



## FIRE EMERGENCY PLANNING CHECKLIST FOR PET OWNERS

Fires, whether in the wild or in your home, mean you need to leave your home quickly. The most important thing you can do in those moments is ensure the safety of your family, both human and furry. Whether you are evacuating your home due to a mandatory evacuation, or whether a fire has started in your home, preparing your family for what to do is extremely important.

Having a plan is key when quick actions/decisions are necessary. If a fire is in your home or coming close, do you have someone designated to ensuring everyone is out of the house? Is there someone in charge of helping your pets evacuate? Do you have an emergency kit available to grab and load up in your vehicle?

Wildfires have destroyed thousands of homes in the recent years and if you are faced with this horrible tragedy we want you to have some information you needed to keep your loved ones safe.

If you don't feel fully prepared, don't be alarmed. Our checklist is a great resource for helping you to start preparing today!

## WHAT TO DO BEFORE A FIRE STRIKES

- Make a plan.** It's easy for panic to set in if you smell smoke, see a fire starting in your home, or if a mandatory evacuation is ordered. Having a plan of action can help take your stress away and keep everyone safe in these moments. Your plan can include items such as:
  - Choose a meeting place outdoors where your family can gather in the event a fire begins in your home unexpectedly.
  - Run practice drills with your family, and be sure to include your pets.
- Have a backup plan for your pets in case you are not home.** In the event that you are not home with your pets during a fire emergency.
- Train your pet to listen** to your commands so they obey you in emergency situations.
- Assemble an emergency kit** prepared just for your pet that includes;
  - clean water - enough for at least 3 days non-perishable food (canned food) and bowls.
  - can opener (if needed).
  - kennel for your dog.
  - litter and litter box.
  - potty pads.
  - have medications handy to grab
  - blankets/towels.
  - photograph of your pet and proof of ownership.
  - vaccination records.
  - basic first aid kit - bandages, gauze, disinfectant to clean a wound, etc.
  - toys.
  - extra leash.
- trash bags.  
Keep these items in an accessible location for easy loading during an evacuation.
- Know your escape plan.** Familiarize yourself with evacuation shelters in your area, or make arrangements with family or friends out of the area so you know where you can go to be safe. Many shelters will pop up during the emergency situation, so have a radio handy to know where those are. Keep in mind that many human shelter evacuation points will not accept pets, so knowing where to take them will be important for their safety and security. Animal shelters outside of the fire area will take pets but may reach capacity quickly.
- Give your pets proper identification.** It's important that pets have I.D. on them at all times, and normally this comes in the form of a collar with a tag that includes name and phone number. Another great option that stays with your pet forever and can't be lost is a microchip. When your lost pet is taken to an animal shelter or veterinary clinic, they will scan your pet for a microchip and read its unique code. This code is stored with your pet's profile and linked to your contact information.
- Place a pet rescue window decal near your front door.** The ASPCA offers free pet safety packs which "alerts rescue personnel that pets are inside your home." You can order one for free on the ASPCA website. <https://secure.aspca.org/take-action/order-your-pet-safety-pack>

## WHAT TO DO DURING A FIRE

- Execute your plan;** get your family out of the house, locate and leash or crate your pets, grab your emergency kit and leave the area. If time allows, it is also recommended that you turn off your gas or propane.
- If your pets are indoors and you are unable to locate them,** do your best to leave windows or doors open on your way out so they can escape on their own.
- If you are ordered to evacuate and need to bring your pets to a shelter,** call the shelter when you are on your way to alert them you will be coming with your pets.
- If your home is in a wildfire evacuation area,** practice “[READY, SET GO](#),” a communications program outlined by CAL FIRE.” This program states:
  - “[Be Ready](#): Create and maintain defensible space and harden your home against flying embers.”
  - “[Get Set](#): Prepare your family and home ahead of time for the possibility of having to evacuate.”
  - “[Be Ready to GO!](#): Take the evacuation steps necessary to give your family and home the best chance of surviving a wildfire.”

## WHAT TO DO AFTER A FIRE EVACUATION

- Check your family and pets for injuries.** If your pet has burn injuries it's important to get them to a veterinarian or animal shelter for treatment as soon as possible.
- Pay attention to your pets' behavior and know that they are scared.** Offer them as much comfort as possible during this time.
- When returning to your property keep your pets with you at all times.** It is not safe for them to roam free yet.
- Get your pets back into a normal routine as soon as you are able.** If you notice any behavioral problems or they just don't seem to be acting normal, contact your veterinarian.