation plans or fire coverage, please don't hesitate to contact your account executive.