



**READY,  
SET,  
GO!**

## **Jefferson County Evacuation Guide**

The Front Range is no stranger to wildland fire. With large fires occurring nearly each summer, evacuations have become commonplace.

**Residents must be prepared to act.**

# WILDFIRE EVACUATION LEVELS

There are three levels of evacuation notices you should be familiar with:

**LEVEL 1: BE READY!** There is an incident in the area. Residents are advised to leave if they need additional time to exit an area or have health conditions (especially respiratory conditions which could be made worse by smoke). Residents are encouraged to move livestock and pets out of the area, and to prepare for a full evacuation. Evacuations are voluntary, but residents are encouraged to leave if concerned.

**LEVEL 2: LEAVE SOON!** Residents are notified there is a full evacuation and are informed to leave. Evacuations are mandatory and entry to evacuated areas may be denied. Residents are encouraged to evacuate as soon as possible. Residents *MAY* have time to gather necessary items, but doing so is at their own risk.

**LEVEL 3: LEAVE IMMEDIATELY!** Residents are notified there is imminent danger, and they should evacuate immediately. **DO NOT** delay leaving to gather any belongings or make efforts to protect your home. Leave immediately, as quickly as possible.

Wildfires can move quickly and change direction with little warning. Be aware that in some cases there may not be time to start evacuation notices with Level 1 or 2. *Getting prepared now* will help protect you and your home if it becomes necessary to evacuate right away.

# EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS NETWORK

The Emergency Preparedness Network (EPN) is a system public safety officials can use to call landline phones or registered mobile phones to inform you of impending dangers. Here's how it works:

1. A brief message is recorded by the agency that answers 911 calls in your area (this could be the sheriff's office, police or fire department, etc.).
2. The EPN system allows the agency to limit who is called by defining an area on a map or by inputting a range of addresses.
3. The message is then "launched." The EPN system calls each number on the list, playing the message when the phone is answered.
4. If the phone is busy, the system will re-try. If an answering machine is encountered, the system will attempt to leave a message.
5. If a TDD signal is encountered, the system will leave a TDD message.

A note about the EPN: It's important to recognize that the EPN is one of the tools available to help keep residents safe in the event of an emergency. Like any tool or technology, it should never be a substitute for your own judgment. **Even if you haven't received an official notification, if you feel threatened by a wildland fire, evacuate.**

# READY

- Make a list of your **5P's**:

## **People, Pets, Pills, Photos, important Papers**

Keep it handy and practice gathering them.

- Prepare a 72-Hour kit:

- » Flashlight with plenty of extra batteries
- » First aid kit, prescription medications, eyeglasses, all essential equipment and devices for infants/elderly residents
- » Water (at least one gallon per person), and food that does not require refrigeration or cooking
- » Sleeping bag and clothing for each family member
- » Important documents such as proof of residence, insurance policies, birth certificates, prescriptions, wills, and deeds
- » This guide and your **5P's** (listed above)

**PLANNING** is key to surviving wildfire. Start today by making sure you have these plans in place.

- Create at least 30 feet of defensible space around your home. (You can learn more at [www.firewise.org](http://www.firewise.org))
- Educate yourself and your family about wildfire and evacuation procedures.
- Identify and learn alternate ways out of your neighborhood. Print maps to keep in your vehicle.
- Know the evacuation plans for your family members in school, assisted living and childcare facilities.
- Designate an out-of-area contact through whom family members can relay information. Make sure your whole family has that person's phone number.
- Plan how you will transport your pets.
- Keep the car fuel tank at least half full during wildfire season.
- Know where your local shelters are.

# SET

## ESSENTIALS:

- Take a deep breath and remember your plan. Life safety always takes priority over property.
- Face your car toward the street and close all windows. Keep the keys handy.
- Load your 5P's and 72-Hour Kit into the car.
- Wear protective clothing made of natural fabrics such as heavy denim, cotton, and pure wool to shield you from heat, embers and flames. Wear sturdy shoes, a long-sleeved shirt tucked into pants, hat, and a handkerchief. Have thick canvas or leather gloves, and light-colored goggles on ready.
- As you leave, post a visible form of notification that identifies that you have evacuated. Hang a white cloth at the end of your driveway (pillowcases, t-shirts, or towels work well). If you have time, write "EVACUATED" on it.

**GO EARLY** During an evacuation, roads become congested with vehicles, dust and smoke, making evacuation a slow process. Long before evacuation seems likely, **PREPARE and GO!**

ONLY IF THERE'S TIME - PREPARE YOUR HOME:

- Close all windows and doors (inside and outside).
- Close window blinds. Remove curtains from windows.
- Shut off natural gas and propane.
- Place metal (not wooden) ladder against side of house.
- Leave exterior and interior lights on.
- If time permits, remove combustibles (patio furniture, firewood, etc.) within 30 feet of your home.
- If you have sprinklers (with adequate water supply), put them around your home, connected and ready to be turned on.

# GO!

- Tune into a local news radio station and listen for instructions. If you have mobile internet, check for emergency updates from the Jefferson County Sheriff's Office at <http://jeffcosherriff1.blogspot.com>
- Obey orders of law enforcement and fire department officials.
- Follow the emergency instructions regarding evacuation routes. Your normal route may not be the safest.
- Drive with your headlights on for visibility and safety.
- Do not block access to roadways for emergency vehicles or other evacuees.
- Do not abandon vehicles on the roadway.
- Do not stop to let pets have a break.
- Drive calmly, obey the rules of the road and pay special attention to fire trucks.



**DON'T WAIT** If you feel threatened, GO! In some cases, there is no time for formal evacuation notification due to quickly changing conditions. You may need to make this decision yourself.

## AFTER EVACUATION

- Check in at an emergency shelter. Whether you stay there or not, your checking in will help others know that you are safe.
- Take pets to a Pet Evacuation Center. If you were unable to evacuate your pets or livestock, contact your local animal control. They will send teams out to retrieve them if safety permits. Jefferson County Animal Control: 303-271-5070. Park County: 303-816-0732.
- Do not attempt to re-enter the fire area until it is declared safe by Law Enforcement.

### ○ 9-1-1 IS FOR EMERGENCIES ONLY

- For road information: Dial 5-1-1 or ask Law Enforcement Officers or Firefighters in the area.
- For general information: Stay tuned to local news radio, television broadcasts and websites.
- If you're unsure of whether or not to evacuate: Be safe, not sorry: EVACUATE.

# EMERGENCY WILDFIRE SCENARIOS

If you are caught by fire while evacuating **DO NOT ATTEMPT TO OUTFIGHT IT**. You are safer and more likely to survive by doing the following:

## CAUGHT INSIDE AN AUTOMOBILE

- Move your vehicle to bare ground or areas where vegetation is sparse. Face the wind and close all doors, vents and windows.
- Turn engine off, leave lights on.
- Lie on the floor and cover yourself with a jacket or blanket. The fuel tank of the car will normally not explode.
- Stay calm and remain in your vehicle until after the flame front passes or until you are forced out of your vehicle by toxic fumes.
- If you are forced out of your vehicle, cover with a wool blanket and lie flat under the vehicle.

# EMERGENCY WILDFIRE SCENARIOS

## CAUGHT ON FOOT, ALONG A ROAD

- Seek shelter: under bridges, in ditches, in rivers or lakes, on burned over areas, and on green grass flats.
- Lie face down along the road cut or the ditch on the uphill side (less vegetation and less convective heat).
- Cover yourself with anything that will shield you from the heat of the fire.



## CAUGHT ON FOOT, IN THE OPEN

- Seek shelter where vegetation is sparse and find a depression in the ground (if possible).
- While the fire is approaching, clear as much vegetation as you can and lie face down in the depression, covering yourself with anything that will shield you from the intense heat and toxic smoke.

# EMERGENCY WILDFIRE SCENARIOS

## CAUGHT AT HOME: “SHELTERING-IN-PLACE”

During some wildfire events, you may not be able to evacuate in time and you will be faced with no other option than to shelter-in-place. Careful planning and action on your part can help protect you during a wildfire.

**Sheltering-in-place is always a LAST RESORT if you cannot evacuate in time.**

### AS THE FIRE APPROACHES:

- Put on any protective clothing and gear you are not already wearing.
- Close windows and doors to the house to prevent sparks and embers from blowing inside. Close all doors inside the house to prevent draft. Open the damper on your fireplace to help stabilize outside-inside pressure, but close the fireplace screen so sparks will not ignite the room.
- Take down your drapes and curtains. Close all blinds.
- Fill all bathtubs, sinks and other containers with water.
- Turn on lights in every room and porch lights.
- Turn off pilot lights.

# EMERGENCY WILDFIRE SCENARIOS

## CAUGHT AT HOME: “SHELTERING-IN-PLACE”

- Back your car into the garage, keeping the windows closed and keys in the ignition. Close garage doors and disconnect the automatic garage door opener (so you can still remove your car in the event of a power failure).
- Place your **5P's** inside your car in the garage for quick departure, if necessary.
- As the fire front approaches, **STAY INSIDE**, take a deep breath and remain calm.



## AFTER THE FIRE PASSES:

- Check the roof immediately. Extinguish any sparks or embers.
- Check inside the attic for hidden burning embers. Extinguish any fires.
- Over the next several hours continue monitoring your home for signs of smoke and embers.
- Contact the Jefferson County Non-Emergency Dispatch Center (303.277.0211) and notify authorities that you are still in your home.

# RESOURCES

## o Elk Creek Fire Department

ElkCreekFire.org - 303.816.9385

If you would like a risk assessment and mitigation suggestions for your home or property, contact Elk Creek Fire Department for more information.

## o Jefferson County Sheriff's Office

Jeffco.us/Sheriff - 303.271.0211

For emergency updates during an incident:

[jeffcosherriff1.blogspot.com/](http://jeffcosherriff1.blogspot.com/)

Jeffco Twitter Feed - @jeffcosherriffco

To register your mobile phone for the Emergency Preparedness Network (or check to see whether your number is already registered), visit <https://alertregistration.com/JeffersonCountyCO/> or the link from [Jeffco.us/Sheriff](http://Jeffco.us/Sheriff).

There are also several links to other resources on the Jeffco Sheriff website: Click on "Prepare for an Emergency" under the "Resources" heading.

## o Animal Control

Jefferson County: 303.271.5070

Park County: 303-816-0732

## o Firewise.org

## o ProjectWildfire.org

## o Ready, Set, Go! [wildlandfireRSG.org](http://wildlandfireRSG.org)

## o Colorado State Forest Service [csfs.colostate.edu](http://csfs.colostate.edu)

# RESOURCES

## Jefferson County Fire Departments:

**Arvada Fire District** [arvadafire.com](http://arvadafire.com) - 303.424.3012

**Coal Creek Canyon Fire Department**

[coalcreekcanyonfd.org](http://coalcreekcanyonfd.org) - 303.642.3121

**Evergreen Fire Rescue**

[evergreenfirerescue.com](http://evergreenfirerescue.com) - 303.674.3145

**Fairmount Fire** [fairmountfire.org](http://fairmountfire.org) - 303.279.2928

**Foothills Fire Rescue** [foothillsfire.org](http://foothillsfire.org) - 303.526.0707

**Genesee Fire** [geneseefire.org](http://geneseefire.org) - 303.526.1230

**Golden Fire**

[cityofgolden.net/government/departments-divisions/fire](http://cityofgolden.net/government/departments-divisions/fire) - 303.384.8090

**Golden Gate Fire District** [goldengatefire.org](http://goldengatefire.org) - 303.279.3538

**Indian Hills Fire District** [indianhillsfirerescue.org](http://indianhillsfirerescue.org) - 303.697.4568

**Intercanyon Fire Rescue** [intercanyonfire.org](http://intercanyonfire.org) - 303.697.4413

**Littleton Fire** [littletongov.org/fire](http://littletongov.org/fire) - 303.795.3800

**North Fork Volunteer Fire Department**

[northforkfire.org](http://northforkfire.org) - 303.838.2270

**North Metro Fire District** [northmetrofire.org](http://northmetrofire.org) - 303.452.9910

**Pleasant View Fire**

[pleasantviewmetro.org/fire-department](http://pleasantviewmetro.org/fire-department) - 303.279.4361

**West Metro Fire Rescue** [westmetrofire.org](http://westmetrofire.org) - 303.989.4307

**Westminster Fire Department**

[ci.westminster.co.us/Safety/FireDepartment.aspx](http://ci.westminster.co.us/Safety/FireDepartment.aspx)  
303.658.4500

**Wheat Ridge Fire** [wrfire.org](http://wrfire.org) - 303.403.5900



ElkCreekFire.org  
303.816.9385



ProjectWildfire.org



Jeffco.us/Sheriff  
303.271.0211



www.wildlandfireRSG.org

Across the country, injuries and deaths are increasing during wildland fire evacuations. The purpose of this guide is to enable residents to act responsibly and safely in the event of a wildland fire.

During a major wildland fire, despite the best efforts of fire protection and law enforcement agencies, there still may not be enough equipment and manpower to go door-to-door or to call advising you to evacuate; you should be ready to make this decision yourself and GO!

The fire departments and law enforcement agencies of Jefferson County assume no liability for the use or misuse of this information, which is intended to provide fire safety and emergency guidelines for residents.