

Understanding Temporary Areas of Refuge

What are temporary areas of refuge?

These are open locations free of unburned vegetation that may be safe places to wait while a fire passes. If your evacuation route is blocked or impassable, a wide parking lot, ball field, or even a house or commercial building may provide temporary shelter. Parking your car, with windows up, in a location far from vegetation or structures and waiting for the fire to pass, is often a safe option for sheltering in place.

How can I find the nearest area of refuge near my home?

Temporary areas of refuge are identified on many [Marin County evacuation maps](#). Wide parking lots, ball fields, and other open areas are usually safe if you stay in your car with windows up until the wildfire passes. It's a good idea to note these areas as you drive around on your daily routines.

How do I decide whether to go to an area of refuge?

Your first choice should be to follow your pre-planned evacuation route. If your evacuation route is blocked or impassable, consider an area of temporary refuge.



What else do I need to know about temporary areas of refuge?

- They can be lifesaving in extreme situations.
- Use them as a last resort, not a primary safety strategy.
- The effectiveness of temporary areas of refuge depend on the circumstances of the wildfire event.
- Stay calm, stay informed, and make your way out to safety once conditions allow.

Learn more at firesafemarin.org