READY! SET! GO!
YOUR PERSONAL WILDFIRE ACTION PLAN
Beverly Hills is one of the most beautiful places to live, but living in the urban interface doesn’t come without its risks. The fire season is now a year-round reality, requiring firefighters and residents to constantly be on heightened alert for the threat of wildfire.

The Beverly Hills Fire Department takes every precaution to help protect you and your property from wildfire. However, the reality is that in the event of a major wildfire, there will simply not be enough fire engines or firefighters to defend every home in the early stages of the incident. This reality requires you to take personal responsibility for protecting yourself, your family, and your property.

Wildfires fueled by dry vegetation and driven by hot, dry winds, are extremely dangerous and impossible to control. Many residents have built their homes and landscaped without fully understanding the impact a fire could have on them. Few have adequately prepared their families for a quick evacuation. Many don’t fully know the potential consequences of choosing to ignore an evacuation order until it is too late.

This publication will give you the tips and tools to successfully prepare for a wildfire. It will give you guidance on retrofitting your home with ignition-resistant features. It will help you create the necessary defensible space around your home. BHFD always recommends that you comply with any evacuation orders resulting from wildfire. This publication will help you prepare your home, yourself, and your family so you can go early, well ahead of the fast-approaching wildfire.

It’s not a question of “if”, but “when”, the next major wildfire will occur in Beverly Hills. That’s why the most important person in protecting your life and property is not the firefighter, but you. Through advanced planning and preparation, we can all be ready for a wildfire. I hope you find the tips included in this publication helpful in creating heightened awareness and a more fire-safe environment for you and your family.

Your Fire Chief,

Gregory Barton
Beverly Hills Fire Department
A defensible home is a home that has the greatest potential for survivability in the event of a wildfire during average wind conditions. Defensible homes are those homes that are in compliance with defensible space requirements or a fuel modification program and have been hardened in accordance with Chapter 7A of the California Building Code.

Fuel Modification is a strip of land between an improved property and wildlands, where combustible vegetation has been removed, thinned, or modified and may be partially or totally replaced with approved drought-tolerant, fire-resistant, and/or irrigated plants to provide an acceptable level of risk from vegetation fires.

Fuel modification reduces radiant and convective heat, thereby reducing the amount of heat exposure on the roadway or structure and providing fire suppression personnel a safer area in which to take action. Fuel modification has proven to be a major factor in reducing fire spread onto structures from wildfires. When combined with special building requirements set forth in CBC Chapter 7A, the ignition of structures is further reduced.

As of January 1, 2023, new Fuel Modification requirements are applicable to the following; new construction, 2,500 sq. ft. of new or re-landscape, change of occupancy, or construction additions or alterations that require fire sprinklers. Properties located in the Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone are subject to the Model Water Efficient Landscape Ordinance (MWELO) California Code of Regulations Title 23 and required to submit Fuel Modification Landscape Plans for review and approval by the Fire Code Official.

See link below for Fuel Modification Standard, prohibited vegetation and additional requirements.

http://www.beverlyhills.org/fuelmodification
What is Defensible Space?

Defensible space is the required space between a structure and the wildland that, under normal conditions creates a sufficient buffer to slow or halt the spread of wildfire to a structure. It protects the home from igniting due to direct flame impingement and radiant heat. Compliance is essential for survivability during wildfire conditions. Defensible space requirements apply to all structures regardless of the year built. To help improve defensible space and reduce hazardous conditions produced by vegetation, the Beverly Hills Fire Department conducts annual inspections of ALL properties located in the Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone (VHFHSZ), located to the North of Sunset Blvd. For additional information and requirements, please visit the following site www.beverlyhills.org/fdbrush

0-200 FEET
Extends 200 feet out from buildings, structures, decks, etc.

- Remove ALL dead, dry or overgrown vegetation
- Trim tree canopies regularly to keep their branches a minimum of 5 feet from structures and 10 feet from other trees.
- Remove vegetation produced debris (dry leaves, pine needles and trimmings) from yard, roof and rain gutters.
- Relocate wood piles and other combustible materials at least 15 feet away from structures.
- Remove combustible material and vegetation that are close to and under decks or any part of the structure.
- Remove or prune vegetation near windows and vents.
- Avoid placing combustible mulch adjacent to structure.
- Remove “Ladder Fuels” (low-level vegetation that allows the fire to spread from the ground to the tree canopy.) Create a separation between low-level vegetation and tree branches. This can only be done by reducing the height of low-level vegetation and/or trimming low tree branches.

ADDITIONAL 50 FEET
Extends from 200 feet to an additional 50 feet from buildings, structures, decks, etc. This additional 50’ clearance applies if your property has a slope greater than 25 percent from horizontal plans.

Are You Prepared?

Trees shall be 10’ away from chimney
Trees shall be 5’ from structures
No vegetation underneath combustible decks
Trees shall be pruned or thinned out.
Trees taller than 12’ shall have lower branches trimmed within 6’ of the ground
Wood piles and mulch shall be 15’ away from structure
Keep your roof clear of leaves, needles, and other debris.

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What is a Hardened Home?

What gives a home the best chance to survive a wildfire are its construction materials and the quality of the defensible space surrounding it. Embers from a wildfire will find the weak link in your home’s fire protection scheme and gain the upper hand because of a small, overlooked or seemingly inconsequential factor. However, there are measures you can take to safeguard your home from wildfire. Each will increase your home’s, and possibly your family’s, safety and survival during a wildfire. Each measure below will increase your home’s, and possibly your family’s, safety and survival during a wildfire.

**EAVES**
Embers gather under open eaves and ignite exposed wood or other combustible material.

**VENTS**
Embers enter the attic, crawl spaces or other concealed spaces and ignite combustible materials. Vents in eaves and cornices are particularly vulnerable, as are any unscreened vents. Keeping vegetation clear and away from all vents prevents embers from constantly being directed into openings.

**WALLS**
Combustible siding and other combustible or overlapping materials provide a surface and crevice for embers to nestle and ignite.

**WINDOWS, DOORS & GARAGE**
Embers can enter gaps in doors, including garage doors. Plants or combustible storage near windows can be ignited from embers and generate heat that can break windows and/or melt combustible frames.

**BALCONIES, DECKS & FENCES**
Embers collect in or on combustible surfaces or undersides of deck and balconies, ignite the material, and enter home through walls or windows. Place non-combustible fencing within the first 5 feet when attached to the house.

To harden your home even further, consider a residential fire sprinkler system. In addition to extinguishing a fire started by an ember that enters your home, it also protects you and your family 24/7, year-round, from any fire that may start in your home.

**EXTERIOR FURNISHINGS**
Wood or plastic furniture can easily catch fire from embers. Keep furniture from being placed adjacent to residence. Storing away cushions will help reduce material from igniting.

**RAIN GUTTERS**
Embers can ignite debris collected in rain gutters. Placing proper screens will help prevent debris accumulation.

**ROOFS**
Roofs are the most vulnerable surface where embers land because they can lodge and start a fire. Roof valleys, open ends of barrel tiles are all points of entry for embers.
Tour a Wildfire Ready Home

Home Site and Yard: Ensure you have at least a 100-foot radius of defensible space (cleared vegetation) around your home. Note that even more clearance may be needed for homes in severe hazard areas. This means looking past what you own to determine the impact a common slope or neighbor’s yard will have on your property during a wildfire.

Cut dry weeds and grass before noon when temperatures are cooler to reduce the chance of sparking a fire.

Landscape with fire-resistant plants that have a high moisture content and are low-growing.

Keep woodpiles, propane tanks and combustible materials away from your home and other structures such as garages, barns and sheds.

Ensure that trees are far away from power lines.

See our website for a list of plants and planting criteria.

Roof: Your roof is the most vulnerable part of your home because it is easily ignited by wind-blown embers. Homes with wood-shake or shingle roofs are at a higher risk of being destroyed during a wildfire than homes with fire-resistant roofs.

Build your roof or re-roof with fire-resistant materials that include composition, metal or tile. Block any spaces between roof decking and covering to prevent ember intrusions.

Clear pine needles, leaves and other debris from your roof and gutters.

Cut any tree branches within ten feet of your roof.

Vents: Vents on homes are particularly vulnerable to flying embers.

All vent openings should be covered with 1⁄8 inch metal mesh. Do not use fiberglass or plastic mesh because they can melt and burn.

Attic vents in eaves or cornices should be baffled or otherwise prevent ember intrusion (mesh is not enough).

Inside: Keep working fire extinguishers on hand.

Install smoke alarms on each level of your home and near bedrooms. Test them monthly and change the batteries twice a year.

Address: Make sure your address is clearly visible from the road.

Windows: Heat from a wildfire can cause windows to break even before the home ignites. This allows burning embers to enter and start internal fires. Single-pane and large windows are particularly vulnerable.

Install dual-pane windows with the exterior pane of tempered glass, to reduce the chance of breakage in a fire.

Limit the size and number of windows in your home that face large areas of vegetation.

Walls: Wood products, such as boards, panels or shingles, are common siding materials. However, they are combustible and not safe choices for fire-prone areas.

Build or remodel with fire-resistant building materials, such as brick, cement, masonry, or stucco.

Be sure to extend materials from foundation to roof.
Driveways and Access Roads:

- Driveways should be designed to allow fire and emergency vehicles and equipment to reach your house.
- Access roads should have a minimum 10-foot clearance on either side of the traveled section of the roadway and should allow for two-way traffic.
- Ensure that all gates open inward and are wide enough to accommodate emergency equipment.
- Trim trees and shrubs overhanging the road to a minimum of 13.5 feet to allow emergency vehicles to pass.

Garage:

- Have a fire extinguisher and tools such as a shovel, rake, bucket and hoe available for fire emergencies.
- Install a solid door with self-closing hinges between living areas and the garage. Install weather stripping around and under the doors to prevent ember intrusion.
- Store all combustibles and flammable liquids away from ignition sources.

Non-Combustible Fencing:

- Make sure to use non-combustible fencing to protect your home during a wildfire.

Non-Combustible Boxed In Eaves:

- Box in eaves with non-combustible materials to prevent accumulation of embers.

Rain Gutters:

- Screen or enclose rain gutters to prevent accumulation of plant debris.

Water Supply:

- Have multiple garden hoses that are long enough to reach any area of your home and other structures on your property.
- If you have a pool or well, consider a pump.

Chimney:

- Cover your chimney outlet and stovepipe with a non-flammable screen of 1⁄4-inch wire mesh or smaller to prevent embers from escaping and igniting a fire.
- Make sure that your chimney is at least 10 feet away from any tree branches.

Deck/Patio Cover:

- Use heavy timber or non-flammable construction material for decks and patio covers.
- Enclose the underside of balconies and decks with fire-resistant materials to prevent embers from blowing underneath, lodging, and starting a fire.
- Keep your deck clear of combustible items, such as baskets, dried flower arrangements, and other debris.
- The decking surface must be ignition resistant if it’s within 10 feet of the home.
Your Wildfire Action Plan must be prepared with all members of your household well in advance of a fire. Use these checklists to help you prepare your Wildfire Action Plan. Each family’s plan will be different, depending on the situation. Once you finish your plan, rehearse it regularly with your family and keep it in a safe and accessible place for quick implementation.

- Create a **Family Disaster Plan** that includes meeting locations and communication plans and rehearse it regularly. Include in your plan the evacuation of large animals such as horses.
- Have fire extinguishers on hand and train your family how to use them.
- Ensure that your family knows where your gas, electric, and water main shutoff controls are and how to use them.
- Plan several different escape routes.
- Designate an emergency meeting location outside the fire hazard area.
- Assemble an emergency supply kit as recommended by the American Red Cross.
- Appoint an out-of-area friend or relative as a point of contact so you can communicate with family members who have relocated.
- Maintain a list of emergency contact numbers posted near your phone and in your emergency supply kit.
- Keep an extra emergency supply kit in your car in case you can’t get to your home because of fire.
- Have a portable radio or scanner so you can stay updated on the fire.
- Tell your neighbor about Ready! Set! Go! and your Wildfire Action Plan.
MAKE A KIT

• Keep a pair of old shoes and a flashlight handy for a night evacuation.

• Keep the six “P’s” ready, in case an immediate evacuation is required:
  • People and pets
  • Papers, phone numbers, and important documents
  • Prescriptions, vitamins, and eyeglasses
  • Pictures and irreplaceable memorabilia
  • Personal computers (hard drive and disks)
  • “Plastic” (credit cards, ATM cards) and cash

OUTSIDE CHECKLIST

☐ Gather up flammable items from the exterior of the house and bring them inside (e.g., patio furniture, children’s toys, door mats, etc.) or place them in your pool.

☐ Turn off propane tanks.

☐ Connect garden hoses to outside taps.

☐ Don’t leave sprinklers on or water running, they can waste critical water pressure.

☐ Leave exterior lights on.

☐ Back your car into the garage. Shut doors and roll up windows.

☐ Have a ladder available.

☐ Patrol your property and extinguish all small fires.

☐ Seal attic and ground vents with pre-cut plywood or commercial seals.

INSIDE CHECKLIST

☐ Shut all windows and doors, leaving them unlocked.

☐ Remove flammable window shades and curtains and close metal shutters.

☐ Remove lightweight curtains.

☐ Move flammable furniture to the center of the room, away from windows and doors.

☐ Shut off gas at the meter. Turn off pilot lights.

☐ Leave your lights on so firefighters can see your house under smoky conditions.

☐ Shut off the air conditioning.

ALERT FAMILY AND NEIGHBORS:

• Dress in appropriate clothing (i.e., clothing made from natural fibers, such as cotton, and work boots). Have goggles and a dry bandana or particle mask handy.

• Ensure that you have your brush fire survival kit on hand that includes necessary items, such as a battery powered radio, spare batteries, emergency contact numbers, and ample drinking water.

• Stay tuned to your TV or local radio stations for updates, or check the fire department website.

• Remain close to your house, drink plenty of water and keep an eye on your family and pets if you did not evacuate.

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GO EARLY

By leaving early, you give your family the best chance of surviving a wildfire. You also help firefighters by keeping roads clear of congestion, enabling them to move more freely and do their job.

WHEN TO LEAVE

Leave early enough to avoid being caught in fire, smoke or road congestion. Don’t wait to be told by authorities to leave. In an intense wildfire, they may not have time to knock on every door. If you are advised to leave, don’t hesitate!

WHERE TO GO

Leave to a predetermined location (it should be a low-risk area, such as a well-prepared neighbor or relative’s house, a Red Cross shelter or evacuation center, hotel, etc.)

HOW TO GET THERE

Have several travel routes in case one route is blocked by the fire or by emergency vehicles and equipment. Choose an escape route away from the fire.

WHAT TO TAKE

Take your emergency supply kit containing your family’s and pet’s necessary items, such as cash, water, clothing, food, first aid kits, and medications. Also, don’t forget valuables such as your computer, photos and important documents.

Organize your family members and make arrangements for your pets.

BE FAMILIAR

Know the city’s designated evacuation routes. These routes have been designated by the city to help improve evacuations during a wildfire and help emergency services get to the emergency. For more information on the designated evacuation routes visit http://www.beverlyhills.org/redflagwarning

NIXLE ALERTS

Sign up for Nixle Alerts for Beverly Hills: Text BEVHILLS to 888777 to receive text message alerts.

IF YOU ARE TRAPPED: SURVIVAL TIPS

• Shelter away from outside walls.
• Patrol inside your home for spot fires and extinguish them.
• Wear long sleeves and long pants made of natural fibers such as cotton.
• Stay hydrated.
• Ensure you can exit the home if it catches fire (remember if it’s hot inside the house it is four to five times hotter outside).
• After the fire has passed, check your roof and extinguish any fires, sparks or embers.
• Check inside the attic for hidden embers.
• Patrol your property and extinguish small fires.

If there are fires that you cannot extinguish with a small amount of water or in a short period of time, call 9-1-1.
Write up your Wildfire Action Plan and post it in a location where every member of your family can see it. Rehearse it regularly with your family.

**My Personal Wildfire Action Plan**

During **High Fire Danger** days in your area, monitor your local media for information on brush fires and be ready to implement your plan. Hot, dry, and windy conditions create the perfect environment for a wildfire.

Important Phone Numbers

Emergency:

School:

Family:

Friends:

When to go:

Where to go:

How to get there:

What to take:

Who to tell (before and after):

BEVERLY HILLS FIRE DEPARTMENT

If you have an emergency, call **911**

Fire Prevention Bureau: **(310) 281-2703**

Website: **www.beverlyhills.org**
Additional Safety Measures and Recommendations:

Trees located within the proximity of the residence should be maintained in a healthy manner. Thinning out trees, trimming back tree foliage and removing ALL dead material and debris produced by the tree will help reduce the risk.

Be courteous to your neighbors. Private property vegetation should not cross over to any adjoining neighbor’s property and create a hazardous condition as far as vegetation overhanging or touching the residence.

If your vegetation is deemed a fire hazard and crosses into an adjoining property, the Beverly Hills Fire Department notice does not give you permission to trespass onto other properties. Please make every effort to contact and coordinate any possible clean up or removal.

If you and your neighbor cannot come into agreement on property lines, the city recommends to hire a surveyor to help indicate the property line. The city has tools for reference that can be used, but officially a survey is the best route to confirm.

Certain vegetation requires more maintenance than others, especially depending on placement of vegetation on your property. Vegetation near structures require more debris maintenance. This is to ensure all roofs are clear and proximity to the residence is being maintained.

There is no fire proof vegetation. Everything can burn and it’s the property owner’s responsibility to maintain their property ALL YEAR ROUND, not just during inspection season.

What is a Red Flag day and why is it important to you?

Red Flag Days are declared by the Beverly Hills Fire Department within the City of Beverly Hills when: 1) Relative humidity 15 percent or less with either sustained winds of 25 mph or greater or frequent gusts of 35 mph, and a burn index of 151 or higher. 2) The Fire Chief may also declare a Red Flag Day in response to an extreme hazard such as widespread lightning strikes or widespread active fire incidents throughout the region.

Streets that have the designated signs posted are part of an emergency evacuation route or lack adequate width to accommodate fire apparatus and resident traffic during a wildfire. The parking restrictions help reduce congestion during an evacuation and help emergency equipment arrive to the incident.

STREETS WITH SIGNS ARE AS FOLLOWS:

1. La Altura Rd North of Doheny Rd
2. Calle Vista Dr North of Doheny Rd
3. Schuyler Rd North of Doheny Rd
4. El Retiro Way West of Schuyler Rd
5. Calle Vista Dr West of Schuyler Rd
6. Miradero Rd West of Schuyler Rd
7. Doheny Rd East of Foothill Rd, West of Loma Vista Dr
8. Foothill Rd North of Sunset Blvd, South of Doheny Rd
9. N Hillcrest Rd North of Sunset Blvd
10. Loma Vista Dr North of Sunset Blvd
11. Carla Ridge East of Schuyler Rd, West of Loma Vista Dr
12. Coldwater Canyon Dr North of N Beverly Dr
13. Benedict Canyon Dr North of Sunset Blvd
14. San Ysidro Dr East of Tower Rd
15. Tower Rd North of Benedict Canyon Dr, South of San Ysidro Dr
16. N Beverly Dr North of Sunset Blvd, South of Coldwater Canyon Dr

For more information, visit http://www.beverlyhills.org/redflagwarning
COMMON HAZARDS
Please contact 310-281-2703 to schedule an appointment. If you would like to have a fire department community risk reduction inspector conduct a pre-inspection walk-through of your property on any of the listed programs below:

- Home Hardening
- Fuel Modification
- Vegetation Management (Brush Clearance)
- Ready set go

Property owner needs to be present during the walk-through. The fire department's objective during the course of these pre-inspections is to educate, improve awareness and provide recommendations to lower any risk on the property. These pre-inspections are not in lieu of the required annual inspections. For additional questions, inspection requests, or inquiries please email vegetationprograms@beverlyhills.org

Wildfires are very unpredictable. Just because a wildfire hasn’t happened here, doesn’t mean a wildfire still can’t occur. Every effort we make to help improve fire safety in our community, the better chances your home will survive a wildfire. We all can make a difference. Be ready, be prepared!
READY! SET! GO!

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