

Wildland-Urban Interface Home Evaluation



**Valley Center Fire
Protection District**



The Miller Fire October 2019

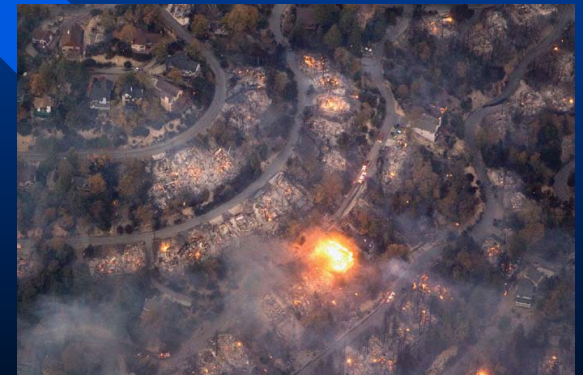


It's not a matter of if, but when...





Significant Wildfires



Wildland-Urban Interface Homes

What We Know

- Our growing population of residents increasingly is encroaching into Wildland areas.
- Over 1400 New Residences in the next 3-5 years



What We Know

National Statistics

- 7 million acres burn annually
- Over 1 million acres in CA to Date
- 65,000 human caused fires
- 5-8° F predicted summer increase
- 2% of wildfires become so large there is not enough suppression resources to control or extinguish
- Our Hot Dry Climate has increased our Fire Season into Early Winter.



Significant Wildfires

Lessons Learned

- Major wildfires have shown that firefighters often are placed in dangerous situations due to inadequate planning and design of roadways, signs, water supplies, and other infrastructure considerations.
- Preventing ignition to these structures will reduce the exposure of firefighters and residents to hazards that threaten life and injury and will reduce catastrophic home losses.
- Wildfire related deaths occur because people wait too late to leave their home or overestimate their ability to stay and defend it.



Question

What is the ignition mechanism that destroys most homes in wildfires?

- a) Radiant heat from crown fires
- b) Small spot fires or flying embers
- c) House to house ignition

Answer: b (90%)



Question

What estimated percentage of homes lost to wildfires could have been saved if their owners had only followed a few simple fire-safe practices?

- a) 40%
- b) 50%
- c) 70%
- d) 80%

Answer: d



Ready, Set Go!

What It Is

- A program that seeks to improve a dialog between Fire Departments and residents
- Started in Southern California
- IAFC launched national program in March 2011
- Addresses 3 major phases of wildfire safety:
 - Preparation
 - Situational awareness
 - Survival
- Complimentary to Firewise principles and other wildfire public education efforts
- Program already credited with saving lives



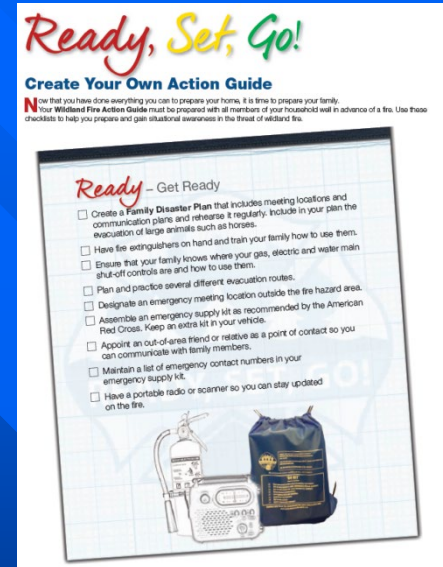
READY – Preparing for the Fire Threat

Preparation

- ✓ Fire department access
- ✓ Reducing ignition hazards
 - Home Ignition Zone (HIZ):
 - Structure and everything around the structure up to 100-200'
- ✓ Fire resistive vegetation
- ✓ Structures adjacent to slopes
- ✓ Creating a family disaster plan

Resource Link:

<https://www.readyforwildfire.org/>



READY – Access

Driveways and Access Roads

- ✓ Fire department access includes:
 - Road width & height
 - Weight capacity
 - Turning radius
 - Turn-arounds
 - Turn-outs
 - Road grade
 - Bridge load capacity clearly marked
 - Gates
- ✓ Realize a “tunnel of vegetation” can block your escape route and deter firefighters from entering your property
- ✓ Clearly marked addresses are important



READY – Bridges: Get it Rated!



READY – Defensible Space Zone

Home Ignition Zone 1

- Structure and area within 30' to 50' of structure



READY – Hardening Your Home

Roof

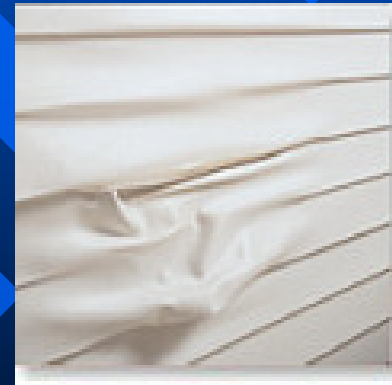
- ✓ Roof material
- ✓ Accumulation of combustibles
- ✓ Proximity of trees
- ✓ Chimneys



READY – Hardening Your Home

Wall/Eaves

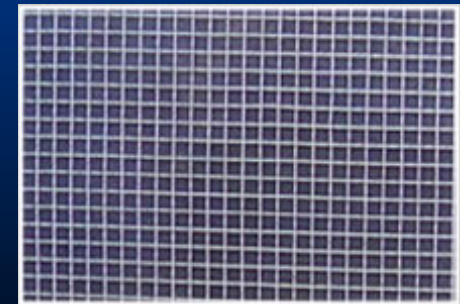
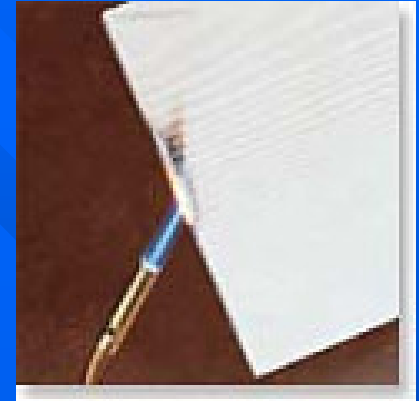
- ✓ Siding material
- ✓ Windows/screens
- ✓ Vent openings : Brandguard
- ✓ Eaves
- ✓ Combustible fuels around house



READY – Hardening Your Structure

Wall/Eaves

- ✓ Consider using non-combustible siding
- ✓ Install dual pane windows and/or fire-resistant shutters that can be closed
- ✓ Install non-combustible window screens
- ✓ Cover foundation and attic vent openings with corrosion resistant max. 1/8" grid wire mesh
- ✓ Enclose eaves
(recommend minimum 5/8" sheathing or other non-combustible material)
- ✓ Remove combustible fuels from around perimeter of house
- ✓ A residential fire sprinkler system can extinguish a fire that enters your home



READY – Hardening Your Home

Balconies/Decks/Fences

- ✓ Materials
- ✓ Skirting
- ✓ Patio furniture
- ✓ Combustible fuels



READY – Structure

Balconies/Decks/Fences

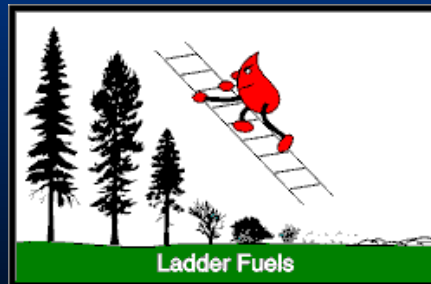
- ✓ Consider using non-combustible materials
- ✓ Install solid skirting around deck perimeter
- ✓ Use non-combustible patio furniture and/or relocate furniture indoors when wildfire threatens
- ✓ Remove leaves, pine needles, dead limbs, pine cones and vines from the house
- ✓ Use noncombustible fencing within 5' of home



READY – Defensible Space Zone 1: up to 50' Past Structure

Vegetation Management

- ✓ Weeds/grass
- ✓ Dead vegetation
- ✓ Shrubs
- ✓ Well irrigated landscaping
- ✓ Ladder fuels
- ✓ Trees
- ✓ Combustible piles
- ✓ Combustible surface materials



READY – Zone 1 up to 50' Past Structure

Strategies

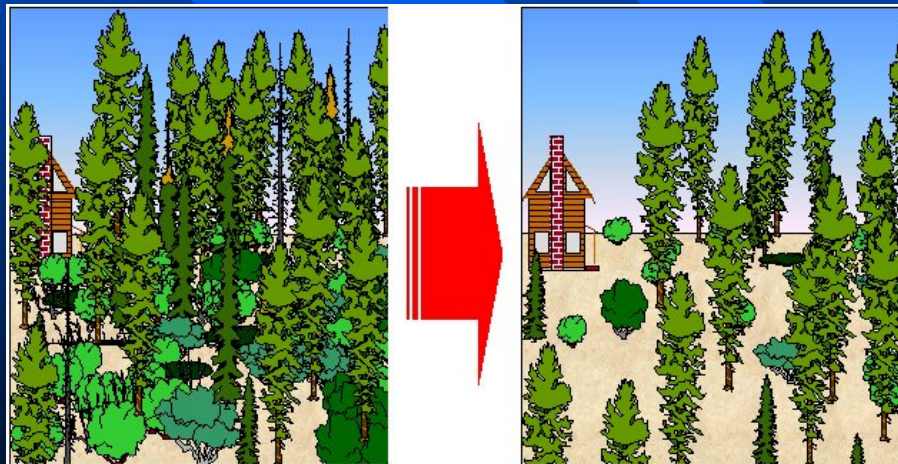
- ✓ Make the first 5' an ignition free zone: **Rock or DG**
- ✓ Keep weeds and grasses cut to a maximum of 4" high
- ✓ Remove leaves, pine needles, dead limbs, pine cones and vines from around the house
- ✓ Min. spacing between conifer tree crowns 30-50'
- ✓ Move shrubs away from the house and plant fire resistant shrubs and trees around your property
- ✓ Maintain green landscaping by ensuring it is watered
- ✓ Eliminate ladder fuels
- ✓ Move large firewood piles and other piles of combustible materials away from your house (min. 30-50')



READY – Zone 2: Defensible Space Zone: to 100'+

Vegetation Management

- ✓ Weeds/grass
- ✓ Dead materials
- ✓ Shrubs
- ✓ Trees
- ✓ Combustible piles



100 Feet Defensible Space is the Law

In January 2005 a California State Law became effective that extended the defensible space clearance around homes and structures from 30 feet to 100 feet. Proper clearance to 100 feet dramatically increases the chance of your house surviving a wildfire. This defensible space also provides for firefighter safety when protecting homes during a wildland fire.

READY – Zone 2: Defensible Space Zone: to 100'+

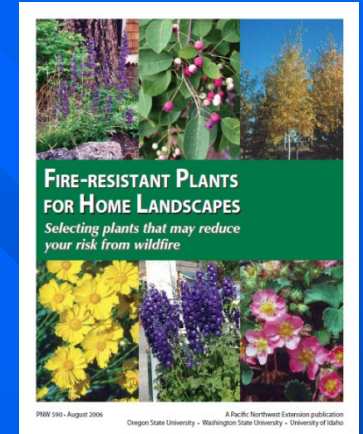
Strategies

- ✓ Reduce or replace as much as the flammable vegetation as possible; keep dried weeds cut
- ✓ Remove all dead vegetation from this zone
- ✓ Eliminate ladder fuels
(vegetation below trees-shrubs, smaller trees, bushes, etc)
- ✓ Thin small trees, keep larger ones, and remove dead or fallen trees
- ✓ Leave 30' between clusters of two to three trees, or 20' between individual trees
- ✓ Prune trees up 10' from the ground
- ✓ Maintain a defensible space around propane tanks
- ✓ If you live on a hill, you may need to extend this zone by several hundred feet

READY - Fire Resistive Vegetation

Characteristics

- 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



READY - Highly Flammable Vegetation

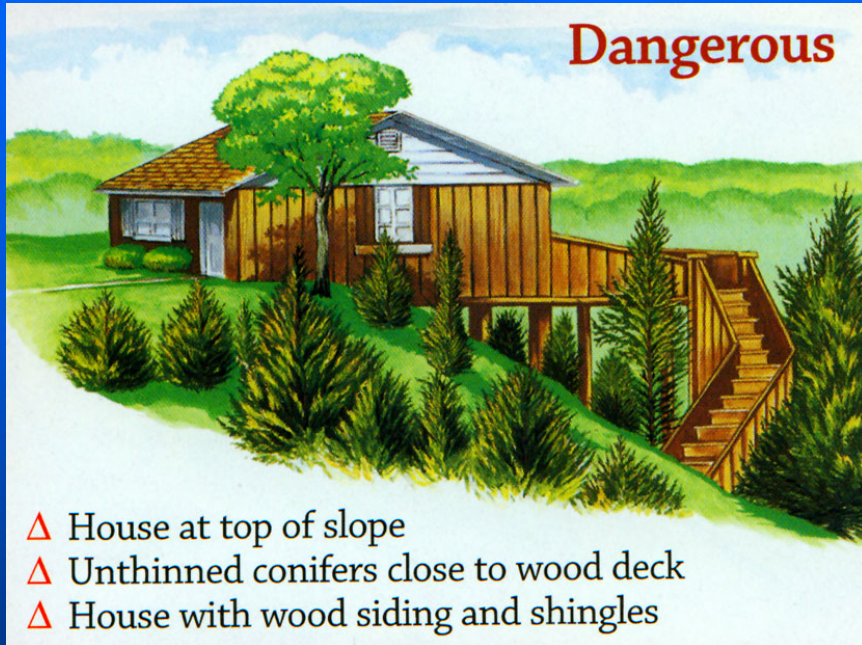
Characteristics

- 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



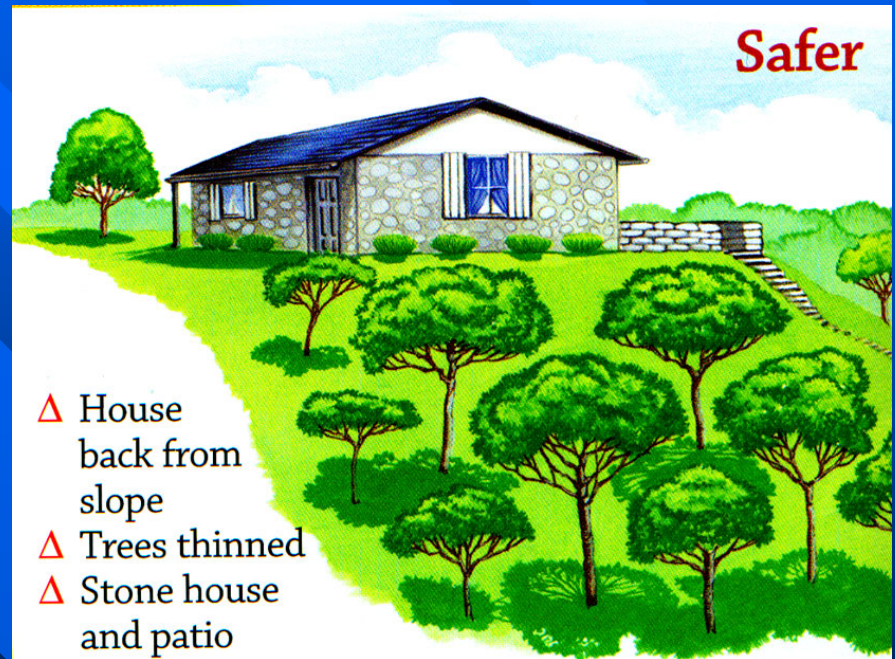
READY – Structure Adjacent to Slope

Dangerous



- △ House at top of slope
- △ Unthinned conifers close to wood deck
- △ House with wood siding and shingles

Safer



- △ House back from slope
- △ Trees thinned
- △ Stone house and patio

READY – Prepare Family Disaster Plan

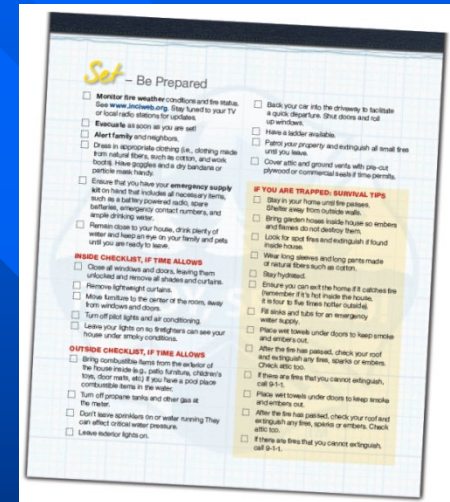
Create a Family Disaster Plan and Rehearse it

- ✓ Plan should include:
 - Several different evacuation routes
 - An emergency meeting location outside of the fire hazard area
 - An emergency supply kit in your car
 - Emergency contact numbers
 - Out of area contacts
 - Portable radio or scanner
 - Sign-up: <https://www.readysandiego.org/alertsandiego/>

SET – Situational Awareness

What to Do to Prepare for an Approaching Event

- ✓ Dress appropriate
 - Clothing made of natural fibers, such as cotton
 - Work boots
 - Goggles, dry bandana, particle mask
- ✓ Alert family and neighbors
- ✓ Hydrate
- ✓ Prepare pets
- ✓ Stay tuned to TV or local radio for updates



SET – Your Home's Interior

Preparing Inside Your Home, If Time Allows

- ✓ Shut windows
- ✓ Remove flammable window shade
- ✓ Remove lightweight curtains
- ✓ Move flammable furniture to center of room, away from windows and doors
- ✓ Shut off gas at the meter
- ✓ Leave lights on so firefighters can see house under smoky conditions

SET – Your Home's Exterior

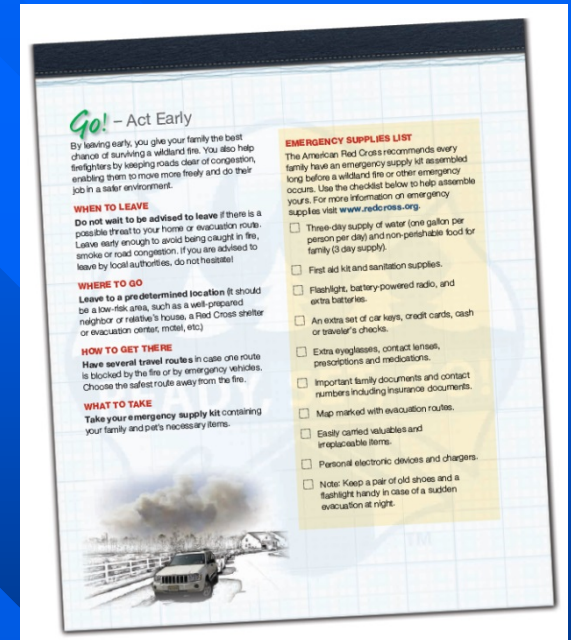
Preparing Outside Your Home, If Time Allows

- ✓ Gather up flammable items from around home and bring them inside
- ✓ Turn off propane tanks
- ✓ Don't leave sprinklers or water running
- ✓ Leave exterior lights on
- ✓ Back your car into the driveway (shut doors and roll up windows)
- ✓ Have a ladder available
- ✓ Patrol your property and extinguish all small fires until you leave
- ✓ Seal attic and ground vents with pre-cut plywood or commercial seals if time permits
- ✓ Have multiple garden hoses that are long enough to reach any area of your home

Go!

Evacuating

- ✓ When?
 - Early
- ✓ Where?
 - To a COVID Safe predetermined location: School Parking Lots
- ✓ How to get there?
 - Have several different pre-planned routes
- ✓ What to take?
 - Emergency supply kit containing family and pet's necessary items
 - Important items you pre-planned for



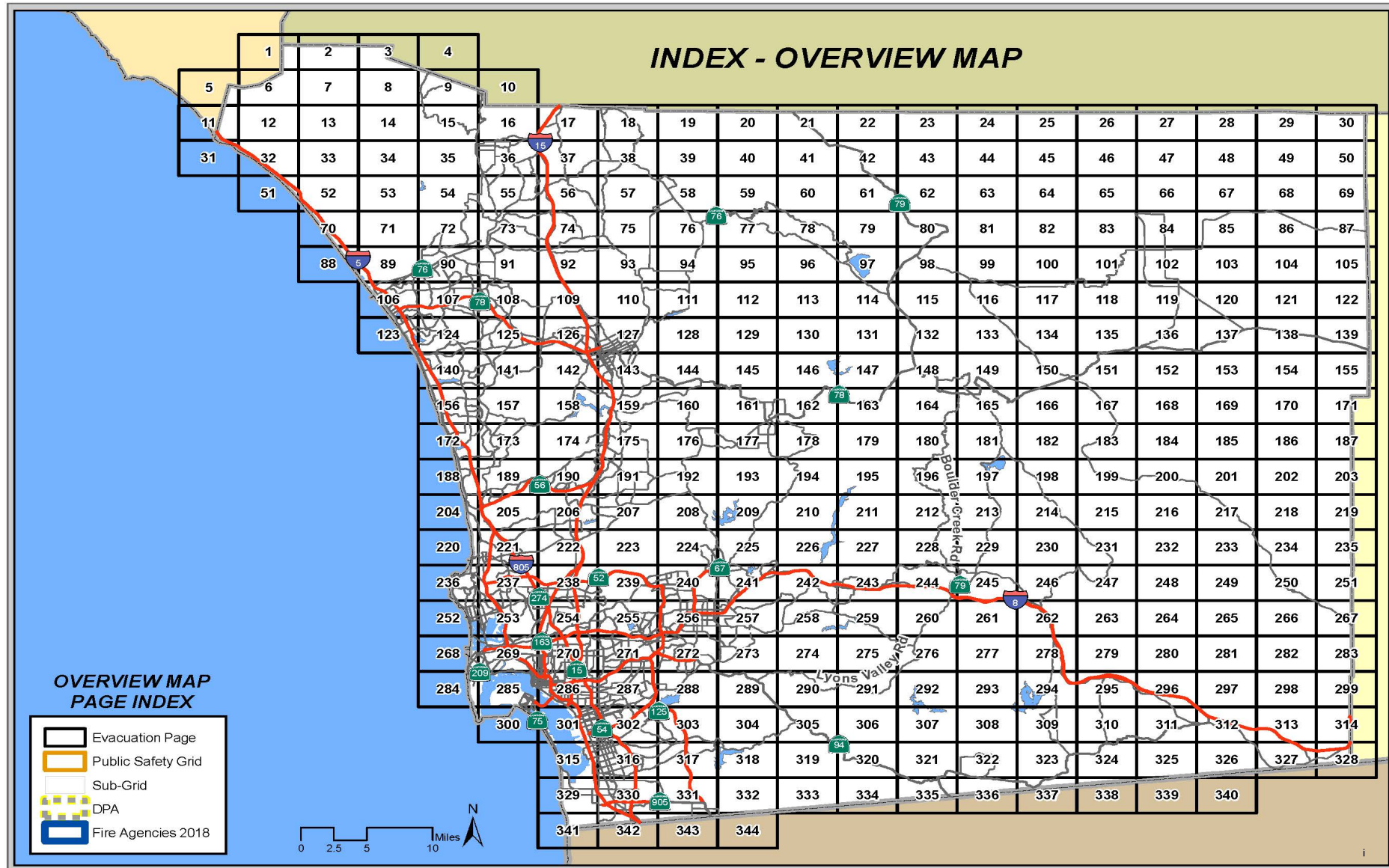
Emergency Supplies

Emergency Supply Kit Essentials

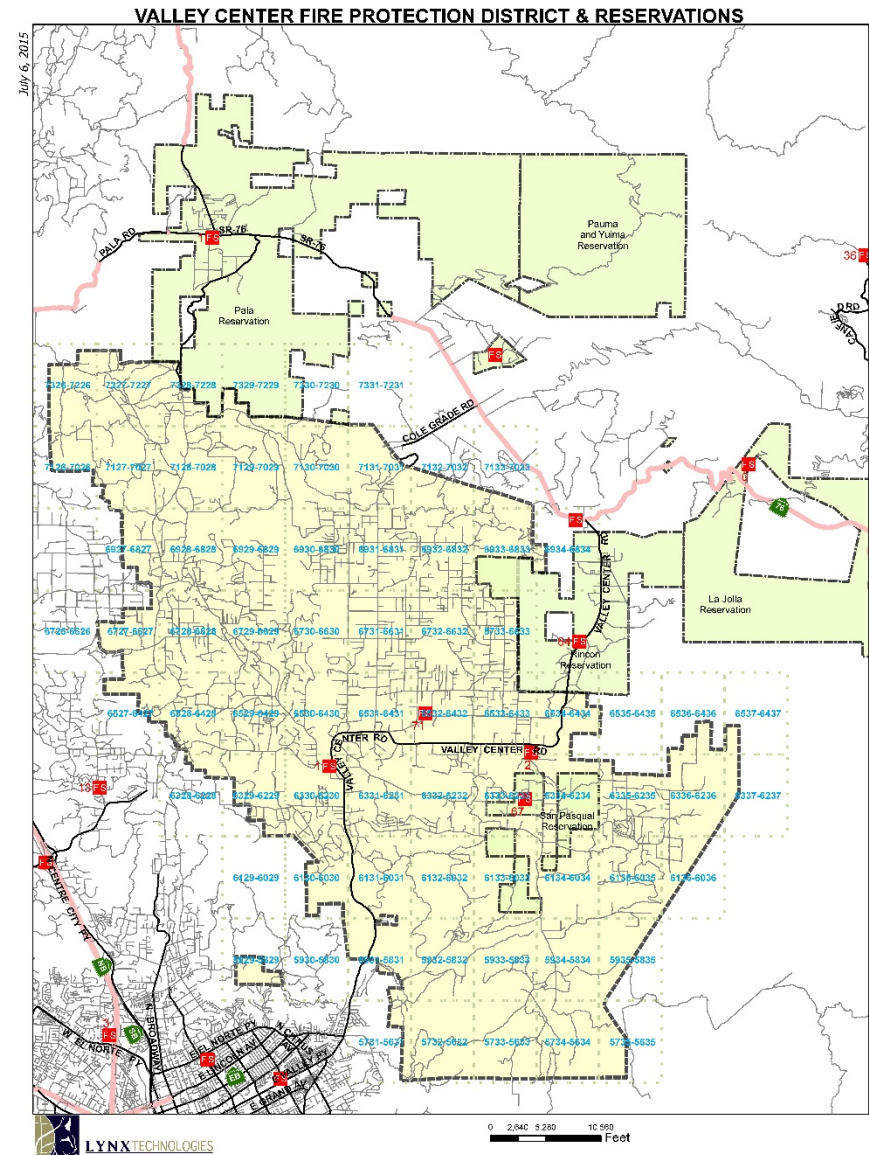
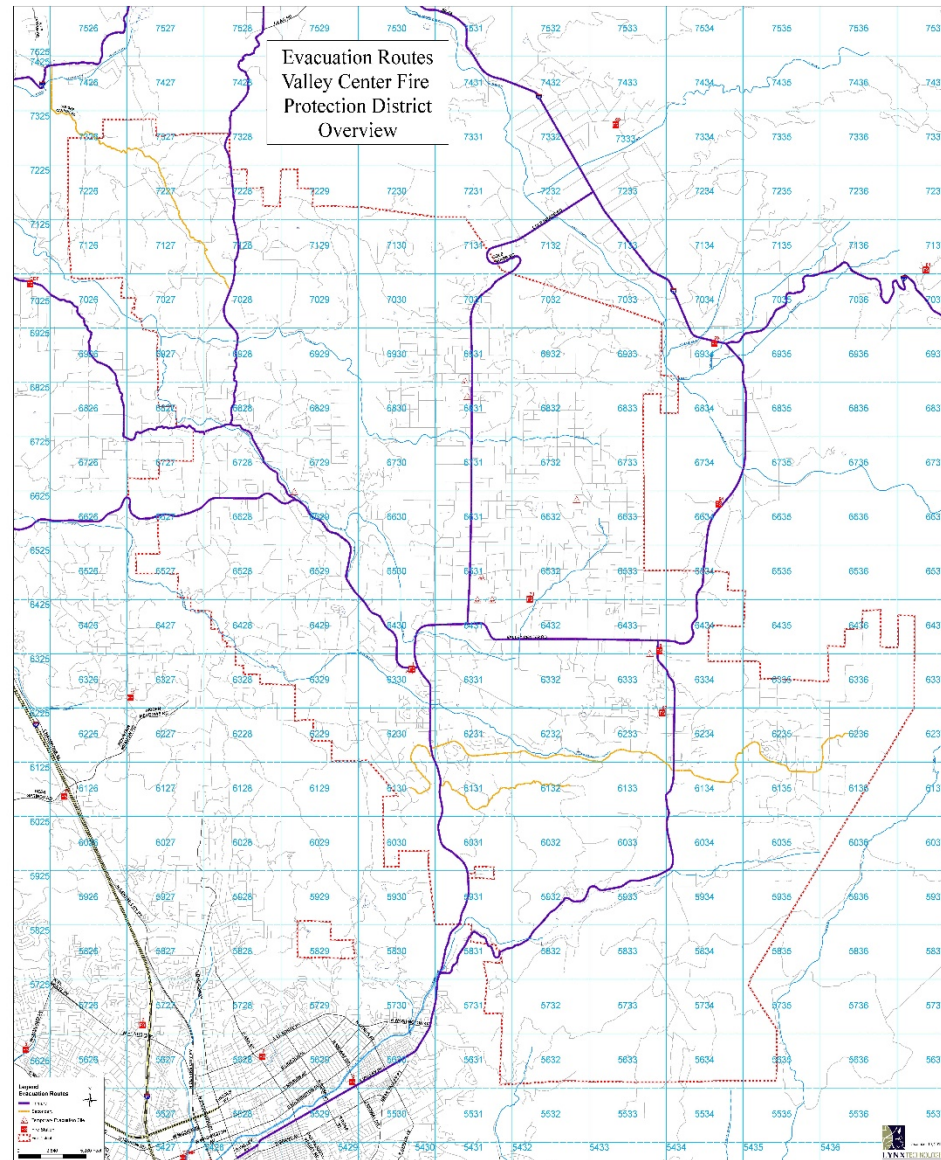
- ✓ Water-3 day supply
- ✓ Food-3-day supply of non-perishable food
- ✓ Items for infants
- ✓ First aid kit
- ✓ One change of clothing and footwear per person
- ✓ Flashlight, battery powered radio, extra batteries
- ✓ Extra set of car keys, credit cards, cash, traveler's checks
- ✓ Dust masks / N95
- ✓ Sanitation and personal hygiene items
- ✓ Wrench or pliers to turn off utilities
- ✓ Can opener for food
- ✓ Book Map in case Cell Service is down
- ✓ Cell phone with charger, inverter, *solar
- ✓ Family and emergency contact information



Regional Evacuation Systems



Local Evacuation Routes



Emergency Supplies

Additional Items to Consider

- ✓ Extra eyeglasses
- ✓ Important family documents: Scan Them!
- ✓ Stored Vital Documents on a Thumb Drive
- ✓ Stored Vital Documents in the CLOUD
- ✓ Prescriptions or special medications
- ✓ COVID Supplies: Mask & Hand Sanitizer
- ✓ Family photos and other irreplaceable items
- ✓ Easily carried valuables
- ✓ Personal computers

September is National Preparedness Month

 **Make a Plan**

 **Build a Kit**

 **Install the free SD Emergency App**

DON'T WAIT. COMMUNICATE.
MAKE YOUR EMERGENCY PLAN TODAY.

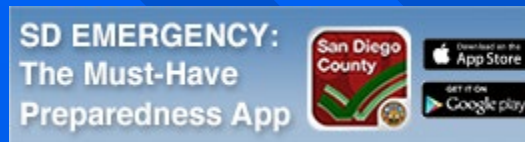


SEPTEMBER IS NATIONAL PREPAREDNESS MONTH!

Citizen Disaster Resources

Citizen's Alert

- Get alerted about important events including:
 - Flood, unexpected road closures, missing persons, evacuation of buildings or neighborhoods, etc.



San Diego County Disaster Registry

- Provides names and locations of people who need special assistance to fire, police, and rescue workers



<https://www.sdge.com/wildfire-safety/our-commitment-wildfire-safety>

THE ROAD-MAP FOR DISASTER SURVIVORS

Contact: Sean Scott

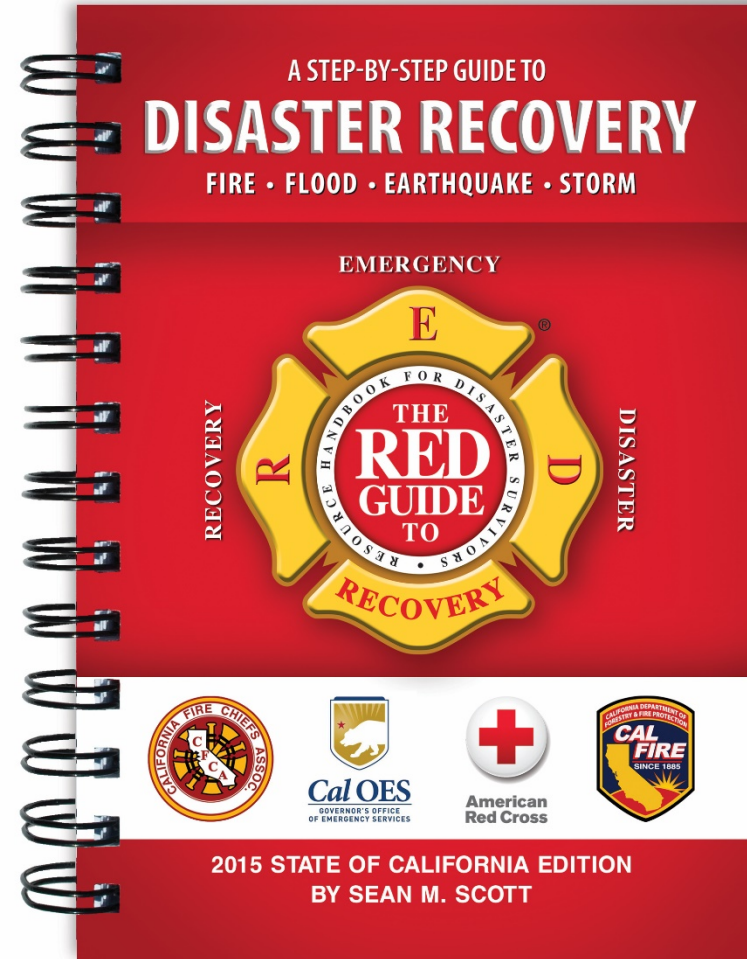
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Thank You

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