

Preparing Before, During and After Wildfires in Missoula County



What to DO BEFORE Wildfires:

Prepare Your Home, Family and Property

PREPARE YOUR HOME AND PROPERTY: KNOW YOUR RISK?

Do you know how to prepare your home for wildfire? Do you know your Home Ignition Zone (HIZ)? Do you know if you live in a high wildfire risk area? Learn about ways to prepare your home and property for wildfire.

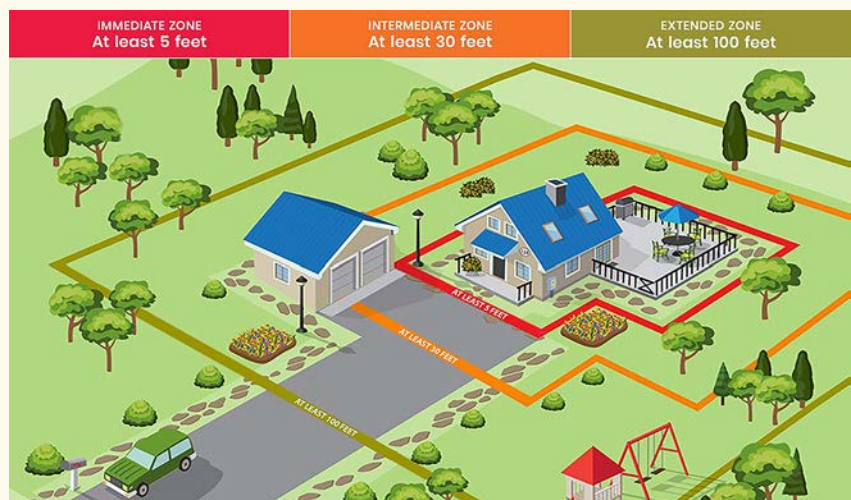
Missoula County residents play a critical role in reducing wildfire risk to their homes and property. Prepare your Home Ignition Zone to improve the survivability of your structure and surrounding landscape.

For more information on reducing your property's wildfire risk, visit [nfpa.org](https://www.nfpa.org).

Home Ignition Zone

RECEIVE A WILDFIRE RISK SITE VISIT

- Do you know your property's wildfire risk?
- Do you know what steps to take to reduce wildfire risk to your home and property?
- Receive a FREE Home Wildfire Risk Site Visit. Consult with your local fire department or fire prevention specialist on how to mitigate your property.
- Become aware of resources available to help accomplish mitigation and what specific actions you can take.



Source: [nfpa.org](https://www.nfpa.org)

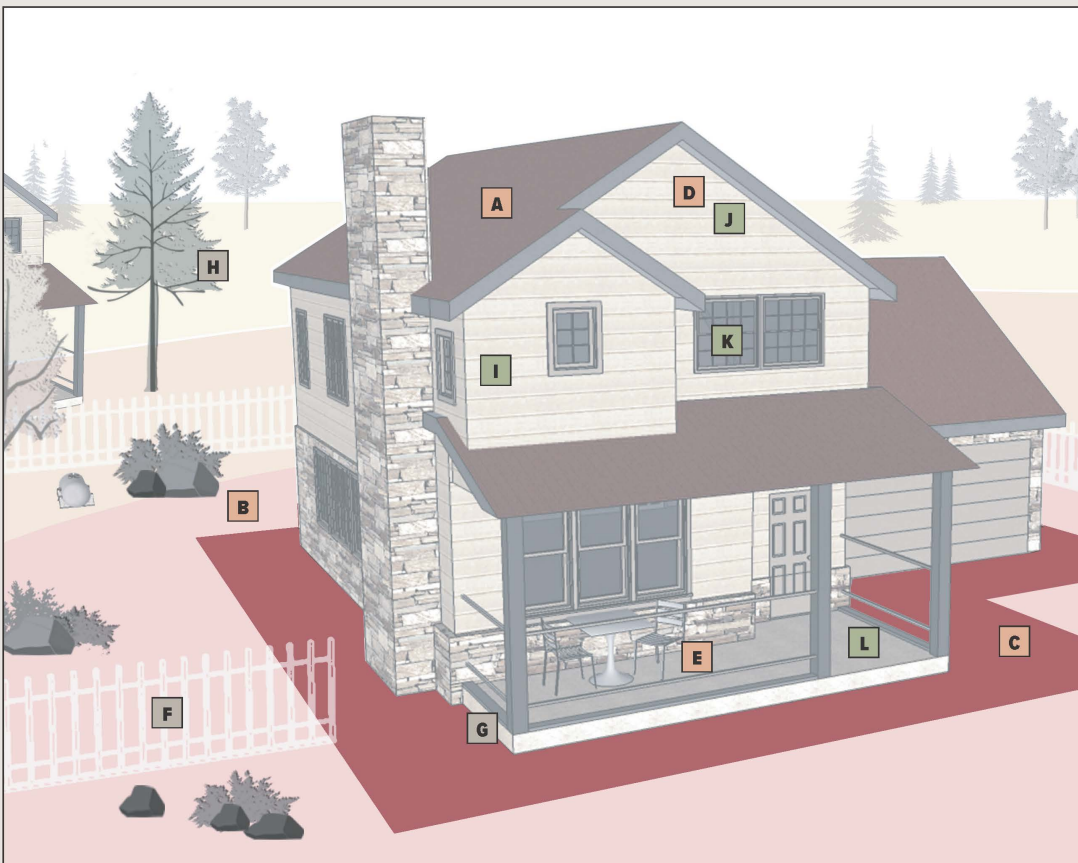
You can schedule a free in-person wildfire risk site visit by scanning the QR code below to meet with a local fire professional on how to reduce your property's wildfire risk. Call (406) 258-3633 or scan the QR code below.

RECEIVE EMERGENCY ALERTS

Sign up to receive emergency alerts at smart911.com. This is Missoula County's primary method for notifying you about evacuation warnings and orders. Be sure to update your profile annually.



Own Your Zone – Exterior Home Protection



1ST PRIORITY			
A	Roof	Install a Class A-rated roof such as asphalt fiberglass shingles or metal panels.	\$\$\$
B	Roof and yard debris	Clear leaves, pine needles, and other flammable material from the roof, gutters, and areas around fences.	DIY
C	Buffer zone	Clear vegetation and other combustible materials to create a 5-foot buffer zone around the home.	\$
D	Vents	Install flame- and ember-resistant vents.	\$
E	Deck	Remove vegetation, firewood, and other combustible materials from on top and under decks.	DIY
2ND PRIORITY			
F	Fencing	Replace wood or plastic fences attached to the home with noncombustible metal fencing.	\$
G	Enclose decks	Enclose low decks and areas under bay windows with mesh screening or ventilated noncombustible material.	\$
H	Trees	Remove branches that overhang the roof and gutters.	\$
3RD PRIORITY			
I	Siding	Replace at least the lower foot of wood or vinyl siding with fiber cement, stucco, brick, or stone siding.	\$
J	Eaves	Enclose open eaves with noncombustible soffit material.	\$
K	Windows	Use dual-paned, tempered glass in windows and doors.	\$\$\$
L	Deck surface	Replace wooden decking with fire-rated composite material, metal, or lightweight concrete.	\$\$\$

DIY - Do it yourself (sweat and labor) \$ - Inexpensive \$\$ - Moderately expensive (may need a contractor) \$\$\$ - Investment (professional install)



**WILDFIRE READY
MISSOULA**

missoulaunitedway.org/wildfire-ready-missoula



cpaw.headwaterseconomics.org

Prepare Your Home, Family and Property

ENSURE EMERGENCY RESPONDER ACCESS

Ensure your home and neighborhood have clearly marked and legible street names. Driveways should be at least 13 feet wide, with 15 feet of clearance. Use reflective address signs for your home so first responders can easily identify your property in dark/smoky conditions.

PREPARE FOR SMOKE: CREATE A CLEAN AIR ROOM

Fine particulate matter found in wildfire smoke is dangerous to breathe. Designate a room that can be closed off from outside air. Close all doors and windows. Use a portable air cleaner and true HEPA filter inside your home. Visit montanawildfiresmoke.org for more information.

PREPARE A GO BAG

Even small wildfires can cause evacuations. It's important to have a Go Bag prepared before wildfire season and keep it updated. Have the Go Bag prepared with at least 72 hours worth of supplies.

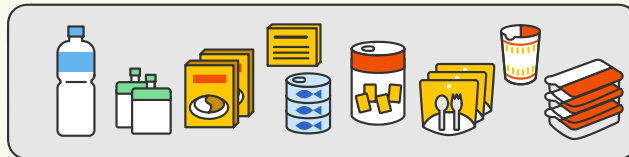
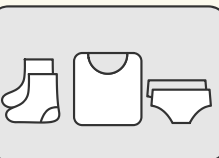
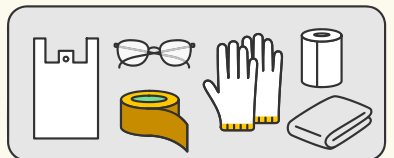
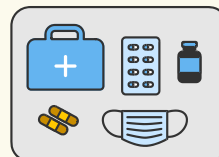
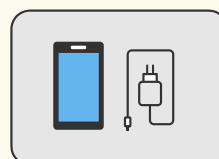
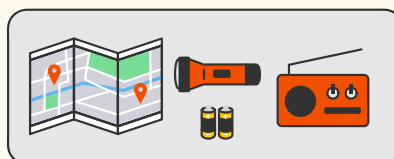
REMEMBER THE 5 P'S

1. **People**
2. **Prescriptions**
3. **Pets**
4. **Papers**
5. **Priceless items/
personal needs**



EMERGENCY
Evacuation goods

- ☐ TOOLS
- ☐ DIGITAL DEVICE
- ☐ CASH
- ☐ MEDICAL GOODS
- ☐ CLOTHES
- ☐ FOOD



What to DO BEFORE Wildfires:

Prepare Your Home, Family and Property

HAVE AN EVACUATION PLAN

It is important to have a plan for what you will do in the event of an evacuation. When preparing your evacuation plan, think about your family, pets, livestock, and valuables to bring during an evacuation. Make an inventory of your personal belongings for insurance purposes in the event your belongings are lost due to a wildfire.

Create a livestock and equestrian evacuation plan if applicable. Establish an emergency meeting location outside of the fire area. For disaster preparedness for people with disabilities, visit [ready.gov](https://www.ready.gov) for more information in your community.

KNOW YOUR INSURANCE COVERAGE

Talk to your insurance representative to discuss your coverage as it relates to wildfire losses. If you are evacuated, some homeowner insurance policies will provide coverage for reasonable living expenses.

**FOR DISASTER PREPAREDNESS FOR PEOPLE
WITH DISABILITIES, VISIT [READY.GOV](https://www.ready.gov).**

ATTEND OR ORGANIZE A WILDFIRE PREPAREDNESS WORKSHOP

Learn about evacuation prep, home ignition zone mitigation, land management resources and more. Contact your local fire department or Missoula County Office of Emergency Management to schedule.

BECOME A NEIGHBORHOOD AMBASSADOR

Learn how to become a neighborhood ambassador and be a leader within your fire adapted community. Call Missoula County Office of Emergency Management for more information (406) 258-3633.

PRACTICE SAFE OUTDOOR BURNING

If you are going to be burning vegetative debris, do so in a safe and responsible manner. Obtain a burn permit, know when, where and what you can burn. To obtain a burn permit visit [app.egovmt.com/burnpermit/](https://app.egov.mt.com/burnpermit/). You must activate the burn permit the day you plan to burn. Visit mcfpa.org for more information about burning.

During Fire Season

IF YOU SEE A WILDFIRE, CALL 911. DON'T ASSUME THAT SOMEONE ELSE HAS CALLED. DESCRIBE THE LOCATION OF THE FIRE, SPEAK SLOWLY AND CLEARLY AND ANSWER ANY QUESTIONS BY THE DISPATCHER.

MONITOR LOCAL WEATHER REPORTS

Be aware of current fire danger ratings, red flag warnings, and other fire related weather alerts. Follow the US National Weather Service Missoula MT Facebook page for up-to-date weather alerts. For local and national fire information: inciweb.nwcg.gov.

BE INFORMED ABOUT FIRES IN THE AREA

Stay informed of nearby wildfires in your area. Attending public meetings and visiting inciweb.nwcg.org is the best way to receive information about nearby wildfires. Follow social media and websites for Missoula County Office of Emergency Management, your local fire department, MCFPA, Missoula County Sheriff's Office for information on current fire conditions in Missoula County.

KNOW ABOUT FIRE RESTRICTIONS

When recreating and traveling in Montana during fire season, it is critical to know about area fire restrictions and adhere to those restrictions. For statewide fire restriction information, visit mtfireinfo.org.

LIMIT SMOKE EXPOSURE

Close windows and doors during times of smoke. If you haven't already, purchase a HEPA filter to clean indoor air of fine particulate matter.

KNOW YOUR EVACUATION STAGES

Missoula County uses a two stage evacuation process: Evacuation **Warning** and **Order**. Evacuation Orders can be given without an official Evacuation Warning! Be prepared for evacuations, even small wildfires can necessitate an evacuation. If told to evacuate, do so immediately!

WHEN A WILDFIRE IS NEAR YOUR COMMUNITY

If you are advised to evacuate, do so immediately. Don't wait to evacuate. Evacuate early and give responders the best chance to access and protect community resources.

During an Evacuation Warning

STAY INFORMED

Sign up for Smart 911 at **Smart911.com** or at **missoulacounty.us/oem**. Every effort will be made to issue an Evacuation WARNING first. Due to rapidly changing events, an Evacuation ORDER may be sent with no prior warning.

DURING AN EVACUATION WARNING

This is the time for final preparation. Pack your Go Bag and place it in a vehicle. Remove curtains from windows, be ready to shut off natural gas, propane and other fuel at the source. Close windows, doors and garage doors. Make arrangements with friends/family for a place to stay. Shelters will be provided as well. Be sure to include your pet/animals when arranging for a shelter. Move flammable materials (grills, patio furniture, etc.) >30' from home if time permits.

EVACUATE EARLY

Bring your Go Bag. By leaving early you give your family the best chance of surviving a wildfire. If there is a threat to your home or evacuation route, leave early enough to avoid being caught in fire, smoke, or road congestion.

EVACUATION WARNING

You are **WARNED** that current or projected hazards associated with an emergency in this area may require immediate evacuation.

- This is the time for final preparation, precautionary movement of persons with special needs, mobile property, and perhaps even pets and livestock.
- Authorities will make every attempt to advise the public as conditions change. Area media outlets have been asked to broadcast updates as they are given.
- If you are not enrolled in **SMART 911**, now is the perfect time to do so. Log on to **smart911.com** and create your safety profile. This service will enhance your ability to receive alerts and provide information to responders to enhance your family's safety.
- **DO NOT WAIT** for authorities to give an evacuation order for your area. Early self-evacuation ensures the safety of you and your family.
- Please do not remove any exterior flagging or markings that have been placed outside of your home. These markings help emergency responders to identify who has or hasn't received notification.

*If a slow moving emergency vehicle with lights and alternating siren tones is moving through the area, it is time to evacuate!
See reverse for EVACUATION ORDER instructions.*

Evacuation Warning

Issued on:

Issued By:

During an Evacuation Order

EVACUATE IMMEDIATELY

If you are ordered to evacuate, do so immediately. Roads can become congested quickly if you delay. A slow moving emergency vehicle with lights and alternating siren tones, loudspeaker announcements, and/or personal contact from a responder all indicate the need to evacuate immediately!

Follow evacuation instructions from emergency officials. Follow local emergency response updates on a cellphone or radio. Updates will be posted by the Missoula County Sheriff's Office on social media, local news outlets and other postings.

WEAR PROTECTIVE CLOTHING

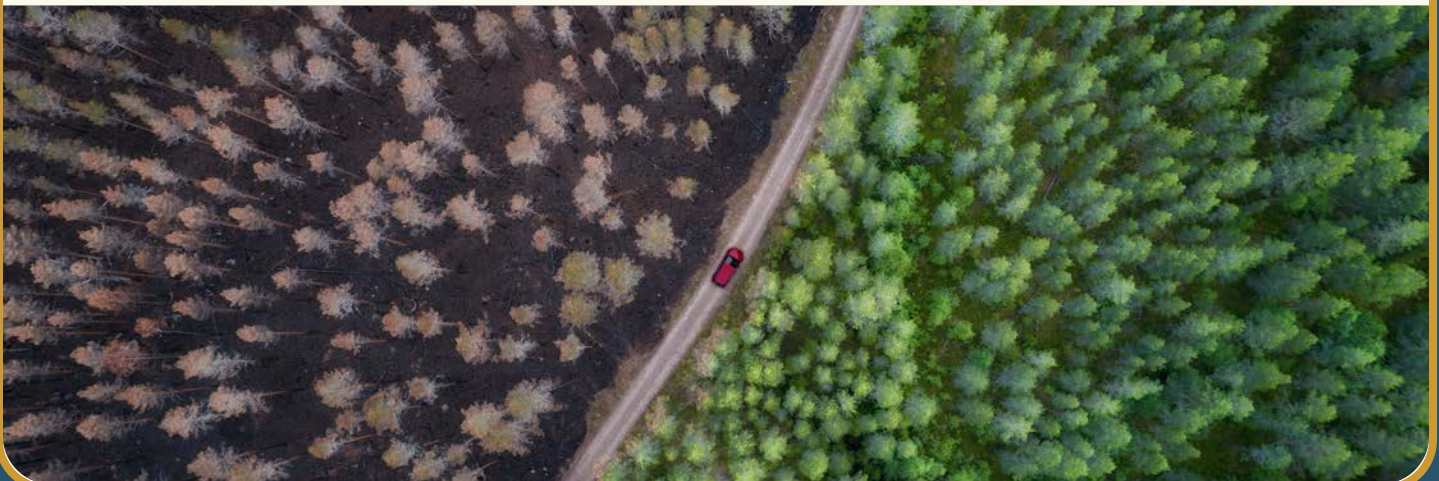
Wear protective clothing when outside, such as sturdy shoes, cotton or woolen clothes, long pants, a long-sleeved shirt, gloves, and masks to protect your face.

IDENTIFY A SHELTER

If you are ordered to evacuate and need to relocate for an extended period of time, make arrangements to do so now. Do not forget to make a plan for your pets/livestock. Call (406) 258-INFO(4636) for shelter information during an evacuation.

DRIVING SAFELY

Drive in a safe and orderly fashion on designated routes only. Smoke, embers and debris can cause low visibility. Be on the lookout for fast moving emergency vehicles. Remaining calm and putting your pre-planned actions in motion will be the best way to keep you and your family safe. Consider evacuating in one vehicle to reduce congestion.



After a Fire

IF EVACUATED, WHEN DO I RETURN HOME?

Only when authorities say it is safe to do so. Stay informed on local emergency response updates from the Missoula County Sheriff's Office. There still may be burning debris in the area, utilities may be shut off and water may be unsafe to drink.

PRIOR TO RE-ENTRY

Utilities must be repaired and in service; sewer and sanitation must be repaired; running water must be available and essential services (gas, medical services and food must be available before re-entry). Authorities will release timely info when it is safe to return.

CONTACT YOUR INSURANCE COMPANY

If you have questions or need help with a problem regarding your claim following a fire, contact the Montana Commissioner of Securities & Insurance Office at (406) 444-2040 or visit csimt.gov.

TAKE PHOTOS OF THE DAMAGE

Do not dispose of property until your insurance adjuster reviews it for your claim. Review your prepared list of your belongings to confirm lost or damaged items for insurance claims.

KEEP RECORDS OF ALL EXPENSES WHILE EVACUATED

Homeowner and renter insurance generally provide coverage for living expenses such as meals, lodging, transportation, etc.

FLOODS AFTER FIRE

Risk of flooding during spring runoff or rain events can increase in areas that were previously burned. Learn about flood preparedness in Missoula County at missoulacounty.us/government/public-safety/office-of-emergency-management.

Missoula County Wildfire Mitigation Programs

WILDFIRE RISK ASSESSMENT: FREE

Receive specific recommendations on preparing your property for wildfire. Visit dnrc.mt.gov/free-visit or call your local fire department or (406) 258-3633 to get scheduled.

MISSOULA COUNTY FUEL MITIGATION PROGRAMS

Missoula Rural Fire Department and Frenchtown Rural Fire's Department offer defensible space mitigation programs within their response jurisdiction. First determine which jurisdiction you reside in, then call MRFD or FRFD to learn more.

WILDFIRE READY MISSOULA

Offers technical and financial assistance for private landowners in creating defensible space and treating their Home Ignition Zone across Missoula County. Visit missoulaunitedway.org/wildfire-ready-missoula.

DNRC FOREST STEWARDSHIP

The stewardship program provides private forest owners with technical and financial assistance to plan and implement long-term stewardship or management goals on their property. Call your local DNRC Service Forester to learn more. To find your local Service Forester, please visit dnrc.mt.gov/divisions/forestry.

BITTERROOT RC&D

Offers technical and financial assistance for private landowners interested in forest stewardship and wildfire risk reduction projects across Missoula, Ravalli and Mineral counties. See map for their service areas. Call (406) 363-5450 or visit bitterrootrcd.org/hazardous-fuels-reduction.

BLACKFOOT CHALLENGE

Offers technical and financial assistance for private landowners interested in forest management and wildfire risk reduction projects throughout the Blackfoot watershed. Visit blackfootchallenge.org/forestry/.

SWAN VALLEY CONNECTIONS

Offers technical and financial assistance for private landowners interested in forest management and wildfire risk reduction projects in the Swan Valley area. Visit swanvalleyconnections.org/forest-stewardship.

CLEARWATER RESOURCES COUNCIL

Offers technical and financial assistance for private landowners interested in forest management and wildfire risk reduction projects in the Seeley Lake area. Visit crcmt.org/fuels.

Missoula County Wildfire Mitigation Opportunities for Homeowners

NRCS (NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICES)- MISSOULA OFFICE

Offers technical and financial assistance to private landowners interested in DNRC's Forestry Assistance Bureau.

Natural resource conservation based on a focused approach using long range planning with local input across Missoula and Mineral counties. Call the NRCS Missoula Field Office at (406) 829-3395 for more info



Wildfire Related Information Online

- Missoula County Fire Protection Association: mcfpa.org
- Current Fire Conditions: gacc.nifc.gov/nrcc/
- Montana Air Quality: svc.mt.gov/deq/todaysair
- For Emergency Info: missoulacounty.us/OEM
- InciWeb (large fire status): inciweb.nwcg.gov
- Montana Department of Natural Resources Fire Info: gis.dnrc.mt.gov/apps/firemap/
- MSU Extension Office: msuextension.org/gallatin/naturalresources.html
- FireSafe Montana: firesafemt.org
- National Interagency Fire Center (NIFC): nifc.gov/
- Montana Wildfire Smoke: montanawildfiresmoke.org/
- Preparing for Wildfires: nfpa.org/Public-Education/Fire-causes-and-risks/Wildfire/Preparing-homes-for-wildfire
- Missoula County Evacuation Information: missoulacounty.us/government/public-safety/office-of-emergency-management/evacuation-information
- Smart 911 and opt-in to receive emergency alerts: smart911.com