Things You Should Know About Wildfire

- Fire is the combination of heat, oxygen, fuel and an ignition source.
- Wildland fuels include grasses, needles, leaves, brush and trees.
- Fires can be ignited naturally by lightning.
- Under the right conditions, fire managers start fires to improve habitat or restore natural systems. However, sometimes people also start unwanted wildland fires through carelessness or arson.
- Where and how quickly a fire moves depends on the terrain, weather and types and condition of vegetation.
- Fires burn faster up hillsides than they do on flat ground. The heat rising from the flames pre-heats the grasses, shrubs and trees above the fire.
- Like sheets of paper, grasses burn quickly, up to several miles per hour under extreme conditions.
- Larger fuels, such as logs, may take hours or even days to burn completely.
- While windswept flames can leap into the crowns of trees and burn entire trees in seconds, many fires merely creep along the ground slowly burning brush and forest litter.
- The diversity of plants and animals in the wildlands can depend upon fire. What may look at first like devastation soon becomes a panorama of new life. Fire starts critical natural processes by breaking down organic matter into soil nutrients. Soil, rejuvenated with nitrogen from ash, provides a fertile seedbed for plants. With less competition and more sunlight certain seedlings grow quickly.

Remember...

If you live near the wildlands, take precautions to create defensible space around your home to increase the chances that it can survive a wildland fire.

Contact your local land management agency to get current wildland fire danger information.

National Interagency Fire Center
3833 S. Development Ave.
Boise, ID 83705
208-387-5050

BLM-FA-AE-08-005-9213

www.nifc.gov
www.firewise.org

PREPARING FOR WILDLAND FIRE

Recommendations for people who live in or near the wildlands

Wildland Fires

Wildland fire is an essential, natural process that has played a role in shaping our natural landscapes for thousands of years. It is critical for the survival of many plants and animals.

In recent years, people have been moving into or near fire-prone wildland areas in increasing numbers. When a fire occurs, these people and their homes are at risk. While it's critical for residents to take action to create defensible space around their homes and property before there is smoke in the air, it's also important for residents and recreational visitors alike to know what to do when a wildfire does occur.

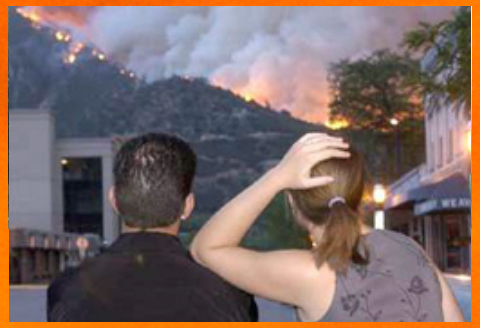
When Wildfire Threatens

- Follow instructions from local officials. These officials will advise you of evacuation orders and the safest escape routes. Listening to the radio and watching TV will provide updated emergency information.
- Pack an emergency kit including water, food that won't spoil, prescription medications, eye glasses, supplies for infants, a change of clothing, blankets, flashlight and batteries, important documents and family photos.
- Make sure your car has a full tank of gas and back your car into the garage or park it in the open facing your escape route. Leave the key in the ignition and close garage doors and windows. Disconnect automatic garage door openers in case of a power outage.
- Confine your pets to one room so you can find them quickly if you need to leave. Make plans to care for your pets prior to your evacuation.
- Arrange temporary housing with a friend or relative outside the threatened area.

Preparing Your Home

- Open fireplace damper and close fireplace screens.
- Close windows, vents, doors, noncombustible window coverings, and remove flammable drapes and curtains.
- Move flammable furniture away from windows.
- Use a garden hose to wet down as much of your roof, siding, and ground adjacent to your house as possible.
- Turn on lawn sprinklers and position on roof if possible.
- Turn off propane tanks.
- Turn on a light in each room to increase the visibility of your home in heavy smoke.
- Place combustible patio furniture inside.

In Case of Evacuation



- When advised to evacuate, do so immediately. Leaving quickly and following evacuation orders helps firefighters do their job as well as reduces traffic problems.
- Lock your home.
- Wear protective clothing including sturdy shoes, cotton or woolen clothing, long pants, long-sleeved shirt, gloves, and a dry bandanna over your face to protect you from smoke.
- Tell a family member or friend outside of the wildfire area where you are going.
- Turn on your vehicle lights and follow evacuation route identified by local officials. If no official route exists, choose a route away from fire hazards and watch for changes in speed and direction of the fire and smoke.
- Always put life before property.