

Wildfire Safety for Parents: Take Control and Be Ready

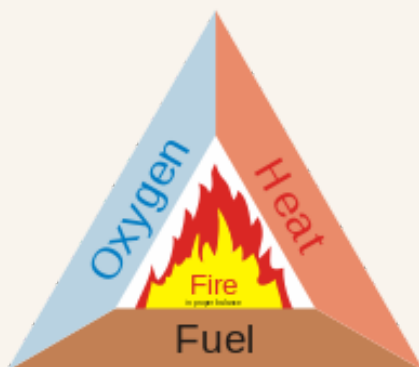
As parents, living with the threat of wildfire can be overwhelming. It summons an instinctual urge to shield and protect our children. But what can we do in the face of such an enormous threat? The good news is that our actions, individually and collectively, can make a big difference to how this plays out. Studies of wildfire behavior have shown us how to prepare ourselves and our homes to lower our risks.

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Know what you can control

Fire demands three things to burn: oxygen, heat, and fuel. Take away any one of these things and the fire goes out.

In a wildfire, oxygen is a given – driven by winds. Heat, as the ignition source, is usually carried by burning embers that blow ahead of the fire. The danger happens when embers land on vegetation around the house that serves as fuel. You CAN control the fuel around your home.



Take control

Clear Zone 0: If there is nothing in the first 5 ft to burn, your house is less likely to ignite. It seems hard to believe, but this small buffer zone saves homes – even in the most catastrophic fires where everything around was burned. Remove vegetation from Zone 0 and move wood piles and furniture as well.

Remove Hazardous Plants: When it comes to ember ignition, public enemies numbers 1, 2 and 3 are Italian cypress, juniper, and bamboo.

BE READY TO EVACUATE

Make a Plan:

1. Sign up for evacuation alerts at alertmarin.org.
2. Know your route out. Wildfires travel uphill, so always go downhill towards a main road.
3. Stay in your car when evacuating. It will provide protection from burning embers and heat.
4. Listen to AM Radio 740 or go to emergencymarincounty.org for updates.

If your child is in school during a wildfire evacuation, the school will deploy its Emergency Action Plan. Contact your child's school to find out what that plan is and how you will be informed.

Pack Your Go Bags:

1. Keep it simple. A wildfire evacuation will likely take hours, not days. The most important thing about packing is to be ready to go without delay.
2. Make a list of essential items you use every day and will want to grab on your way out: Keys, cell phone, charger, medicines, glasses.
3. Download the Survival Checklist [here](#).
4. Pack a few items to keep your kids calm: a favorite toy, blanket and snack.
5. Don't forget your pet's food, water, a leash and a crate.

Adapting to wildfire means being prepared. Let's get prepared!
Learn more at firesafemarin.org

