



Wildfire Preparedness 30 Day Challenge

1. Addressing

Wildfire Preparedness Challenge Day 1... Is your home address clearly marked? A clearly marked address is important for both medical and fire responses, so that emergency responders can easily and quickly find your home. If you live on a city street your address should be clearly visible on your house from the street. If you live in a rural area, the route should be clearly marked with address signs identifying the route to your home. For those living in Medford Rural Fire Protection District #2, rural address signs are available at our headquarters free of charge. Stop by our headquarters office M-F 8-5 and we will prepare the sign for you.



2. Access

Wildfire Preparedness Challenge Day 2... Is your access road/driveway to your home safe? Is it cleared enough to give you a safe escape route if you need to evacuate quickly, or is it a tunnel of flammable vegetation? Would the Fire Department consider your home defensible in a wildfire situation based on the condition of your access road/driveway? Here are a few tips:

- Driveways shall be provided with a minimum unobstructed width of 12' and a minimum unobstructed height of 13' 6"
- Vegetation/fuel reduction is required along the driveway. Jackson County requires a 22' fuel break along access roads, which includes the driveway surface. Driveways in excess of 150' in length shall be provided with turn-arounds and turn-arounds shall be provided every one-half (1/2) mile.
- Driveways in excess of 200' in length and less than 20' in width shall be provided with turnouts in addition to turn-arounds. Driveway turnouts shall be an all-weather road surface at least 7' wide and 50' long with 25' tapers on each end. They shall be spaced at maximum 800' intervals.
- Access must be designed and constructed to carry a vehicle that has a weight of 50,000 pounds with the ability to carry an occasional fire vehicle weighing 60,000 pounds. Access must be constructed of a minimum of six (6) inches of 4"-minus base rock, or equivalent.
- You should have several travel routes planned out ahead of time in case one route is blocked by the fire or by emergency vehicles. Choose the safest route away from the fire.



3. Bridges

Wildfire Preparedness Challenge Day 3... Do you have a bridge along your access road/driveway? Bridges can be critical to ensure a successful emergency response. If firefighters are unsure whether the bridge will support the weight of their vehicle, they likely won't cross it. In order to assure firefighters can safely drive over a bridge to respond to a fire or medical emergency, the following considerations are important:



- It is recommended the bridge has a minimum 12' driving width surface
- In order for fire trucks to navigate the bridge, it shall be capable of supporting 50,000 lbs. with the ability to carry an occasional fire vehicle weighing 60,000 lbs. The bridge should be posted with the designed vehicle weight limit load capacity at both entrances so that emergency responders know it is capable of supporting their fire apparatus. If you are unsure your bridge meets these standards, you should consult an Engineer.
- All access routes to your home should be free from low-hanging tree branches and cleared of flammable vegetation at least 10 feet on each side of roads/bridges. The minimum canopy clearance should be 13 ½ feet. Dead material accumulations should be cleared from under combustible bridges or culverts.



4. Roof

Wildfire Preparedness Challenge Day 4... Experts say as many as 80% of homes lost to wildfires could have been saved if their owners implemented a few simple fire-safe practices. Of the homes that burn in wildfires across our nation each year, over 90% of the losses are attributed to small spot-fires or flying embers that initially ignite the home. Starting at the roof, here are some tips to help your home resist ignition:

- Have a fire resistant roof (Class A or B is recommended). Composition roofs generally provide good protection while wood shake roofs are very susceptible to ignition.
- Remove combustible debris that has accumulated on roofs and in rain gutters. Embers can cause these fine materials to ignite.
- Consider replacing vinyl gutters with non-combustible gutters.
- Trim trees so that no branches overhang within 25 vertical feet of a roofline.
- Chimneys should be equipped with an approved spark arrestor screen and have a minimum 10' clearance to trees.



5. Vents

Wildfire Preparedness Challenge Day 5... Burning embers are the most important cause of home ignitions. One way they can penetrate your home is through attic and foundation vents. Once introduced into these areas, embers can easily ignite insulation and other combustible materials which will destroy your home. One way to prevent this from happening is to install vents that resist embers and flame intrusion.

Another way to decrease the chance is to cover vent openings with corrosion resistant fine metal mesh (1/8" or smaller holes). Watch this video to see a demonstration about how embers ignite homes.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vh4cQdH26g>



6. Exterior Walls-Siding

Wildfire Preparedness Challenge Day 6...

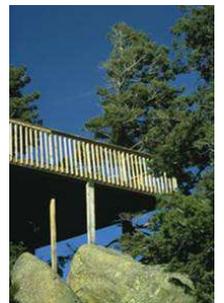
Are your walls susceptible to ignition? Although non-combustible materials are recommended on exterior walls and eaves, wood siding can withstand radiant heat from a large fire, like a tree on fire, if the siding is greater than 30' away from the fire source. Wood siding can be vulnerable to ember ignition if there are open crevasses or voids where the embers can collect. Fill or repair these deficiencies prior to fire season. Flame contact can be avoided by removing flammable vegetation and combustible ground cover from around the structure. Attaching wood fences to exterior walls should be avoided as these fences can also play a role in igniting combustible siding. Enclosed eaves provide the best protection for overhangs (use minimum 5/8" thick sheathing or other non-combustible material). Three goals are to prevent embers from lodging, to not have smaller fires close enough to the home to directly spread fire to combustible walls, and to not have bigger fires close enough to the home to ignite the walls or eaves by radiant heat.



7. Balconies/Decks

Wildfire Preparedness Challenge Day 7...

Wood decks can ignite by direct flame contact, radiant and combustible heat, or embers during in a wildfire. While non-combustible materials are recommended, a homeowner can decrease the possibility of a wood deck igniting by keeping vegetation away from the deck and making sure the deck surface and the space under the deck are cleared of all fine combustible materials, like leaves and pine needles (for lower decks, it is recommended the deck is skirted with minimum 5/8" thick sheathing or other non-combustible material to keep materials from accumulating under the decks). In addition, if a wildfire is threatening, combustible patio furniture should be moved indoors or well away from the house.



8. Home Ignition Zone: First 3-5'

Wildfire Preparedness Challenge Day 8...

The first 5 feet perimeter around your home can be critical when it comes to ignition potential. It is recommended that this area is clear of flammable vegetation or any other stored combustible items/materials (wood piles, plastic garbage/recycle containers, etc.). If vegetation is

desired, small fire-resistant plants should be used. If the exterior walls are combustible, any combustible ground cover within this area should be removed and replaced with non-combustible materials such as gravel or river rock.



9. Firewood

Wildfire Preparedness Challenge Day 9...

Firewood piles and other piles of combustible materials should be moved at

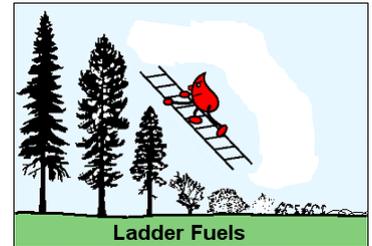
least 30' away from your home or put within an enclosure with doors. Embers easily lodge in these piles, will ignite the pile, and spread fire to the exterior wall. The firewood pile should be positioned in an area where there is at least a 15' horizontal distance to any tree crowns. Very large firewood piles should be positioned a minimum 100' and uphill from your home if possible.



10. Home Ignition Zone First 30'

Wildfire Preparedness Challenge Day 10... After making sure the first 5' perimeter around your home is clear from flammable vegetation or any other stored combustible items/materials, the first 30' perimeter around your home is also very important to the survivability of your home. The ideal is to:

- Maintain green landscaping by ensuring it is watered
- Keep dried weeds cut to a maximum of 4" high
- Replace as much flammable vegetation as possible with fire resistive vegetation
- Locate trees and shrubs in well-spaced groupings (tomorrow's post will deal with tree spacing)
- Eliminate ladder fuels (vegetation below trees-shrubs, smaller trees, bushes, etc. that will spread fire up into the tree crown)
- Prune limbs or branches to a minimum height of 10-15', or 1/3 the tree height for shorter trees

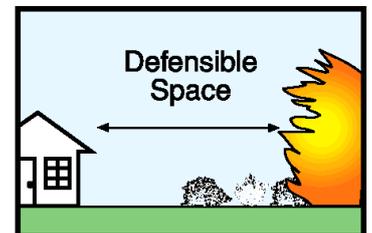


11. Home Ignition Zone First 100'

Wildfire Preparedness Challenge Day 11...

For the 30-100' perimeter around your home it is recommended to thin small trees, keep larger ones, eliminate ladder fuels, and remove any dead or fallen tree (The first 100' perimeter around your home is often called the defensible space zone). Tree should be trimmed to provide a minimum 15' clearance to power lines. In order to reduce the chance of tree-to-tree ignition, the following is a recommendation for tree spacing:

- Between Full-grown Tree Crowns (0-20% slope)
 - Minimum 18' (0-30' from structure)
 - Minimum 12' (31-60' from structure)
 - Minimum 10' (61-100' from structure)
- For steeper slopes, the distances above should be increased by the following factors: 2x (21-40% slope), 3x (41+% slope)



12. Propane Tanks

Wildfire Preparedness Challenge Day 12...

This video should motivate anyone who has a propane tank to clear vegetation out from around the tank. Relocate propane tanks at least 30' from the home. Create a defensible space around the tank (at least 10' clearance to combustible materials).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Lr15rPHEmeQ>



13. Vegetation Management: Fire Resistant Vegetation

Wildfire Preparedness Challenge Day 13...

Highly flammable vegetation should be replaced with fire resistant vegetation. Characteristics of highly flammable vegetation are:

- Contains fine, dry, or dead material within the plant, such as twigs, needles, and leaves
- Leaves, twigs and stems contain volatile waxes, terpenes, or oils
- Sap is gummy, resinous, and has a strong odor
- May have loose or papery bark

Characteristics of fire resistant vegetation are:

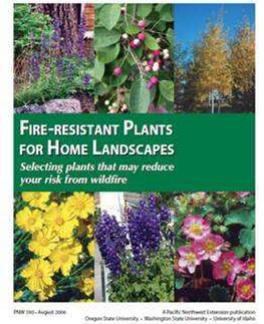
- Leaves are moist and supple



- Plants have little dead wood and tend not to accumulate dry, dead material within the plant
- Sap is water-like and does not have a strong odor
- Sap or resin materials are low

These guides from Oregon State University will help you choose the right vegetation:

[http://www.ci.medford.or.us/Files/Fire%20Resistant%20Plants%20\(OSU\).pdf](http://www.ci.medford.or.us/Files/Fire%20Resistant%20Plants%20(OSU).pdf)
http://www.ci.medford.or.us/Files/fireresist_shrubs_and_trees_book_7-2012.pdf



14. Firewise (Video and Guide)

Wildfire Preparedness Challenge Day 14...

How do you make your home Firewise? Watch this video...

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t6jV-gM9EwQ>



15. Houses on Slopes

Wildfire Preparedness Challenge Day 15...

If you are building a new home or have an existing home in a steep-sloped area there are things you can do to minimize the fire hazard. Generally, fire spreads much faster up a slope. Setting your home back at least 30' from the downward side edge of the slope is recommended. Having non-combustible barriers like masonry walls at the top edge of the slope on the downward side prevents the fire from wrapping over the slope into your home. Having non-combustible barriers at the bottom edge of the slope on the upward side prevents falling burning debris from getting close to your home. Of course, providing defensible space by thinning vegetation is also a key. The downward side of the slope may require a defensible space of several hundred feet. Consider non-combustible exterior walls, boxed eaves, and fire/ember resistive vents on your new home.



16. Preventing Home Ignitions

Wildfire Preparedness Challenge Day 16...

How do you prevent your home from igniting in a wildfire? Watch this video to learn more...

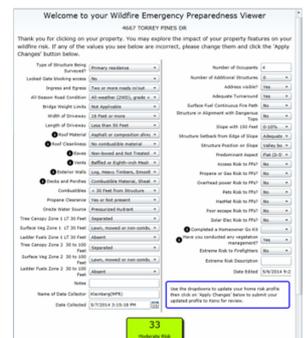
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZyDqyNA4qx4>

17. Intterra

Wildfire Preparedness Challenge Day 17...

In 2014 Medford Fire-Rescue began evaluating and mapping properties for wildfire threat as it relates to risk management, pre-planning, citizen education, and incident management. In MFR's jurisdiction there are over 2,800 properties located in wildfire hazard areas. By visiting the link below and inputting your address, you can now view your property to see the determined assessed threat. You can also update your home risk profile based on your mitigation efforts and submit the updated profile for review.

<https://apps.intterragroup.com/keno/>

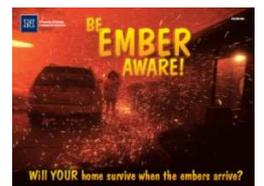


18. Embers (Video)

Wildfire Preparedness Challenge Day 18...

Most homes lost in wildfires are initially ignited by flying embers. An ember storm can assault your home during a wildfire. Watch this video to learn how to protect your home from ember ignition.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gAuhNDb963Y>



19. How to Become a Firewise Community

Wildfire Preparedness Challenge Day 19...Firewise Communities Program

Is your neighborhood interested in working together to reduce the wildfire risk in your area? We can come deliver a presentation and also talk about the Firewise Communities Recognition Program. A Firewise Community is a recognized community that is engaged in wildfire risk reduction activities. Some of the benefits of Firewise Communities include:

- Creates more defensible space by reducing flammable fuels in the neighborhood
- Improves property value while reducing the risk of loss
- Encourages good neighbors
- Promotes peace of mind (you have done everything you can to prepare your home and property for a wildfire)
- Opens up possible grant opportunities

For more information, contact our office at 541-774-2300 or visit: www.firewise.org



20. Ready, Set, Go! (Video and Guide)

Wildfire Preparedness Challenge Day 20...

Are you ready for wildfire season? The Ready, Set, Go! Program will help you get ready for wildfire season and know what to do if a wildfire threatens your home. The next few days will be dedicated to different aspects of this program. Watch the following video to get introduced to the program.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=feMlaars9kc>



21. Ready

Wildfire Preparedness Challenge Day 21...Ready, Set, Go!

Getting "ready" for wildfire season means creating defensible space around your home, reducing and/or eliminating possible materials/fuels that could ignite near your home, managing vegetation, making your home itself more resistant to ignition, and pre-planning what to do in advance of a wildfire. The following Ready, Set, Go! Personal Wildfire Action Guide is an excellent wildfire preparedness resource.

<http://www.wildlandfirersg.org/Portals/18/Resources/Resources/RSG%20Action%20Guide,%20ENGLISH,%20v5,%20FINAL,%20090514.pdf>

22. Ready

Wildfire Preparedness Challenge Day 22...Ready, Set, Go!

What can you do ahead of time to help your family better prepare for a wildfire disaster? Getting "ready" includes:

- Creating a Family Disaster Plan that includes meeting locations and communication plans and rehearsing it regularly. Include in your plan the evacuation of large animals such as horses.
- Having fire extinguishers on hand and training your family to use them.
- Ensuring your family knows where your gas, electric, and water meter shut-off controls are and how to use them.
- Planning and practicing several different evacuation routes.
- Designating an emergency meeting location outside the fire hazard area.
- Assembling an emergency supply kit as recommended by the American Red Cross. An extra kit should be kept in your vehicle.
- Appointing an out-of-the-area friend or relative as a point of contact so that you can communicate with your family members.
- Maintaining a list of emergency contact numbers in your supply kit.
- Having a portable radio or scanner so that you can stay updated on the fire.



23. Set

Wildfire Preparedness Challenge Day 23...Ready, Set, Go!

What can you do to get “set” if a wildfire is approaching your area but is not yet an imminent threat? Here are some things to consider:

- Monitor fire weather conditions and fire status. Stay tuned to your TV or local radio stations for updates.
- Evacuate as soon as you are set!
- Alert family and neighbors.
- Dress appropriate (Clothing made of natural fibers, such as cotton, and work boots). Have goggles and a dry bandana or particle mask ready.
- Ensure that you have your emergency supply kit on hand that includes all necessary items, such as a battery powered radio, spare batteries, emergency contact numbers, and ample drinking water.
- Remain close to your house, drink plenty of water and keep an eye on your family and pets until you are ready to leave.
- If time allows, prepare the inside of your home by:
 - Shutting windows.
 - Removing flammable window shade.
 - Removing lightweight curtains.
 - Moving flammable furniture to the center of rooms, away from windows and doors.
 - Shutting off gas at the meter.
 - Leaving lights on so firefighters can see the house under smoky conditions.
- If time allows, prepare the outside of your home by:
 - Gathering up flammable items from around home and bringing them inside.
 - Turning off propane tanks.
 - Not leaving sprinklers or water running (they can affect critical firefighting water pressure).
 - Leaving exterior lights on.
 - Backing your car into the driveway to facilitate a quick departure (shut doors and roll up windows).
 - Having a ladder available.
 - Patrolling your property and extinguishing all small fires until you leave.
 - Sealing attic and ground vents with pre-cut plywood or commercial seals if time permits.
 - Having multiple garden hoses that are long enough to reach any area of your home.



24. Go!

Wildfire Preparedness Challenge Day 24...Ready, Set, Go!

Civilian fatalities in wildfires occur mostly because people wait too long before deciding to evacuate. By leaving early, you give your family the best chance of surviving a wildfire. Remember:

- When to Leave
 - Do not wait to be advised to leave if there is a possible threat to your home or evacuation route. Leave early enough to avoid being caught in fire, smoke, or road congestion. If you are advised to leave by local authorities, do not hesitate!
- Where to Go
 - Leave to a predetermined location (it should be a low-risk area, such as a well-prepared neighbor or relative's house, a Red Cross shelter or evacuation center, motel, etc.).
- How to Get There
 - Have several travel routes in case one route is blocked by the fire or by emergency vehicles. Choose the safest route away from the fire.



- What to Take
 - Take your emergency supply kit containing your family and pet's necessary items.

25. Emergency Supply Kit

Wildfire Preparedness Challenge Day 25...

Having an emergency supply kit is an important part of preparing to take care of your family in any situation where normal life is disrupted. The following is a recommended supply list:

- Water - 3 day supply (1 gallon per person per day)
- Food - 3 day supply of non-perishable food
- Map marked with at least two evacuation routes
- Prescriptions or special medications
- Extra eyeglasses or contact lenses
- Change of clothing
- Items for infants
- First aid kit
- One change of clothing and footwear per person
- Flashlight, battery powered radio, extra batteries
- Extra set of car keys, credit cards, cash, traveler's checks
- Dust masks
- Sanitation and personal hygiene items
- Wrench or pliers to turn off utilities
- Manual can opener for food
- Cell phone with charger, inverter
- Family and emergency contact information
- Copies of important documents (birth certificates, passports, etc.)
- Pet food and water



For more information on emergency supplies visit www.redcross.org

26. Citizen Alert

Wildfire Preparedness Challenge Day 26...

Wouldn't it be great to be notified on your home phone, cell phone, via text message, or e-mail if a wildfire is threatening your area? The Citizen Alert Program is designed to do this.



This notification system helps local officials provide you with critical information quickly in a variety of situations such as fire, flood, unexpected road closures, missing persons and evacuation of buildings or neighborhoods.

In the event of an emergency, local officials will use the Citizen Alert system's emergency notification function to call homes and businesses in the affected area. This function will only call landline phones. If you do not have a landline phone, you will not be notified unless you register another contact option! If you register other contact options, such as your cell phone, work phone or email, you can be notified even when you're not at home.

You specify how you want to be contacted. For example, you can tell the system to call your cell phone and work phones, or just text your phone or send an email. Whichever form of communication works

best for you! You can also specify multiple locations in Jackson County you care about, such as your house, your parent's house, or your kids' school.

For more information and to sign up, visit:

<https://jacksoncountyor.org/emergency/Resources/Citizen-Alert>

27. Disaster Registry

Wildfire Preparedness Challenge Day 27...

Would you or a loved one need special help during an emergency?

You should sign up for the disaster registry if you would:

- Need outside help to safely leave your home during a disaster
- Be in jeopardy if you stayed in your home, without assistance, for three days
- Need special notification about the need for evacuation, due to impairment

The Disaster Registry is a database of names, locations and needs of people who need special assistance during an emergency. This database is available to fire, police and rescue workers.

Being on the Disaster Registry does not guarantee that you'll get help first in a disaster. There are so many needs during a disaster, that our firemen and police can't help everyone at once. But if your name is in the Disaster Registry, they will know of your need for special assistance.

Sign up at: <https://jacksoncountyor.org/emergency/Resources/Disaster-Registry>



28. New Home Construction Wildfire Measures

Wildfire Preparedness Challenge Day 28...

If you plan on building a new home in a hazardous wildfire area, there are measures you can take to make your home and property more resistant to wildfire. Here is a summary:

- Fire resistant structure planning including:
 - A minimum fire resistant rated Class A or B roof.
 - Non-combustible siding.
 - Non-combustible exterior vents that resist the passage of embers and flames through the ventilation openings.
 - Non-combustible rain gutters.
 - Solid skirting around the bottom of decks.
 - Non-combustible fencing attached to house.
 - Ember screens on chimneys.
- A minimum 100' fuel break (defensible space) around your home (If you live on the top of a hillside, you may need to increase this by 2-3 times below your home).
- Landscape Planning including:
 - 0-5 feet perimeter non-combustible zone around your home (concrete or non-combustible ground covering).
 - Utilize fire resistant vegetation (See Oregon State University's "Fire Resistant Shrubs and Trees in SW Oregon").
 - Tree planning:
 - Fully grown tree crown positioning to provide a minimum 10' horizontal clearance to chimneys or any part of structure.



- Conifers: Fully grown tree crown positioning to provide a minimum 30' clearance to other tree crowns.
- Eliminate ladder fuels (vegetation like taller shrubs below trees that will spread fire into tree crown).
- Prune trees up a minimum of 10' from the ground.

29. Home Evaluation Program

Wildfire Preparedness Challenge Day 29...

In September 2009 we witnessed how quickly a fire could spread within the wildland-urban interface area when, in just a few hours, the Deer Ridge Fire consumed 633 acres in the foothills of East Medford. Fortunately, no lives were lost and all homes were saved. Under different conditions, we may not be so fortunate in the future.



In 2010, Medford Fire-Rescue began a Wildland-Urban Interface Home Evaluation Program. This is a campaign each year targeting specific hazardous wildfire areas. The goal is to take a proactive approach to reduce the wildfire threat by evaluating properties, giving advice, and providing educational material. We have several areas within our jurisdiction that have the potential for a wildfire disaster. Educating residents through evaluation of their properties regarding home ignition hazards, fuel reduction, defensible space, and access can greatly reduce the future threat that both homeowners and firefighters face. The evaluation process is completely voluntary and free. To schedule an assessment, please call 541-774-2300. For more information about how to prepare your property for wildfire season and for possible financial assistance opportunities, visit our office or our website at:

<http://www.ci.medford.or.us/Page.asp?NavID=343>

30. Congratulations

Wildfire Preparedness Challenge Day 30...

Congratulations! If you have learned from this challenge and taken the effort to put the advice into practice, you have made your home more resistant to wildfire, created a safe buffer zone of defensible space around your home, and prepared your family for a wildfire event.



For more information, visit: <http://www.ci.medford.or.us/Page.asp?NavID=343>