

## EVACUATION TIPS

BE PREPARED FOR WILDFIRE AND OTHER DISASTERS IN OUR TERRITORY



The following tips are lessons learned from personal experiences of wildfire survivors in our territory. The links provided direct you to sites maintained by state, county, city, or public media.

## STAY CONNECTED, INFORMED, AND COMMUNICATE IS KEY



- Connect to your county/city/state emergency alert system. [Click here to find yours.](#)
- Create a phone tree with your neighbors and/or church members that can act as an early warning system as well.
- Identify church members/neighbors that might need extra assistance to evacuate and create a plan.
- Keep the NCC Disaster Response line 888-280-4909 number handy. When evacuated,

and the NCC Disaster Response Team learns about it, we will open this emergency line at 7 AM and 7 PM to share resources and tips. They line will close after 30 minutes if no one calls into it.

- [Click here to learn more about your county.](#)

## PREPARE TO EVACUATE



- Take a video of your home inside and out.
- Create a go-bag for each family member and/or pet(s). [Click for an example of what to put in your go-bag.](#) Keep it packed and in an easily accessible pathway to your exit door or car. Plastic duffle bags are convenient, waterproof, easy to stuff, and cram into the car.



- Pre-pack items in your car so you know where things will fit.
- Create various evacuation plans and practice them. The less thinking the better.
  - Scenario 1. You have 1 minute to leave.
  - Scenario 2. You have 1 hour to leave.
  - Scenario 3. You are in a warning zone but have time.
- Drive various evacuation routes and look for potential issues. Familiarize yourself with the side roads and turn around points of each route. Take note of low-hanging trees. Narrow two-lane roads. Find the best route and put it into your evacuation plan.
- Create and save pre-determined routes in your phone's navigation app. Relying on voice direction commands while driving can reduce stress and mistakes. However, be prepared to change your plans.
- Buy a pair of yellow tinted glasses that will help you see better in smoky, dark roads.
- Install backup room lights that operate on batteries and solar/battery-powered lights along the outside of your house along the evacuation pathway. LED switch style lights in every room and solar-powered lights on a deck or pathway are helpful.





Evacuation happens in stages, especially if you leave immediately. Understanding this will help with that overwhelming feeling.

### **Stage 1 - First 30 minutes to 3 hours**

- Find a safe place to stop and assess your situation.
- Let the stress and adrenaline drop to normal levels.
- Activate the phone tree or reach out to your loved ones if possible.
- If your church or school is the safe place, you might want to create a plan at the site prior to the disaster.
- Once you are sure about your short-term plan for shelter and food, activate it.

### **Stage 2 – Short Term (within hours to 3 days)**

- Assess and decide on your short-term options for shelter and other vital resources (1 to 3 days). Hotel. Friend's house. Evacuation Center.
- Register at the official evacuation site as soon as possible, even if you are not staying there. They will have resources and most importantly the registration will help with recovery.
- Connect with your local pastor/head elder and/or to the NCC Disaster Response line 888-280-4909 which is open at 7 AM and 7 PM after we are informed about an evacuation. There are limited cash resources available that will help ease some of the financial strain during the first 7 days.

### **Stage 3 – Mid-Term (3 to 14 days)**

- This is the most difficult time because you are not sure when you will be allowed back into your home, if you have a home to return to, and if so, what state it will be in when the evacuation order is lifted. You just have to keep praying for patience and wisdom as you make decisions.
- Evaluate your mid-term options (4 to 14 days). May include connecting with your insurance provider to help with temporary housing.
- Continue to stay informed with official sites like CAL FIRE or your law enforcement sites. Do not rely on the news or word of mouth as this can cause more confusion. It usually takes officials a few days to get the information flow going but having been through a couple of fires over the years, law enforcement and CAL FIRE are doing a much better job. They usually review information at 6 AM and 6 PM on their social media channels.

### **Stage 4 – Long-term plan**

- Establish your long-term plan if it looks like you will be evacuated for some time.

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## RECOVERY

- You are your best advocate and do not be afraid to ask question or challenge decisions. Recovery is a process, so pray for patience and wisdom.
- Being informed will help with recovery. Review your insurance policy now and understand what you should do, when you should do it, and what to expect.
- Even if you just evacuate, this is trauma, and the trauma may show up in unusual areas of your life and those in your family. Be aware of them and seek counsel if you are unprepared to deal with them.
- Be careful of scams and people/organizations who are trying to help. The best place to seek help/resources is at the evacuation centers established by your county or city.
- When you are allowed back to your home still standing but the power was off, prepared to throw all your food away. Take large trash bags/cans, masks, and gloves and clean out your refrigerator and all your stored food.

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## CONTACT

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