

# CalFire: Planning for a fire could save life and property

**Publisher's note:** *This is the second of three articles from the Amador-El Dorado Unit of CalFire regarding the "Ready-Set-Go!" fire and life safety campaign.*

**By Teri Mizuhara**

CAMINO – Making sure your family and your home is set for an approaching wildfire and a possible evacuation is the second part of CalFire's Ready-Set-Go fire safety program.

"Right now is a good time to review your evacuation plan (Wildfire Action Plan) with your family. Don't wait until the smoke is swirling around your home because by then it is too late," Kelly Keenan, CalFire's Amador-El Dorado unit chief, says. "Practicing your evacuation plan now if you have one or creating an evacuation plan and practicing it now will ensure a much smoother departure in the face of a wildfire or other major emergency. Failing to plan is planning to fail. Are you willing to risk the health and welfare of your family?"



If an evacuation is imminent, have your evacuation kit(s) and other valuables in your car. Have your car backed into your driveway with your doors and windows closed (this way you can drive forward out of your driveway). Keep your family and pets close by. Dress in appropriate clothing (natural fibers versus man-made fabrics), have goggles and a mask to protect you from the smoke. Alert your family and neighbors. Drink plenty of water and stay tuned to your local television/radio stations and news websites for updated news.

If time allows, prepare the interior of your home by doing the following:

- Shut off gas at the meter and turn off all pilot lights.
- Leave your lights on in the house so firefighters can see your home through the smoke.
- Shut all your windows and doors; be sure to leave the doors unlocked.
- Remove flammable curtains and window shades. Close metal shutters.
- Move furniture to the middle of the room, away from window and doors.
- Shut off your air conditioning.

Then prepare the exterior of your home:

- Move flammable items such as patio furniture, door mats, and children's toys inside the house or far away from the side of your house.
- Shut off your propane tank.
- Do not leave your sprinklers on; they deplete the local water pressure.
- Leave your exterior lights on.
- Seal exterior vents if time permits.

Survival tips if you are trapped:

- Stay calm, do not panic. Focus on what you need to do to survive.
- Shelter yourself and your family members away from outside walls.
- Wear long sleeves and long pants made of natural fibers.
- Stay hydrated. Fill sinks and tubs for an emergency water

supply.

- Place wet towels under doors to keep embers and smoke out.
- Make sure you can exit your home if it catches fire but remember that it will be four to five times hotter outside than inside your home.

“It is always best to leave your home well ahead of the wildfire. Roads quickly become clogged with vehicles (people evacuating and emergency service equipment responding to the fire) and the smoked filled air can cause people to become disoriented and panic. Protect your loved ones and get set today and rest easy tonight because it is not a matter of if a wildfire will happen but when a wildfire will occur,” warns Keenan.

For more detailed information on what you have read, visit CalFire’s website [www.readyforwildfire.org](http://www.readyforwildfire.org) or call (530) 644.2345 to receive a free brochure on the Ready-Set-Go program and evacuation tips for your family and pets.