

## PREPARING FOR WILDFIRES/DEFENSE OF HOME

### 1. RECOGNIZE WARNINGS & ALERTS

- Sign up for YoloAlert; PG&E Public Safety Power Shutoff Alerts
- Download FEMA app and receive real time alerts from National Weather Service
- Be aware of Emergency Alert System (EAS) and Wireless Emergency Alert (WEA), which don't require you to sign up
- Pay attention to air quality alerts

### 2. MAKE AN EMERGENCY PLAN

- Make sure everyone in household knows/understands what to do if they need to evacuate quickly
- Plan for those with special medical needs

### 3. REVIEW IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS

- Make sure your insurance policies and personal documents like ID are up to date
- Make copies of documents and keep them in a secure place [digitally (password protected) or in a binder]

### 4. DEFENSE OF HOME

- **Use fire resistant materials to build, renovate or make repairs**
- **Find an outdoor water source with a hose that can reach any area of the property**
- **CREATE A FIRE RESISTANT ZONE free of leaves/debris/flammable materials**
  - *Assess both horizontal and vertical aspects of vegetation*
  - *Thin shrubs and trees so there is space between them*
  - *Keep lowest branches pruned to maintain vertical separation between trees/bushes/grasses*
  - *Create 3 concentric zones around the house*
    - **ZONE 1 - Structure Ignition Zone**
      - Eliminate combustible materials within 30 ft of the home
      - Desirable substations for combustible materials: irrigated grass, rock gardens, metal patio furniture, stone patios
      - Remove combustible materials from the roof and trim tree branches that overhand roofs
    - **ZONE 2 - Firebreak Zone**
      - Only includes individual and well spaced clumps of trees and shrubs
      - Use driveways and paved/graveled walkways as firebreaks
      - Plant fire resistant, low volume vegetation that retains moisture and needs minimum maintenance
      - Separate auxiliary structures from the home by at least 50 ft, making sure they are fire resistant
      - Patio furniture should be noncombustible: metal
      - Place wood piles at least 30 ft from the house in graveled area
      - Store fuel tanks away from house at minimum distance required by code

- **ZONE 3 - Reduced Fuel Zone**

- Reduce fuel farther than 100 ft from the house by thinning and pruning vegetation horizontally and vertically (thinning and pruning can be more limited than in Zone 2)
  - Goal is to improve the health of the woodlands and to slow an approaching fire
  - Zone 3 is an aesthetic transition between the more heavily modified Zone 2 and the unmodified surroundings
- **Designate a room that can be closed off from outside air**
    - Close all doors and windows
    - Set up portable air cleaner to keep indoor pollution levels low when smoky conditions exist

## **5. CHARACTERISTICS OF LOW MAINTENANCE PLANTS**

- Drought, pest, wind resistant
- Native to the area
- Noninvasive
- Slow growing
- Sustainable without supplemental fertilization

## **6. KNOW YOUR EVACUATION PLAN/ROUTE/RALLY POINT**

- Learn your evacuation zone, evacuation route and rally point
- Practice your evacuation plan
- If you must evacuate, bring go-kit with you
- Follow instructions from local authorities

## **7. GATHER SUPPLIES**

- Have enough food and water and other supplies to survive in place 1-2 weeks
- If you stock up ahead of time, it leaves more for those who can't afford to
- Keep N95 masks on hand to avoid breathing in smoke particles
- Keep your cell phones charged; purchase backup charging devices

## **8. STAY SAFE DURING A FIRE**

- Evacuate immediately if told by authorities to do so
- During a pandemic it may be safer to shelter with friends than a public shelter
- If trapped by fire, call 911 and give your location, but be aware emergency response may be delayed or impossible
- Pay attention to your health symptoms
- Pay attention to emergency alerts

## **9. RETURNING AFTER A WILDFIRE**

- Do not return until it is safe to do so
- Avoid hot ash, smoldering embers, charred trees
- When cleaning, wear protective clothing; use appropriate masks or respirators
- Send text messages to family and friends so they know you are safe
- Document property damage with photos; conduct an inventory; contact insurance company
- Engage virtually via computer/smart tablet/smartphone with your community to relieve anxiety/stress