# LIVING WITH WILDFIRE

## Jefferson County's Guide to Becoming Fire-Adapted

MARCH 2024

# INTRODUCTION

How did we get here?

Wildfire was here before us. The east slope of the Cascade Mountains encompasses a diverse range of forest types, from cold and wet forests at high elevations near the Cascade Crest to warm and dry forests at lower elevations around Madras, Gateway, and Metolius. These forests are adapted to and depend on different kinds of fire.

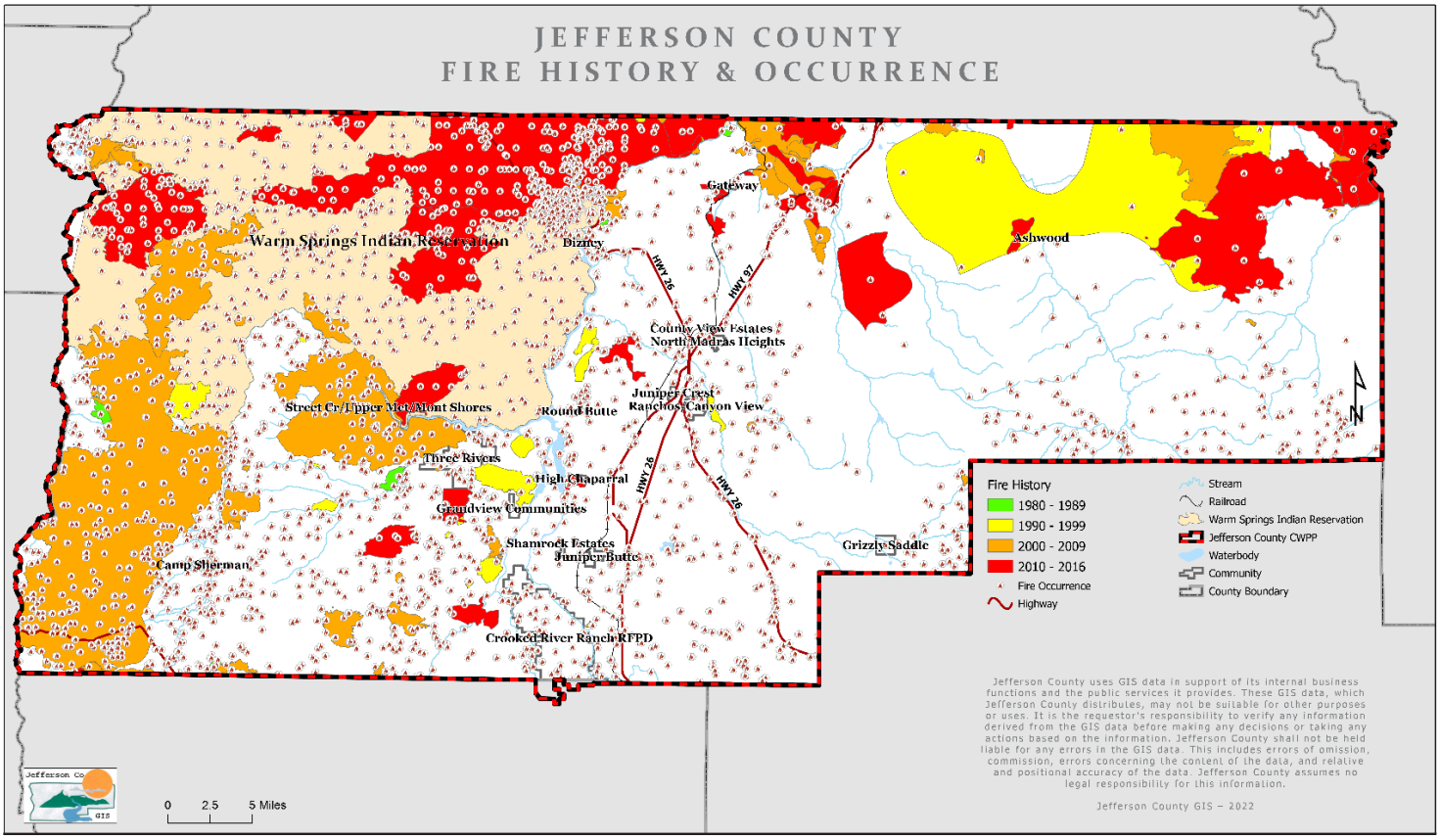
**For millennia, our mid- and lower-elevation ponderosa pine, juniper, and dry mixed-conifer forests were maintained by low- to mixed-severity fires.** These fires reduced tree competition for water, maintained wildlife habitat, recycled soil nutrients, and supported healthy forests and watersheds. They also thinned out young trees and shrubs and reduced the buildup of pine needles, leaves, and twigs – "wildfire fuel."

However, in the late 1800s, the occurrence of fire started to change. These changes included the introduction of widespread livestock grazing and invasive annual grasses and a steady increase in wildfire suppression efforts over the past century. Persistent droughts have additionally stressed the landscape and left vegetation tinder dry.

These factors led to unnatural and unhealthy ecosystems: overly dense forests with overgrown, shrubby understories full of uniformly young trees and few old, large, fire-tolerant trees. Juniper, a highly flammable species, and invasive annual grasses like cheatgrass have spread into rangelands, increasing the likelihood of fast-moving, intense wildfires. As a result, the landscapes of Jefferson County are less resilient in the face of wildfires, insects, diseases, and drought.

We now face a greater likelihood of more prolonged and intense wildfires, threatening the values we care about and the landscape itself.

*Below: A fire history and occurrence map identifies more than half of Jefferson County residents live with wildfire risk.*



# CULTURAL PRESCRIBED FIRE

For centuries, Indigenous people used fire to modify the landscape. Cultural prescribed fires were intentionally set as part of the environmental cycle and maintenance of wildlife habitats, natural medicines, and various foods such as roots and berries that sustained the cultures and economies of the Indigenous peoples of the Americas.

**What was initially perceived by colonists as untouched, pristine wilderness was the cumulative result of naturally occurring low-intensity fire and cultural burning practices**, creating a mosaic of grasslands and forests sustained and managed by the people indigenous to the landscape.

Disruption of cultural burning practices occurred with European colonization. The forced relocation of indigenous people, who had historically maintained the landscape, ended the use of low-intensity burns. With the fire exclusions over the years, the forests are heavily overgrown with heavy fuel loadings. Combined with climate change and poor health conditions of the forests, we are seeing devastating wildland fires and huge losses of natural resources.

## PRESCRIBED FIRE TODAY

Prescribed fire is an effective management tool used by state and federal agencies and trained private landowners for a wide range of purposes including fuels reduction, pasture and timber management, and improved ecosystem health.

Practitioners use their understanding of fire behavior and fire ecology to plan burns that will meet specific objectives. This process involves several steps: scouting and preparing the burn unit, planning the burn, conducting the burn, and monitoring the results. Knowledge of fire behavior, careful consideration of weather, fuel conditions, and smoke produced are also incorporated into planning a prescribed burn.

Two main types of prescribed fire are broadcast burning and pile burning. Pile burning involves burning piles of fuel built from woody debris. Broadcast burning involves applying fire to a predetermined area that can range in size from few to many acres.

If you are interested in learning more about prescribed fire as a tool for managing your land, reach out to:

- Visit **centraloregonfire.org** for more information on prescribed fire in our area.
- Oregon Department of Forestry: odfcentraloregon.com
- Read Oregon State University's ***Prescribed Fire Basics*** series: beav.es/qpc

# FIRE-ADAPTED COMMUNITIES

Neighbors and Agencies working together to reduce wildfire risk

As Jefferson County's population increases, more residents move to the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) and away from urban centers. Homes and businesses within the WUI face elevated risks of wildland, rangeland, brush, or forest fires.

Rugged and varied terrain separates Jefferson County's three rural fire protection districts and three rangeland fire protection association areas. Federal and State fire units will respond during extreme fire seasons but may need more time. It is the responsibility of residents to ensure their homes are prepared to survive wildfire.

With the growing potential for loss of human life and property due to wildfire, you ***can and should*** take an active role in decreasing the wildfire threat to your home, business, and community.

There are proven steps that residents can take to improve personal safety and home survival during wildfires. The **National Fire Protection Association's Firewise USA®** and **Fire-Adapted Communities** programs offer effective preparedness guidelines to help our community survive a fire – from homes and neighborhoods to the larger landscape.

Once implemented at the neighborhood, community, and regional levels, these recommendations will assist communities in becoming prepared for wildfire.

## Community Wildfire Protection Plan

For residents looking to understand their community's risk of wildfire and recommended mitigation and prevention opportunities, the Jefferson County Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) is a plan established ***by*** the community ***for*** the community.

Collaboratively developed by local, state, and federal agencies, as well as interested citizens, the CWPP identifies and prioritizes areas for hazardous fuel reduction treatments, provides coordinated strategies for protecting communities and infrastructure, and recommends measures that homeowners and communities can take to reduce the ignitability of structures and protect their homes.

- Jefferson County CWPP: https://www.coic.org/emergency-preparedness/jefferson-co-cwpp

*Below: Community members learn to become fire-adapted through home assessments (left) and wildfire home protection class (right).*

# FIREWISE USA® in Jefferson County

## A conversation with Lake Billy Chinook resident, Diane Burkeen

### What first got you interested in fire preparedness?

Before moving to our Rim Park neighborhood, I experienced fires in an urban neighborhood, motivating a desire to mitigate fire risk through partnership with community members and emergency responders.

I also came to the area with a fire risk awareness due to the devastating property loss experienced by extended family members during the 2018 Camp Fire in Paradise, California.

### Why did your neighborhood decide to apply for Firewise USA® recognition?

Our Fire Chief encouraged the pursuit of Firewise recognition to facilitate neighborhood awareness of fire risk and to educate property owners on how to take action to improve fire resiliency. Our neighborhood is situated adjacent to a geographic area that experiences wildfires.

### How did you get your neighbors on board?

Involving our neighbors began through "boots on the ground and leashes in hand" as we communicated with our neighbors while walking our dogs. A shared appreciation for the exceptional natural beauty of our surroundings provided the foundation for discussion of becoming a fire-resistant community. During fire season, a banner provided by the Oregon State Fire Marshal, posted at the entry to the neighborhood, is a friendly reminder for all entering to be aware and take appropriate action to mitigate fire danger.

### How did you determine the highest-risk areas in your neighborhood?

Our Fire Chief initially facilitated the risk assessment for the neighborhood. Subsequently, at the neighborhood Firewise meeting this year, our Fire District solicited sign-ups for voluntary property fire assessments and feedback.

### Do you have a maintenance plan?

Yes, our Firewise program includes actionable goals spanning three years.

Some goals pertain to enhancing overall property awareness of Firewise recommendations. Other goals are community-wide, necessitating access to funding for resources to accomplish these goals.

### What can communities gain by working together?

Together, communities can communicate to encourage and reinforce individual effort, explore and attain available resources, and gain momentum in achieving goals.


FIREWISE COMMUNITIES®

# YOUR DEFENSIBLE SPACE

Evaluating your home's ignition zones and the overall landscape

**Fire requires three ingredients = fuel + heat + oxygen.** Without any one of these elements, fire will not occur. While it is difficult to remove heat or oxygen to stop the progress of a wildfire, we can reduce the availability of fuel.


Most homes that burn do so because of flying embers, not from the main front of a wildfire. Embers can travel far ahead of an advancing wildfire. If they land in leaves in a roof gutter or a patio chair pad, those combustible materials can quickly ignite and spread to the rest of the home.

By managing vegetation around your structures, you reduce the threat of wildfires and allow firefighters to more safely and effectively defend your property.

Studies by the U.S. Forest Service and the Insurance Institute for Business and Home Safety have shown that a well-prepared and clean Home Ignition Zone can drastically increase the survivability of your home in the event of a wildfire.

The **HOME IGNITION ZONE** includes the home and its immediate surroundings, out to a distance of 100 feet (or 200 feet on steeper slopes). The work you do within the Home Ignition Zone is called creating **DEFENSIBLE SPACE**, and it plays an important role in reducing the risk of losing your home to wildfire.

**The Home Ignition Zone is divided into 3 sub-zones:**

- **Immediate zone:** structure to first 5 feet
- **Intermediate zone:** 5 to 30 feet from each structure
- **Extended zone:** 30 to 100 feet from each structure (up to 200 feet on steep slopes)

During large wildfire events, it is likely that firefighting resources will be limited for home protection in many neighborhoods. Your defensible space may become your home's best protection.

*The following pages outline proven steps that residents can take, including adjustments to their homes and landscape, as shown in the photos above and below, to significantly reduce the likelihood of losing their homes to wildfire.*

# **THE BIG PICTURE:** Check your surroundings

Outbuildings, including barns and woodsheds, within 30 feet of your house become a part of your Home Ignition Zone. Consider these buildings as another fuel source.

Examine vegetation types and how close they are to structures.

Southern exposures and prevailing winds cause vegetation to dry out more quickly.

Create fuel breaks by thinning trees and vegetation near your structures to help slow the spread of wildfire and give firefighters a defensible area.

Maintain an area 0 to 5 ft around the home that is free of combustible materials. Rock, concrete paths or pavers are good choices.

# **HOME HARDENING:** Create an ember-resistant structure

Evaluate roofing materials and assembly.

Embers can accumulate under open eaves. Cover the underside with a soffit, box them in or fill gaps with caulk. Maintain log chinking.

Install and maintain non-combustible roof gutters. Keep them free of litter and debris.

Check your roof annually to make sure shingles are in good condition — flat, with no tears or gaps. Install firesafe roof materials.

Ensure all areas where roof and siding meet are properly flashed.

Inspect seams around skylights, chimneys and stovepipes.

Noncombustible stucco, brick, steel or cement board siding are fire-resistant choices.

Cover all attic, eave and foundation vents or openings (except for laundry dryer vents) with 1/8-inch or smaller wire mesh to keep embers from being blown inside.

**Clear debris from vents regularly.**

Check chimneys for flue caps and screening wire mesh no larger than 3/8-inch over the opening. Check roof turbine vents for screens.

Keep roof skylights free of debris. Use double-pane glass or fire-rated domed skylights.

Install double-pane windows with tempered glass.

# **IMMEDIATE ZONE** (0–5 feet): Maintain a noncombustible area

Create a noncombustible area at least 5 feet wide around the base of your home. Use gravel, rock, or hard surfaces such as brick and pavers. Keep the area clear of flammable plants, doormats, or cushions.

Watch for flammable "paths" (such as a line of wood mulch or a wooden fence line) leading to the home.

**Do not store your firewood on or under your deck!**

Routinely remove debris such as leaves, pine needles, or weeds from patios, decks, porches, balconies, and fencing. Keep spaces under decks clean, or consider enclosing with 1/8-inch or smaller wire mesh.

This area should be maintained annually.

Photo: Kara Baylog

Maintain your garage as you would your home and ensure the garage doors are properly sealed.

If parking outside, keep vehicles on a clean (nonflammable) surface outside the 5-foot noncombustible area.

If a fence must be connected to your home, use metal to disrupt a potential fire path.

**Do not plant ornamental junipers or arborvitae near homes!**

Their exterior branches can often hide dead foliage in the center. When combined with their natural volatile oils, collected embers can smolder undetected and reignite long after firefighters have left the area.

Photo: Amy Jo Detweiler

# INTERMEDIATE ZONE (5–30 feet)

**The first 30 feet is critical; keep it lean, clean and green:**

- Create an area from 5 feet to 30 feet that is fire-resistant and acts as a buffer from embers and flames.
- Clear all flammable vegetation within 10 feet of propane or fuel tanks.
- Keep firewood stacks at least 30 feet from structures and keep covered when possible.
- Remove all dead and dying vegetation in this zone.
- Use low-growing vegetation near homes and keep them cultivated and watered. Any dead or dried materials should be removed.
- When retaining native shrubs, reduce their numbers to individual plants or small groups and break up their continuity across the landscape. Keep grasses mowed to 4 inches or less.
- Avoid planting underneath or near windows, soffit vents, eaves or in front of foundation vents.
- Keep tree limbs pruned at least 10 feet away from your roof, chimney and stovepipe.
- Prune limbs encroaching on power lines (consult professionals first).
- When using mulch, keep it moist and try breaking up its continuity with patches of hardscapes (such as landscape rocks or gravel) or with areas of irrigated grass.

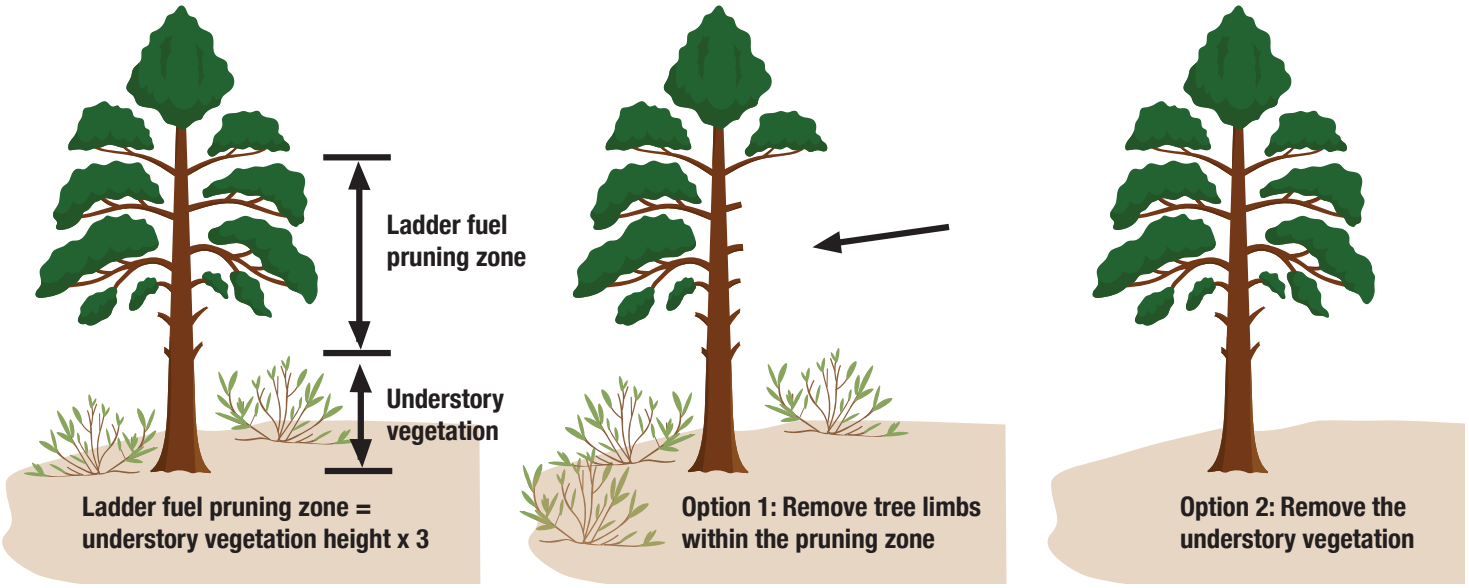
**Avoid highly flammable plants within 30 feet of your home!**

Ornamental conifers such as Arborvitae, juniper varieties and cypress varieties are extremely flammable. They contain volatile oils and waxes in their foliage and accumulate dead materials within the plant. When they burn, they generate enough heat to ignite nearby vegetation and your home. Many native plants also fall into this highly flammable plant category.

Combinations of low-growing deciduous shrubs, herbaceous flowers and groundcover plants are far less likely to generate enough heat to ignite your home or surrounding vegetation.

For more information on what to plant, consult Oregon State University's ***Fire-Resistant Plants for Home Landscapes*** at https://beav.es/qpT

## LADDER FUELS PRUNING ZONE




*How high can flames fly? About three times taller than the height of the understory plant that is burning!*

| Understory Vegetation Height | 1 ft. | 2 ft. | 3 ft. | 4 ft. | 5 ft | 6 ft. | 7 ft. | 8 ft. | 9 ft. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Ladder Fuel Pruning Zone Distance | 3 ft. | 6 ft. | 9 ft. | 12 ft. | 15 ft. | 18 ft. | 21 ft. | 24 ft. | 27 ft. |

# EXTENDED ZONE (30 feet and beyond)

This area extends from the 30-foot "Lean, Clean and Green" area out to at least 100 feet and up to 200 feet on steeper slopes with thicker vegetation. It usually lies beyond the residential landscape and often consists of naturally occurring plants such as conifer and hardwood trees, brush, forbs and grass.

Consider extending this zone on the typical prevailing wind side of the property to ensure protection due to wind-driven wildfire events.

If you want to keep a particular small dense clump or patch of trees and shrubs for a visual screen, clear out the area around it, creating an island and ensuring that you are breaking up the continuity of fuels.

**Pace yourself!** These tasks are critical, but plan your modifications over several months or years to fit your budget.

**Do the following on a portion of your Extended Zone each year, treating all of it over time:**

- Reduce ladder fuels by pruning low tree branches and shrubs growing directly under trees.
- Remove invasive weeds such as cheatgrass and knapweeds. Consult ***Recognizing and Identifying Three Invasive Annual Grasses in the Great Basin Desert*** at https://beav.es/qsD
- In the spring, remove needle cast and leaves from gutters, roofs, gardens, and flower beds.
- Thin dense patches of trees and shrubs to create separation between them to slow the spread of fire.
- Ensure access routes are cleared at least 14 ½ ft. high and 12 ft. wide for safe and effective evacuation.
- Clear an area for emergency vehicles to turn around near your home.
- Be sure your address is posted and visible from the road.

# THE IMPORTANCE OF MAINTENANCE

Maintaining a defensible space is an ongoing activity. Plants grow back, and flammable vegetation needs to be routinely removed and disposed of properly. Before each fire season, re-evaluate your property using the **Home Ignition Zone checklist** on **page 19** and implement the necessary defensible space recommendations.

None of these treatments offer a one-and-done approach! Restoration requires ongoing efforts and recurring treatments to maintain desired forest and range conditions and keep fire risk low.

# **EMERGENCY ACCESS** TO YOUR HOME

## DRIVEWAY CLEARANCE

To aid in safe and effective emergency services response to your home, remove flammable vegetation extending at least 10 ft. from both sides of the driveway. Overhead obstructions (overhanging branches and power lines) should be removed or raised to provide clearance at least 14 ½ ft. high and 12 ft. wide.

## STREET & ADDRESS SIGNS

Street signs should be posted at each intersection leading to your home and your home address should be readily visible from the street. If your driveway leads to multiple homes, use directional arrows. While wood may be more attractive, signs should be made of reflective, noncombustible material with characters at least 4" high.



## TURNAROUNDS & TURNOUTS

Homes located at the end of long driveways or dead-end roads should have turnaround areas suitable for large fire equipment. Turnarounds can either be a cul-de-sac with a min. 48-foot radius (per the Oregon Fire Code) or a space suitable for executing a 3-point turn. Create turnouts in driveways and access roads that will allow two-way traffic.

## GATED DRIVEWAYS

Before installing a gated driveway, ensure local fire agencies can access locked or electronically operated gates. Rural wire gates should have multiple locks to allow entry for fire and medical responders as well as landowners.

# **EMERGENCY ACCESS** TO YOUR COMMUNITY

## ESCAPE ROUTES

Make a plan with more than one way out of your neighborhood if possible. Avoid undeveloped routes or areas with heavy vegetation and steep slopes due to the possibility of becoming stuck. Consult your local emergency manager or fire department for advice if needed.


## FUELBREAK

A cleared strip of land, also called a fuelbreak, changes fire behavior by slowing it down, reducing the length of flames and preventing the fire from reaching tree canopies.

Community fuelbreaks are particularly effective when integrated with the defensible space of adjacent homes.

## SECONDARY ROAD

When communities only have one way in and out, evacuation of residents while emergency responders are arriving can result in traffic congestion and potentially dangerous driving conditions. An improved second access road, even one only used for emergency purposes, can improve traffic flow during a wildfire as an escape route.

## SAFE AREA OR SAFETY ZONE

A safe area is a designated location within a community where people can go to wait out the wildfire. Often, airports, ballparks, golf courses, parks and parking lots can serve as safe areas. A large area that has already burned or has no fuel around it can also serve as a good safety zone — a last resort if evacuation is no longer an option.

# YOUR EVACUATION PLAN

Evacuations save lives and allow responding personnel to focus on the emergency.

**Stay aware and informed!** Wildfire conditions may change rapidly. Communication may be obstructed by downed power or phone lines or road closures. **Be hyper-vigilant during wildfire season and red flag days.**

## NOTIFICATIONS

Effectively communicating emergency information requires partnership between local government, emergency responders, the media and the public. Although emergency information is made available, **YOU** must make a conscious effort to seek out that information. No single method of communication is fail-safe during an emergency, so regional public safety officials use a combination of methods to keep the public informed during an emergency.

- **Register for emergency alerts:** oralert.gov
  - If you live near the Jefferson County border with another county, we recommend that you sign up for alerts from both sources
- Jefferson County Sheriff's Office:
  - jeffco.net/sheriff
  - facebook.com/JeffersonCountyORSheriff
- Central Oregon Fire Info: centraloregonfire.org
- KTVZ Fire Alert: ktvz.com/fire-alert/

Consider evacuation based on your local conditions, even if you have not been notified to do so.

**Smartphone user?** Scan this QR code for a link to Jefferson County Emergency Alerts with the Frontier Regional Emergency Alert Program.

### Special Needs of Vulnerable Populations

During a disaster, it is essential that individuals with special needs, including the elderly and people with medical needs and people with certain disabilities, receive proper care.

- Anyone with a disability or who lives with, works with, or assists a person with a disability or functional need should create a plan for an emergency.
- If a person is dependent upon medications or equipment, or has special dietary needs, plan to bring those items with you. Be sure to include documentation for insurance and medical conditions.
- Plan for transportation ahead of time - public transportation during an emergency evacuation may not be suitable for those with special needs.
- People with special-needs may be easily upset and stressed by sudden and frightening changes. Your plans should ensure that a caregiver or trusted family member is able to stay with them at all times.

**LEVEL 1: BE READY.** Monitor emergency service websites and media outlets. There does not have to be an active wildfire to be at Level 1.

**LEVEL 2: BE SET.** This may be the only warning you get. Emergency services may not have capacity to notify you if conditions worsen.

**LEVEL 3: GO! LEAVE IMMEDIATELY!** You are in danger. The safety of you and your family is the most important thing now.

# LEVEL 1 EVACUATION: BE READY

***Possible evacuation for your area.*** If you receive a Level 1 warning it is important to start preparing for a possible evacuation. You may not receive a Level 2 "be set" warning before you are ordered to a Level 3 "go!"

## GET READY CHECKLIST

Below is a suggested list of things to do and bring in the event you must evacuate. It is important to have everything ready to go, because an evacuation order can come at a moment's notice. If you live in an area of increased wildfire risk it may be crucial you have items, such as a go-kit, prepared in advance.

- Go-kit prepared and accessible
- Several changes of clothes, sturdy shoes (for each household member)
- Essential medications and medical equipment
- Important papers and identification (passport, birth certificate, health information, insurance policies, etc.)
- Important phone numbers, cell phone and charger, computer and backup drive
- Cash, credit cards
- Copies of personal items (such as family photos)
- Leave windows closed
- Park vehicle facing outward in driveway and always keep fuel tank at least half-full.
- Prepare for pet and livestock evacuation

### Evacuation plan:

Make sure every household member knows and understands what to do in the event of evacuation. Know where to go, how to get there, and who else knows where you are going. It may be important to make and review this plan before receiving an evacuation notice.

- Be informed of what might happen by learning about community hazards, emergency planning and local warning systems.
- Assess what you will be able to do during an emergency and what you will need help with. Consider creating a personal support network to help you plan and respond to an emergency.

## PREPARING A GO-KIT:

The best time to prepare a go-kit is before you need it! Having a go-kit prepared for each family member right now can add to your family's safety and comfort during and after an emergency. Prepare for at least three days, but preferably seven.

### A basic kit should include:

- Water
  - One gallon per person, per day
  - Stored in unbreakable container and labeled
- Supply of nonperishable packaged or canned foods with hand-operated opener
- Flashlight and extra batteries
- First-aid kit
- Whistle
- Dusk mask (N95 respirator mask suggested)
- Duct tape
- Moist towelettes, garbage bags, plastic ties
- Fire extinguisher
- Sleeping bag or blanket for each person
- Local map, paper and pencil

Photo: David Pereiras.

# LEVEL 2 EVACUATION: BE SET

***Short notice evacuation likely of your area.*** Monitor public safety, news sites and emergency notifications for information as you prepare for evacuation at any moment. Conditions can change suddenly, so finish preparations for sudden evacuation.

***Don't wait to be asked to leave!*** Early evacuation, especially with pets and livestock, is a good course of action.

### PREPARE TO EVACUATE:

- Be aware of your surroundings. Monitor current fire conditions and weather. Local infrastructure may be down.
- Wear long pants, long sleeves and a jacket made of cotton or wool. Pack hats, gloves and boots.
- Double-check keys, go-kits, pets, livestock preparation.

### INSIDE YOUR HOME:

- Close all interior doors.
- Leave a light on in each room.
- Remove curtains and anything flammable from around windows.
- Close windows, skylights and exterior doors.
- Turn off pilot lights.
- Close fireplace/stove damper.

### OUTSIDE YOUR HOME AND OUTBUILDINGS:

- Double-check your 0-5 foot Immediate ignition zone.
- Leave gates unlocked. Prop open wooden gates to prevent fire spread.
- Turn on outside lights.
- Make sure buildings with hazardous materials are properly labeled for firefighters to see.
- Move combustible lawn or patio furniture away from home.

## EVACUATING PETS AND LIVESTOCK

Pets, livestock and other animals may sense impending disasters before humans recognize a threat. Survival instincts can make normal handling techniques ineffective. It is important to prepare in advance for handling animals in these situations. And remember, defensible space around barns and pastures is just as important as around your home!

### PET PREPAREDNESS KIT:

- Pet carrier, leash and collars with identification
- Vaccination, medical records, vet contact, current photo
- Pet food, water and supplies for 3+ days

### LIVESTOCK PREPAREDNESS KIT:

- First aid, hay, feed, water for 3+ days
- Tack, leads and halters
- Wire cutters, sharp knife, shovel, hose and bucket
- Vaccines, medical records, registration, photos

**Plan ahead** – know where pets, livestock and animals are, and where you will take or leave them. Make truck and trailer arrangements and know evacuation routes.

### IF YOU CANNOT EVACUATE YOUR ANIMALS

- Bring small animals indoors. Do not leave pets tethered outdoors.
- Leave only dry food in non-spill containers. Do not leave treats or vitamins.
- Depending on your pet's needs, leave water in bathtubs, sinks or non-spill containers.
- Do not confine mixed species of pets, such as cats, dogs, hamsters and birds in the same room, even if they normally get along.
- Move livestock and horses to a safe area, such as a recently grazed or mown pasture, riding arena or irrigated pasture. Never release them onto streets and roads. Provide enough feed and water for at least 48 hours.

# LEVEL 3 EVACUATION: GO NOW!

***Leave Immediately!*** Danger to your area is current or imminent, and you should evacuate immediately. If you choose to ignore this advice, you must understand that emergency services may not be available to assist you further. DO NOT delay leaving to gather any belongings or make efforts to protect your home.

## REMEMBER, THERE IS NOTHING YOU OWN WORTH YOUR LIFE!

If you receive a Level 3 Evacuation notice, please evacuate immediately – don't be caught in traffic or by the fire itself!

- This will be the last notice that you receive.
- When a wildfire threatens it will likely be dark, smoky, windy, dry and hot. There may be embers being blown about, no power, no phone service and poor water pressure.
- Entry to evacuated areas may be denied until conditions are safe.
- Always register with official personnel when you arrive at a shelter.

## EVACUATING

- Load up and go!
- Close garage door.
- Drive cautiously with headlights on.
- Follow practiced evacuation routes to the designated safe meeting place.
- Follow instructions of emergency responders.
- Let authorities know of anyone needing assistance.
- Be sure to let contacts know when you are safe.

## IF YOU CANNOT LEAVE

If you are unable to evacuate, stay in your home during the fire. It will be much hotter and more dangerous on the outside.

- Call 911 for assistance.
- Turn on all exterior lights.
- Stay away from windows and move to an interior room or hallway.
- Do not attempt to leave until after the fire has passed and you can safely leave.
- Check for small fires inside the house and extinguish them.
- Drink plenty of water.
- Make sure you can exit the house if it catches fire.
- Fill sinks and tubs with water.
- Place wet rags under doors and other openings to prevent entry of embers and smoke.
- Once the fire front has passed, check your flowerbeds, roof, rain gutters, attic and crawl space for fires or burning embers and extinguish them.

## RETURNING HOME AFTER THE FIRE

On the way back to your home:

- Check with law enforcement for an end to evacuation and the all-clear to return.
- Refer to TripCheck for road clearances.
- Look for downed trees, shrubs and rocks loosened by the fire that could create obstacles or fall on to the road or driveway.
- Be aware of standing trees or utility poles by the side of the road that may or may not looked burned, or partially burned. These can be loosened by the fire.
- Watch out for downed power lines.

Once back on your property:

- Wear personal protective equipment:
  - Thick boots
  - Heavy gloves
  - N95 mask or P100 particulate respirator
  - Eye protection
- Check around the house for embers in gutters, under decks, wood/debris piles, roof valleys, and shrubs/vegetation clumps. Check for wisps or smell of smoke.
  - Call 911 if any heat found.
- Check for gas (smell of gas) and water leaks.
- Check the main power meter (normally outside)
- If you notice any damage to gas lines, phone lines, power lines, stay clear and call utility service provider.

# REDUCE YOUR HEALTH RISK FROM WILDFIRE SMOKE

*Adapted from Our Future in Our Hands OSU Extension publication, EM9404. https://beav.es/qPE*

When air quality is poor from wildfire or prescribed fire smoke, the best recommendation for reducing your exposure is to stay indoors with all windows closed and minimize outdoor activities as much as possible. The use of an air purifier, like a high-efficiency particulate air (HEPA) filter, can also help improve your home's air quality during a smoke event. If you are sensitive to smoke, ask your doctor what additional devices or medications you may need to protect yourself and have them available.

Did you know you can make your own air filter with a "do it yourself" approach? (See illustration at right). Make sure to turn off the DIY filter whenever you leave your home.

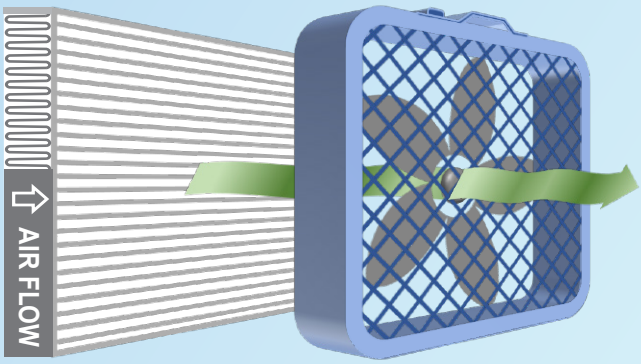
## Set up a clean air zone in your home:

1. Decide on a room to be your clean air zone and an use an air purifier or DIY air filter in the room.
2. Keep windows and doors closed as often as possible to prevent smoke from getting in.
3. Avoid burning candles or incense and refrain from frying or cooking foods at high heat.
4. Do not use the bathroom fan, hood or microwave vent fan, or the dryer. They will all bring smoke inside.
5. Stay in your clean air zone as much as you can until air quality conditions improve or you find a better location to avoid wildfire smoke.

## Air conditioning: on or off?

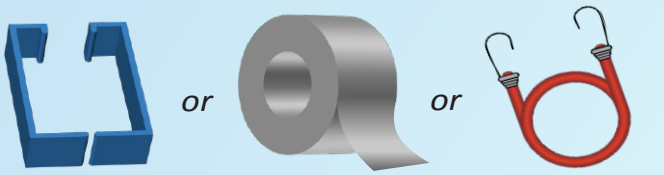
If you have HVAC or an air conditioning system, you should determine what you need to do in order to minimize smoke that enters your home.

## MATERIALS NEEDED FOR DIY AIR FILTER:




**20" x 20" air filter**
Suggested rating: MERV 13

**20" x 20" box fan**
Only use certified fans with UL or ETL marking (2012 model or newer)



**Clamps** or **Duct tape** or **Bungee cords**

## ASSEMBLY

1. **Attach the air filter to the back of the box fan using clamps, duct tape or bungee cords.**
2. **Check the filter for the direction of the air flow (marked on the side of the filter).**
3. **Replace filters when dirty.**
4. **For safety reasons, turn off the DIY filter when you leave your home.**

*Credit: AirNow. Learn about box fan safety tips at:* https://www.airnow.gov/wildfires/be-smoke-ready

**Do it yourself at your own risk. Jefferson County is not liable or responsible for any damage or loss from making an air filter at home or for your use of this information.*

- **Central HVAC system:** Find out if it has a fresh air intake. If it does, find out how to close it or turn the system to recirculate mode. Make sure the HVAC filter is in good condition, fits snugly and is replaced as recommended.
- **Window air conditioner:** Find out how to close the outdoor air damper. If you cannot close the damper, remove the unit and close the window. Make sure the seal between the air conditioner and the window is as tight as possible.
- **Portable air conditioner:** If you have a portable air conditioner with a single hose vented out of a window, do not use it in smoky conditions. If you have a unit with two hoses, make sure that the seal between the window vent kit and the window is as tight as possible.

# WILDFIRE STRUCTURE CHECKLIST

- [ ] **Replace** roofing with asphalt composition shingles, metal or concrete and flat/barrel-shaped materials. Roofing with fire-resistant material underneath is preferred. Untreated wood shakes or shingles are flammable and should be replaced with a fire-resistant material.
- [ ] **Inspect** roofing regularly for gaps, tears, holes, and/or missing shingles. Repair as soon as possible.
- [ ] **Enclose** soffits and eaves with non-combustible or ignition-resistant materials. Ensure proper ventilation is maintained.
- [ ] **Install** non-combustible gutters or remove gutters from sections where they are not needed. If using gutter guards or covers, use material resistant to burning.
- [ ] **Clean** roofs, gutters, and decks of any accumulated leaves, needles, and other organic debris, even if you have a gutter guard.
- [ ] **Install** tempered, multi-layered, or fire-resistant glass on any skylight.
- [ ] **Place** spark arrestors on the fireplace and woodstove chimneys.
- [ ] **Install** corrosion-resistant 1/8" metal wire mesh on attic and foundation vents, and areas below decks and patios. Exclude laundry dryer vents.
- [ ] **Enclose** the underside of decks, porches, and balconies with noncombustible, ignition-resistant, and fire-retardant materials.
- [ ] **Remove** anything stored under decks or porches. Move construction material, trash, and woodpiles at least 30 feet away from the home and other outbuildings.
- [ ] **Use** non-combustible or ignition-resistant skirting on manufactured homes, trailers, or outbuildings.
- [ ] **Seal** gaps on the outside of the garage, doors, and outbuildings. Check for gaps in siding and seal.
- [ ] **Mow** lawns and water all plants, making sure any surface vegetation within 30 feet of a structure is lean and green. Avoid using mulch within 5 feet of structures. Plant fire-resistant plants in landscaping and maintain space between plants and structures. Remove accumulations of ground litter and debris.
- [ ] **Prune** trees up to 6 to 10 feet from the ground or 1/3 of the height for trees shorter than 18-feet tall. Make sure the canopies of trees extend no closer than 10 feet to the edge of the structure. Space trees 10-20 feet between crowns (greater spacing required on slopes).
- [ ] **Locate** propane tanks at least 30 feet from structures with vegetation cleared from under and 10' around the tank.
- [ ] **Have** a gap or noncombustible section of material between wood fencing and structures.
- [ ] **Remove** vegetation adjacent to storage sheds or other outbuildings.
- [ ] **Chip**, compost, or haul yard debris to a recycling center and follow local fire regulations if burning yard debris.

# JEFFERSON COUNTY RESOURCES In an Emergency Dial 9-1-1

**Jefferson County Sheriff's Office**
541-475-6520
675 NW Cherry Lane,
Madras, OR 97741
jeffco.net/sheriff

**Jefferson County Fire & EMS**
541-475-7274
765 S 5th Street,
Madras, OR 97741
jcfr1.org

**Lake Chinook Fire & Rescue**
541-629-8911
11700 SW Graham Road,
Culver, OR 97734
lakechinookfireandrescue.org

**Warm Springs Fire & Safety**
541-553-1634
2112 Wasco Street,
Warm Springs, OR 97761
warmsprings-nsn.gov/program/116

**Crooked River Ranch Fire & Rescue**
541-923-6776
6971 SW Shad Road,
Terrebonne, OR 97760
crrfire.org

**Sisters – Camp Sherman Fire District**
541-549-0771
301 South Elm Street,
Sisters, OR 97759
sistersfire.com

**Warm Springs Fire Management**
541-553-1146
4207 Holliday Rd,
Warm Springs, OR 97761
warmsprings-nsn.gov

**Jefferson County Public Health**
541-475-4456
500 NE A Street, Suite 102
Madras, OR 97741
jeffco.net/publichealth

**U.S. Forest Service – Sisters Ranger District**
541-549-7700
201 N. Pine Street,
Sisters, OR 97759
fs.usda.gov/centraloregon

**Crooked River National Grassland**
541-416-6640
274 SW 4th Street,
Madras, OR 97741
fs.usda.gov/ochoco

**Oregon Department of Forestry – Sisters**
541-549-2731
16721 Pine Tree Lane,
Sisters, OR 97759
odfcentraloregon.com

**Bureau of Land Management – Prineville District Office**
541-416-6700
3050 NE 3rd Street,
Prineville, OR 97754
blm.gov/office/prineville-district-office

**Central Oregon Fire Prevention Co-op**
centraloregonfireservices.org

**OSU Extension Service**
541-475-7107
extension.oregonstate.edu/jefferson

**Oregon Living with Fire**
541-241-6235
61150 SE 27th Street,
Bend, OR 97702
oregonlivingwithfire.org

**Central Oregon Intergovernmental Council**
541-548-8163
1250 NE Bear Creek Road,
Bend, OR 97701
coic.org/emergency-preparedness

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This publication was adapted from Oregon State University's *Before Wildfire Strikes; A Guide to Wildfire Risk Reduction in Wallowa County* (EM 9405); *Fire-Adapted Communities: Our Next Step in Wildfire Preparedness* (EM 9116); and *Before Wildfire Strikes! A Handbook for Homeowners and Communities in Southwest Oregon* (EM 9131). **With permission granted by the authors:** Ariel Cowan, Central Area regional fire specialist and assistant professor (practice); Daniel Leavell, retired Extension specialist and associate professor (practice); John Punches, Extension Forester for northeast Oregon; and Jacob Putney, Extension Forester for Baker and Grant counties; all of Oregon State University's Forestry & Natural Resources Extension.