Wildfire Evacuation Plan for Residents

WHY SHOULD I EVACUATE?
During a wildfire emergency safety of lives is of utmost importance. In order for the Fire Department to effectively work to control the fire or protect homes it is best if citizens are safely evacuated. Your life is of highest importance and if you, family, and neighbors are in a safe place we have accomplished the most important goal.

HOW WILL I KNOW WHEN TO EVACUATE?
Research suggests that 50% of homeowners will evacuate without being told to do so. Residents need to evacuate as soon as possible after becoming aware there is a fire, residents in the fire zone will only slow efforts to fight the fire. Obvious signs include smoke, flames, and word of mouth news from neighbors. The City of Ashland maintains an emergency broadcast station at 1700 AM on your radio dial. The broadcast will be updated remotely by fire officials to give you directions. Ashland Fire and Rescue also maintains a wildfire hotline at 552-2490. Other notifications of evacuation may include door to door notification, siren alert, or a mobile loud speaker.

WHERE SHOULD I GO?
First, follow the directions broadcast on 1700AM or received from a public official. If you are ordered to evacuate and not given specific instructions please quickly follow the posted evacuation routes. Drive carefully toward the main streets of town. Follow the blue and red "Wildfire Evacuation Route" signs. NOTE: If a designated route appears unsafe due to fire, use common sense and find a safer route. To see where the evacuation routes are, click Wildfire Evacuation Map. Once clear of the area go to a friend’s house or parking lot out of the hazard area. If you are required to stay away from your home for a long period, shelters will be designated by the Red Cross.

WHAT SHOULD I DO BEFORE I LEAVE?
· DON’T PANIC. You will think more rationally if you remain calm.
· Keep family members together.
· Gather pets and secure them in a safe location – ready to go.
· Wear long pants, long sleeved shirts, and boots or sturdy shoes for protection from the heat.
· Identify escape routes and safety zones – stay away from flammable vegetation.
· Follow posted evacuation routes, unless the location of the fire compromises the safe use of a designated route. If necessary, choose an alternate route.
· Arrange temporary housing at a friend or relative’s home outside the threatened area. Leave a note in your home telling where and how you can be located.
· Prepare for a safe, rapid, organized evacuation.
· Listen to a battery-operated radio for reports and evacuation information.
· Follow instructions of law enforcement and fire personnel.
· If advised to evacuate, DO SO IMMEDIATELY! Exit safely and watch for changes in speed and direction of fire and smoke.
ONLY IF YOU’RE SURE YOU HAVE TIME:

Inside the Home –
· Close windows, vents, doors, venetian blinds, or non-combustible window coverings.
· Remove lightweight curtains. Leave doors unlocked.
· Turn off appliance natural gas pilot lights.
· Move flammable furniture away from windows and sliding glass doors.
· Leave lights on in your home. If electrical power does not fail, lights will help firefighters locate your home during hours of darkness or in heavy smoke.
· Leave a note as to where you will be going or contact family and friends to tell them you’re safe and where you’ll be.

Outside the Home –
· Park vehicles in open areas facing the direction of escape.
· Roll-up vehicle windows. Leave car doors unlocked but closed.
· Move flammable and combustible materials away from the home.
· Seal unscreened attic and foundation vents with pre-cut plywood or commercial seals, if you have them available.
· Turn off propane tanks.
· Place combustible patio furniture inside the home or garage.
· Connect garden hoses to outside faucets.
· Wet-down shrubbery within 25 feet of your house – start on the downhill side of the house.
· Turn off natural gas at the house meter.

WHEN CAN I RETURN HOME?
Emergency personnel will let the public know when it is safe to return to the area. Again, tune into 1700AM for continuing updates of the situation. Other sources include the City website www.ashland.or.us or local news sources.

WHAT SHOULD I TAKE WITH ME?
The most important thing is to get yourself and your family out of danger as quickly as possible. If fire is directly threatening your home you need to leave as soon as possible. If you have received an evacuation order from a public official, please leave within the time given to you. DON’T WORRY ABOUT POSSESSIONS IF YOU ARE IN DANGER! DO NOT STAY TO PROTECT YOUR OWN HOME.

ONLY if you have time to take belongings consider these things:
· Pets and food for them
· Prescription medicines
· Pictures and photo albums
· Baby supplies (diapers, food, etc..)
· Personal Hygiene Supplies and glasses/contact lenses
· Cash, Checks, and credit cards
· Personal files and computer hard drive
· Sleeping bag and pillow
· Cell phones and contact numbers

*All homeowners in wildfire areas should catalog their belongings either by listing them and their value, taking pictures, or videotaping. Send copies to friends or family who live in a safe area.*