

Wildfire Evacuation and Preparedness

In recent years California has experienced several large and devastating wildfires brought about by extreme weather conditions and very dry vegetation, which allowed the fires to grow at rates seldom seen before. The Boulder Creek Fire Protection District is a little more fortunate as our fuel types and weather are more favorable to resisting large fires, however due to years of draught conditions this is also changing. The Boulder Creek Fire Protection District has the potential for dangerous wildfires that could spread quickly. Residents must be ready to evacuate at any time, regardless of public notification.

Defensible Space

Providing defensible space around your residence allows First Responders to potentially defend your homes. It also increases your survivability in the event you have to shelter in place. For more information see Living With Fire here <https://bcfd.com/fire-prevention/>. Also keep your gutters clean, especially during months with potential fire danger, as embers can easily ignite leaves and lead to the roof catching fire.

Access, Egress and Addressing

In the event of a large fire agencies from all areas of the state will respond. These agencies are not familiar with our area and make the following recommendations very important.

- Provide visible addresses for your homes. These should be 4"-6" in height, contrasting in color and easily visible from the street. For residences with long driveways, place addresses at the end of the driveway easily visible from the street.
- Ensure street signs are in place and visible.
- Provide vegetation clearance along your roads and driveways. Clearances need to be 14' in height and 14' in width. If your roads are more narrow clear 10' beyond the edge of the road.

Emergency Notifications

All homes with landlines will receive emergency notifications. Cell phones will not receive emergency notifications unless they are registered here <http://www.scr911.org/>. Emergency notifications will typically be ordered by the Incident Commander of the fire. Emergency notifications will consist of a recorded message telling you what to do (precautionary evacuation, mandatory evacuation, shelter in place etc.) and should include routes of travel for evacuating. In the event of a large evacuation law enforcement will be brought in to manage traffic flow and assist with evacuations. Please remember that while you are evacuating emergency vehicles are also responding to the incident.

You will be advised of potential evacuations as early as possible. You must take the initiative to stay informed and be aware. Listen to your radio (KBCZ 90.1 FM, KSCO 1080 AM, KZSC 88.1 FM or KPIG 107.5 FM), Television (KION and KSBW) and internet sources (Facebook: Boulder Creek Volunteer Fire Department, Boulder Creek Neighbors) for announcements from law enforcement and emergency personnel regarding evacuations and evacuation routes.

Evacuation Preparedness

Right now, before an emergency occurs, is the time to prepare. Scan all important documents (insurance, license, passport, mortgage, bank account information, credit card information, will or trust, prescriptions) and put on a thumb drive. Also take a video or photographs of your home's inventory (home furnishings, personal possessions, jewelry, art etc.) and place them on the thumb drive. Make several copies of the thumb drive and keep one with you, in your Go-Bag and/or someplace outside the home. Send one to a trusted friend or relative outside the area. Recovery is often hampered because people can't even prove who they are, let alone prove what they had.

When to Evacuate

If you feel threatened, leave immediately. Do not wait for an evacuation order!

If an evacuation is ordered for your area LEAVE IMMEDIATELY!

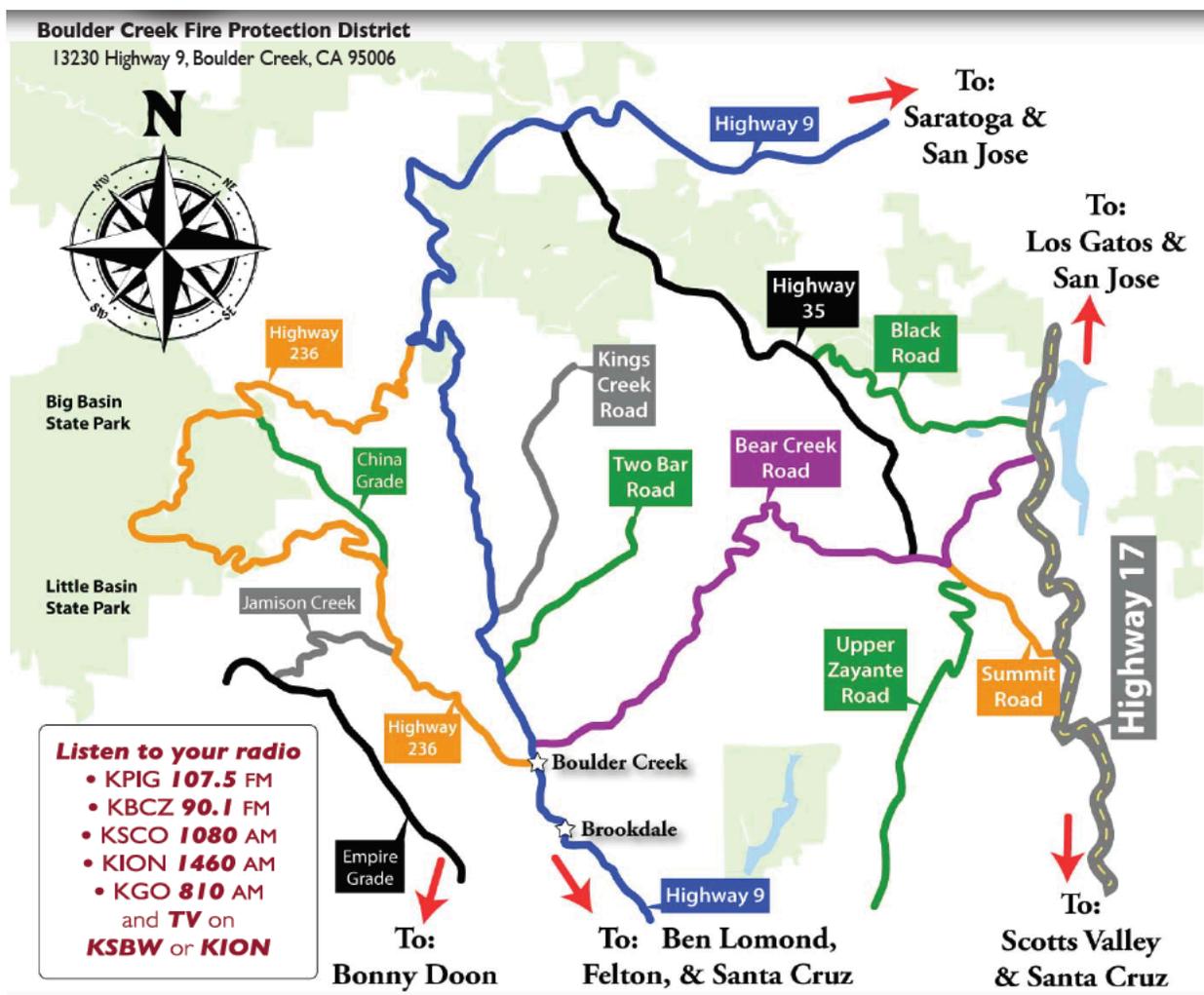
If you see or experience any of the following consider evacuating on your own:

- **Visible fire in a home close by accompanied by strong winds**
- **Visible fire in vegetation / forested areas**
- **Strong winds carrying smoke and embers through or over your neighborhood**

Officials will notify you of an evacuation order as early as possible by landlines, cell phones, social media, radio and TV. In an intense, rapidly growing wildfire, they may not be able to go door to door for evacuations. You must take the initiative to stay informed and be aware.

Evacuation Routes

- Officials will determine the areas to be evacuated and escape routes to use depending upon the fire's location, direction of travel and fire behavior (winds, terrain, etc.). Know your evacuation map! Look at the possible routes you might be directed to use.
- You will be advised of evacuation routes as early as possible by landlines, cell phones, social media, radio and TV.
- Law enforcement agencies are typically responsible for enforcing an evacuation order. Follow their directions promptly.
- You may be directed to a designated Public Assembly Point for your immediate safety and later to an evacuation shelter. Predetermined evacuation routes can't be set in stone as fires are fluid and movement of the fire is dependent on fuel types, topography and weather.



How to Evacuate

If you are instructed to evacuate, leave immediately following all evacuation instructions. Evacuating the area early will help keep roads clear of congestion, letting firefighters move more freely to do their job. ***If you feel threatened, evacuate immediately. Do not wait for an evacuation order!***

If roads are clear and you can drive:

- Drive routes as instructed by officials. Do not block public safety personnel or vehicles while driving. If you encounter blocked roads, consider alternate routes. If you must leave your car, park in a location that does not block traffic (blocking sidewalks is acceptable) and evacuate on foot.

IT IS CRITICAL THAT YOU KEEP THE ROADWAYS CLEAR FOR FIRST RESPONDERS!!!

If you need assistance leaving (can't walk or drive out on your own):

- Check with your neighbors to see if they can give you a ride or assist you in evacuating on foot.
- Call 911 if you can't leave your house and need emergency assistance to evacuate.
- If first responders come to your door, notify them that you will need assistance evacuating.

Preparing Your Household to Evacuate

If you are instructed to prepare to evacuate, take the following steps. ***If you feel threatened, evacuate immediately. Do not wait for an evacuation order.***

Immediate actions:

- Cover up to protect against heat and flying embers. Wear long pants, a long-sleeved shirt, heavy shoes/boots, a cap, a dry bandana for face cover, and goggles or glasses. 100% cotton or natural materials are preferable.
- With members of your household, identify in advance where to meet if you get separated. Select a common friend or relative to call.
- Assemble a Go-Bag.
- Locate your pets and take them with you.
- Leave a note on your door so firefighters know you have evacuated.

Prepare to drive:

- Back your vehicle into your driveway. Do not block the road.
- Pack your Go-Bag into your vehicle.
- Keep your all vehicle doors and windows closed.
- Carry your car keys with you.
- Be prepared to evacuate on foot.

Go-Bag Packing List:

- Flashlight
- Cell phone
- Area map marked with at least two evacuation routes
- Water and snacks
- Radio
- Cell phone charger
- Blanket
- Prescriptions or critical medications
- Extra eyeglasses or contact lenses
- Change of clothing and toiletries
- Extra set of car keys, credit cards, and cash
- Battery-powered radio and extra batteries
- Important documents

- Cash, credit card and ATM card
- Whistle to signal for help
- Pet collar and leads, carriers, medications, water and food
- Essential durable medical equipment, like a walker, cane, or C-Pap machine
- Photos and other critical personal valuables

Help Protect Your Home

If time allows, follow these checklists to give your home the best chance of surviving a wildfire.

If you feel threatened, evacuate immediately. Do not wait for an evacuation order!

If you have been ordered to evacuate, leave immediately. Do not waste time protecting your home!

Inside the House

- Shut all windows and doors.
- Remove flammable window shades and close metal shutters, especially those in attics.
- Remove lightweight curtains.
- Move flammable furniture to the center of the room, away from windows and doors.
- Leave your lights on so firefighters can see your house under smoky conditions.
- Shut off the air conditioning.

Outside the house

- Gather up flammable items from the exterior of the house (patio furniture, children's toys, door mats, trash cans, etc.) and either bring them inside or move them as far away from your home as possible.
- Move propane BBQ appliances away from structures.
- Connect garden hoses to outside water valves or spigots for use by firefighters. Fill water buckets (5 gallons or less) and place them around the outside of the house.
- Don't leave sprinklers on or water running, they can affect critical water pressure.
- Leave exterior lights on so your home is visible to firefighters in the smoke or darkness of night.
- Have a ladder available and place it at the corner of the house for firefighters to quickly access your roof.
- Seal attic and ground vents with pre-cut plywood or commercial seals. If embers come in through these or other air intakes, they could cause your home to catch on fire.
- Check on neighbors. Make sure they are preparing to leave and know which way to go. Ask if they have a plan to get out safely and offer help to those who need it.
- Patrol your property and monitor the fire situation.

If You Become Trapped

In your vehicle:

- Park your vehicle in an area clear of vegetation and power lines. Do not block the road.
- Keep the engine running and headlights on. Roll up windows and set the ventilation system to recirculate to reduce smoke in the car.
- Cover yourself with wool blanket or jacket.
- Lie on vehicle floor.
- Use your cell phone to call 911. Advise officials that you are trapped and of your location (address or intersection is best).

While on foot:

- Go to an area clear of vegetation – mowed field, ditch, depression, parking lot, under bridges, or body of water, if possible.
- Lie face down and cover up your body.
- Use your cell phone to call 911. Advise officials that you are trapped and of your location (address or intersection is best).

While in your home:

- Keep your family together.
- Call 911. Advise officials that you are trapped and of your location (address or intersection is best).
- Fill your sinks and tubs with cold water.
- Keep doors and windows closed but unlocked.
- Stay inside your house.
- Stay away from exterior walls and windows.

Note: It will get hot in the house. But it will be much hotter and more dangerous outside.

Returning Home after an Evacuation

Fire officials will determine when it is safe for you to return to your home. This will be done as soon as possible considering safety and accessibility.

- Be alert for downed power lines and other hazards. ***Stay away from all downed power lines and treat them as if they are live!***
- Check your residence carefully for hidden embers or smoldering fires for the next 24 - 72 hours.