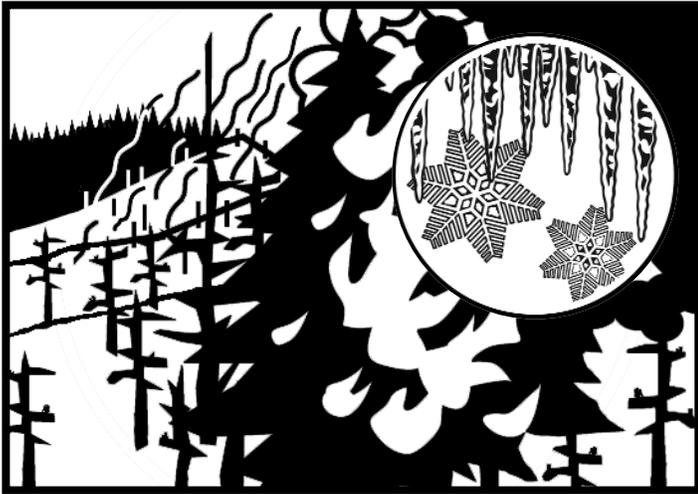


ESP FIRE & ICE



Fire and Ice

On August 26, 2009, an arsonist ignited the Station Fire in the Angeles National Forest bordering Los Angeles County, and became the largest wildfire in its recorded history. It burned 160,577 acres – roughly the size of the City of Chicago – killed two Los Angeles County firefighters, and burned until mid-October. Fire is, and always has been, a natural part of Southern California’s landscape. These wildfires are often fueled by dry vegetation and driven by hot, dry “Santa Ana” winds, making them extremely dangerous and impossible to control. Fire season is now year-round and requires everyone to be on heightened alert, especially for those living in wildland area communities.

Severe weather conditions can cause wildland fires, heat waves, and winter storms. Winter storms have caused many disasters, as recently as the winter of 2010. Hundreds of residents living in the burned out areas adjacent to the Station Fire experienced severe mudslides following major

rainstorm activity, and needed to be evacuated to safety. Many of their homes were damaged, and recovery efforts will take years to complete and cost millions of dollars. Timely preparation and key action steps to protect your home and property will help avoid the effects of severe winter weather, including the financial costs.

Snow and ice on roadways can also create hazardous driving conditions, especially in mountainous areas where driving is impaired. Even if you don’t live in severe or winter storm areas, you might travel to or visit these areas. Be aware of these winter hazards and be prepared to handle them.

The reverse side of this Focus Sheet includes simple steps that may save your life, those of your family, and protect your home from the devastating effects of wildland fires and severe winter weather.

Check these websites

- www.fema.gov (Federal Emergency Management Agency)
- www.oes.ca.gov (California Governor’s Office of Emergency Services)
- www.noaa.com (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration)
- www.firesafecouncil.org (The Fire Safe Council)
- www.fire.ca.gov (California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection)



FIRE & ICE

www.espfocus.org

Your Home

- Follow building, fire and hazard abatement codes.
- Install non-flammable screens with mesh 1/2 inch or less on chimneys and enclose all roof eaves with fire resistant material such as aluminum or steel and place metal mesh over all attic or roof vents.
- Keep roofs and rain gutters free of needles, leaves, or other debris.
- Enclose the underside of balconies and decks with fire resistant material, such as aluminum decking.
- Inspect chimneys and screens twice annually.
- Install a smoke alarm on each level of your home, especially in bedrooms, and test them monthly.

Your Yard

- Clear the brush away from your home (a minimum of 100 feet).
- Trim all trees and tree branches away from electrical lines and chimneys. (Use a professional to trim near utilities and power lines)
- Remove weak, dead, and leaning trees and bark beetle infested trees.
- Stack firewood at least 30 feet away from your home or other structures.
- Store all combustible or flammable liquids in approved storage containers.
- Locate all propane tanks at least 30 feet from any structure.
- Use fire-retardant plants and bushes to replace highly combustible vegetation.

When Wildland Fires Approach

- Listen to the radio or watch television for instructions.
- Evacuate as soon as directed by public safety officials or when danger is perceived.
- Park your vehicles facing the direction of escape with windows rolled up.
- Place your disaster supplies kit and evacuation kit along with valuables and other essentials in your vehicle.
- Secure pets and livestock and prepare them for evacuation.
- Leave your electricity on and leave inside lights on.
- If time permits, cover up by wearing long pants, a long sleeved shirt, goggles, cap, and bandanna. 100% cotton is preferable.
- Close doors behind you when evacuating to slow down the flames, smoke, and heat.
- Help young children, seniors, and persons with disabilities to evacuate safely.

Plan for Evacuation

- Develop and practice a home evacuation plan. Your plan should include:
 - A floor plan with all escape routes
 - Easily accessible exits for young children, seniors and persons with disabilities. (Locate their rooms as close to exits as possible)
 - A list of valuables to take in an emergency. (Store them together in one location, if possible.)
 - Identify the most important papers to take if you have to leave, such as insurance policies, medical records, and driver's license
 - Include medications and eyeglasses
 - A place to reunite after evacuation
 - The location of animal shelters or other sites that house pets
 - Practice drills
- Work with neighbors to assist:
 - People with special needs
 - People who need transportation to other sites
- Work with local emergency officials to identify:
 - Several routes out of your neighborhood
 - Likely evacuation sites or safe refuge areas

Winter Storm Preparedness

- Be familiar with winter storm warning messages, such as a flood watch or warning.
- Make sure you have sufficient heating fuel in case regular fuel sources are cut off.
- Have safe emergency heating equipment available.
- Install and check smoke alarms.
- Have disaster supplies on hand, in case you have to shelter in place or in case the power goes out.
- Develop an emergency communication plan.
- Keep cars and other vehicles fueled and in good repair.
- If you are in low-lying areas, keep sandbags, plywood, and plastic sheeting on hand.

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This information sheet is produced as part of the Emergency Survival Program (ESP). ESP is an awareness campaign designed to increase home, neighborhood, business and school emergency preparedness. ESP was developed by the County of Los Angeles. The California Emergency Management Agency (Cal EMA) and representatives from Contra Costa, Imperial, Inyo, Kern, Los Angeles, Marin, Mono, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, San Diego, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, Santa Cruz, and Ventura counties, Southern California Edison, the Southern California Earthquake Center and the American Red Cross assist in the development of campaign materials and coordination of the campaign.