FULL SPANISH TRANSLATION INCLUDED

TAHOE GUIDE TAHOE WEEKLY

# TAHOE WILDFIRE PREPAREDNESS GUIDE

**DEFENSIBLE SPACE**
Will your home survive a fire?

**WILDFIRE**
checklists & resources

**PREPARE GO BAGS NOW**

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- **Workforce Housing**
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# BE AWARE.
# BE PREPARED.

As we continue doing the work to make our system more resilient to extreme fire conditions, we also use three key strategies to safeguard our communities against the threat of wildfires. While these measures help to keep us all safe, they can lead to power outages. We want everyone to be aware and prepared.

**1** | **FIRE SEASON SETTINGS**
Sensitive settings on power lines to reduce wildfire risk.

**2** | **PUBLIC SAFETY OUTAGE MANAGEMENT**
Proactive de-energization ahead of extreme wildfire risk conditions.

**3** | **EMERGENCY DE-ENERGIZATION**
Turning off the power when a wildfire gets too close to power lines to protect first responders and prevent secondary fires.

Visit **nvenergy.com/PowerSafeNV** to learn more about these strategies and how to be prepared for extended outages during this time of heightened fire risk.

POWER SAFE NV | This is what we do NVEnergy

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on the cover

Dixie Fire, which consumed 963,309 acres in northern California in 2021. | Courtesy CalFire

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# Tahoe Wildfire Preparedness Guide

## Full Spanish translation

BY KATHERINE E. HILL

Tahoe Guide presents the 5th annual Tahoe Wildfire Preparedness Guide featuring a full Spanish translation. This guide provides resources for residents, vacation homeowners and visitors to be prepared in the case of a wildfire.

The guide provides information about how to create defensible space and take steps to safeguard homes and businesses against the threats of wildfires; to prepare your home, your family and your business in case of an evacuation; and be prepared in case evacuation warnings and/or orders are issued and you need to leave.

Also, everyone including visitors should visit TahoeAlerts.com and sign up for emergency alerts.

### FUNDING FOR THE GUIDE

Thanks to a grant from the North Lake Tahoe Tourism Business Improvement District's TOT-TBID Dollars at Work Program, we are able to produce this guide and provide a full Spanish translation.

Thanks to the grant, the guide will be distributed for free throughout the North Lake Tahoe community, including the West Shore, Olympic Valley and Northstar. Learn more about the TBID at northtahoecommunityalliance.com.

The advertisers and financial sponsors in this guide have provided us with additional funding so that we can make copies also available to Truckee, the East and South Shores, Alpine County and beyond. Every fire district in the Tahoe and Truckee area also receives copies of the guide to distribute.

### SHARE THE GUIDE

I invite you to share this guide, download the free digital version at YourTahoeGuide.com/fire and share on social media. Businesses, government entities, nonprofits and everyone else is invited to share the guide on your websites, social media channels and newsletters. If you want to know where hard copies are available, email publisher@yourtahoeguide.com.

### HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

The Tahoe Wildfire Preparedness Guide is available in digital format for free at YourTahoeGuide.com/fire. You can download it, fill out the checklists and post the resources section at home. Save a copy of the resources and the Family Communication Plan in your Go Bag. Scan or take a photo of the resources and the Family Communication Plan to save on your phone, as well.

### DIRECT LINKS ONLINE

Direct URL links to every resource included in this guide are available at YourTahoeGuide.com/fire.

### ACCESSIBILITY

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Visit our website, then click on the figure in the blue bubble at the bottom of any page to select the accessibility setting you need. You may personalize the settings or select from a list of preset options including:

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- Keyboard Navigation
- Blind Users (for use with screen readers)

### TRANSLATIONS

A full Spanish translation is available following the English version in the print and digital editions.

As well, the content is available in other languages at YourTahoeGuide.com/fire. Click on the figure in the blue bubble to open the AccessiBe plugin. On the top right of the new screen, click on the English default language to access the drop down menu. There are options to choose between 20 languages.

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# Getting right with fire

BY SEAN MCALINDIN

A burnt clearing in the North Fork American River Shaded Fuel Brake. | CAL FIRE/Placer Co. Fire Dept.

Tahoe Guide spoke with local, statewide and national wildfire experts, along with naturalist Obi Kaufmann to paint a perspective of fire in the Tahoe Sierra. Here's what we learned.

## THE STATE OF FIRE

"California is a very dangerous place," says Kaufmann. "Fire is one of the threats that comes with living here. It's part of the deal."

Kaufmann is a naturalist, poet, painter and the author of "The California Field Atlas." His most recent book, "The State of Fire: Why California Burns," explores the Golden State's time-honored romance with incendiary combustion.

"The story of fire in California is very old, complex and interesting," he says "Thanks to a long tradition of indigenous stewardship, fire in California exists in ways it doesn't anywhere else. It's completely unique on all the planet."

Throughout the past 6,000 years, California's environment as we know it was sculpted through intentional forest fires by hundreds of indigenous sovereignties across the state.

"It's because of the regular application of fire on the land that we enjoy all of the biodiversity that California appreciates as part of its core character," says Kaufmann. "Every single arboreal habitat either has a strategy of being dependent upon, or adapted to, the regular return of fire. There is a good argument that California is as beautiful as it is because of its relationship with fire."

Yet at the turn of the 20th Century, as native traditions were restrained for land policies that suppressed wildfire, California forests were left to grow free in a proliferation of small, weak conifer trees that fuel many of today's mega-blazes.

"Now we have overcrowded forests," says Kaufmann. "With the advent of climate breakdown by way of anthropogenic global warming, we have arid soil. The wood body of the tree itself is fundamentally drier. Fuels are behaving in ways we haven't seen before. The novel ecosystem that has emerged has no historical analog as patterns of stress and simplification become disastrously apparent."

So, we find ourselves where we are today, one careless mistake away from the next nightmare scenario. Anyone who has seen the blood-red glow of a smoke-filled Sierra sunset knows the chilling feeling of being in the vicinity of an uncontrollable fire.

> "There really isn't a fire season. Our firefighters are professionals who respond to fires 12 months out of the year."
> – Mary Eldridge, CAL FIRE

"Across the Sierra, these young trees with their dead soil, insect-plagued, fungal-ridden, simplified forests, seem to say, 'Where did you go? We had a deal'," says Kaufmann. " 'We give you food and resources. You give us fire. Fire that we can handle. Fire that exists within our own evolutionarily prescribed parameters. Where did you go, humanity?' "

Perhaps what we need now is a reset in how we view our relationship with fire at all, says the poet philosopher: "Fire in California is not some kind of bug in the system. It is the system. It is always on the way. And it will not be denied."

## ARE WE PREPARED FOR FIRE?

"There really isn't a fire season," says Mary Eldridge, public information officer for the Nevada-Yuba-Placer Unit of CAL FIRE. "Our firefighters are professionals who respond to fires 12 months out of the year."

Eldridge's CAL FIRE unit, one of 21 in the state, comprises portions of Nevada, Placer, Yuba and Sierra counties adjacent to North Lake Tahoe and Truckee. South Lake Tahoe is flanked by the Amador-Eldorado Unit that stretches as far south as Alpine and Calaveras counties.

"Our goal is to put out any fire at 10 acres or less," she says. "Ninety-five percent of the time we do that and the public never hears about it. They only hear about fires that grow bigger than that, in the worst time of the year, under the worst conditions."

According to the Legislative Analyst's Office, CAL FIRE's budget has more than doubled over the past 10 years

CONTINUED ON **PAGE 6**

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from $1.7 billion in 2014-15 to $3.7 billion in 2023-24.

The Fight for Firefighters Act introduced in February 2025 in response to the Palisades Fire outside of Los Angeles aims to add another $175 million to keep roughly 3,000 firefighters who are typically laid off during the winter months on staff year round. In response, Eldridge's unit brought back its seasonal firefighters in January this year, rather than in March or April.

When they're not putting out fires, CAL FIRE firefighters participate in prevention activities including prescribed burning, fuel reduction, defensible space protections and public education.

Two major projects undertaken by the Nevada-Yuba-Placer unit in recent years are the Ponderosa West Fuel Break outside of Grass Valley near the site of the devastating 49er Fire of 1988 and the North Fork American River Shaded Fuel Break between Colfax and Auburn, which is intended to safeguard vital transportation and energy lines passing through the Sierra Nevada along Interstate 80.

On March 1, 2025, Gov. Gavin Newsom proclaimed a state of emergency to expedite critical prevention efforts ahead of peak fire season. While forest thinning is part of the answer to cultivating healthier, more fire-resistant forests, it has its drawbacks.

"Industrial logging is often the wolf inside the sheep's clothing," says Kaufmann. "It can perpetrate conditions that exacerbate megafires by making slash piles that increase the surface area of fuels and by cutting roads through forested communities that become wind tunnels. The fundamental axiom is that logging removes big trees, while fire removes small trees."

Prescribed burning is an effective method for reducing ground fuels but it is a method that is difficult to implement.

"Over the past 20 years CAL FIRE has had goals to burn up to half a million acres, but it's never topped more than 50,000," says Kaufmann.

This is largely because of the small, unpredictable weather windows available for prescribed burning. Additionally, municipal and countywide air districts have the ability to cancel these actions at any time out of concern for air quality.

"Our foresters may go through the planning process, get approval and then on the day of the scheduled burn the air quality isn't right and they're not allowed to burn," says Eldridge. "Now, that project is over. You have to bring all the information forward and try to find a new date the local air district would support and try again. They could put the legwork in for years and still not be able to put fire on the ground."

In and around Lake Tahoe Basin, Tahoe Fire and Fuels Team is a partnership of more than 20 conservation, land management and fire agencies that collaborate to develop an Incident Action Plan each year. This year's plan is focused on four priorities: fuel reduction along with evacuation routes, fuel reduction around critical infrastructure, fuel breaks around the communities and fuel breaks along key ridges in the basin.

While more specific projects are being planned, Lake Valley Fire District plans to clear 61 acres around South Tahoe High School this summer.

"Evacuation is a top priority," says Martin Goldberg, Battalion Chief at Lake Valley Fire District in South Lake Tahoe. "We are looking to do fuel reduction along those routes, widen them along the roadside so there's less of an impact to those that are evacuating. This means that you could survive a fire from inside your vehicle, if there was a potential to be trapped. We need to do what we can to keep roads open and improve the routes we have. But there are so many unknowns. These events can happen very quickly and change over time. There's not one size fits at all strategy. You can't just designate one way out and one way in. It's too dynamic of a situation."

Firefighters tend burn piles on the North Fork American River Shaded Fuel Brake. | CAL FIRE/Placer Co. Fire Dept.

## ARE YOU A ZONE ZERO HERO?

This year, the Tahoe Fire and Fuels Team is hoping to spread the word about a key lesson reemphasized by the Los Angeles fires earlier this year. It's all about Zone Zero, also known as the ember resistant zone.

"There should be nothing combustible within zero to 5feet of the house," says Goldberg. "This includes fencing, trash

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GROCERY OUTLET bargain market Truckee & Incline Village

and recycling, firewood, scrap wood, pine needles, wood chips, lawn chairs, what's on your deck. Anything that catches an ember must be removed."

Whether or not you have to remove trees and bushes depends on what it is in that zone.

"Manzanita or juniper has to go because they are very flammable," says Goldberg.

The area 5 to 30 feet out from the house is called the Lean, Clean and Green Zone. The idea there is to maintain spacing between shrubs and trees, and remove dead vegetation, debris and other ladder fuels that can increase the probability of fire moving toward the house.

One of the most common misconceptions about defensible space is that it's trees that catch houses on fire.

"That's fairly rare," says Goldberg. "That would mean ignition from a direct flame. Embers don't catch trees, trees catch other trees. But embers find places where it's most likely to burn. More often than not, it's the embers that hit the side of the structure, fall against the base of the structure and ignite something else nearby the house. It's not your trees. Keep your trees. It's your house."

This gets to the idea of home hardening: the process of taking measures to reduce a home's vulnerability to wildfires by using fire-resistant materials and measures to prevent embers from entering the home. Siding that is dilapidated for falling apart can be the perfect entryway for embers. It is recommended to rescreen vents with wire mesh with 1/16 to 1/8 of an inch gaps.

The five fire districts surrounding Lake Tahoe all offer free home inspections to inform residents what actions are required and/or recommended to protect their homes.

"We are reaching out to the community," says Goldberg. "But we've never given tickets or done enforcement. The approach we are going for is voluntary compliance."

Firefighters perform fuel reduction work on the North Fork American River Shaded Fuel Brake. | CAL FIRE/Placer Co. Fire Dept.

## A FORCE IN FLUX

While state, county and municipal fire districts trained and prepared this spring, federal firefighters were left largely in confusion and disarray due to staffing and funding changes. With many employees afraid to speak out for fear of losing their jobs and benefits, reliable information was hard to come by.

Soon after the Trump administration took office, public information outlets at the Department of Agriculture (USDA) went dark. Of the eight National Forests contacted by Tahoe Guide for this story, only one responded: Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit (LTBMU).

"We are no longer authorized to speak on behalf of our forests, " said LTBMU spokesperson Lisa Herron. "It's a difficult situation."

Tahoe Guide's media request was instead referred to the USDA national press team who responded on March 11 with the same form letter many media outlets received earlier this year.

"Secretary [of Agriculture Brooke] Rollins fully supports the President's directive to improve government, eliminate inefficiencies and strengthen USDA's many services to the American people," reads the statement. "We have a solemn responsibility to be good stewards of the American people's hard-earned taxpayer dollars and to ensure that every dollar spent goes to serve the people, not the bureaucracy."

According to the USDA statement, none of the terminations were of operational firefighters. However, many did comprise the extensive support staff that outnumbers firefighters nearly two to one and helps to make complex wildfire operations possible.

"Our concern lies in the reduction of overhead staff," says Goldberg. "Those are the personnel who staff big incidents and operations from different branches and divisions. When we come off the line, we need meals. We need equipment, repairs, sleeping arrangements, everything down the line. It's all run by overhead staff. That's an impact."

With 46 percent of the land area in California managed by federal agencies, such as the Bureau of Land Management, the Fish and Wildlife Service, the National Park Service and the Forest Service, many environmentalists and government employees have been apprehensive.

"We're strapped to the ups and downs, the ins and outs of this non-policy," says Kaufmann. "Those of us who care about such things are really concerned about our preparedness on an institutional level for fire to come. Regardless of the ecological reality, the political reality is something else this year, something totally unique."

Meanwhile, CAL FIRE continues its critical work with the five fire districts surrounding Lake Tahoe and the assortment of state, tribal and federal entities that manage risks throughout the Sierra Nevada.

"There is no way that is having an effect on us," said Eldridge of federal funding fights. "The fire doesn't care about your federal, state or local line. It's gonna burn. Our priority is the public that we serve and not a boundary. Funding always ebbs and flows. There are budget shortfalls and budget windfalls, but we can't really work as the wind blows. We have to have a plan in place and we have to be able to respond. We're going to do the work that needs to get done and the rest will settle itself out." ■

Tahoe Water
FOR FIRE SUPPRESSION PARTNERSHIP

*Investing in critical water infrastructure to create wildfire-resilient communities.*

*Learn more at - TahoeWaterforFire.org*

north tahoe PUBLIC UTILITY DISTRICT
SOUTH TAHOE PUBLIC UTILITY DISTRICT
Tahoe City Public Utility District
INCLINE VILLAGE GENERAL IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT ONE DISTRICT – ONE TEAM

# Wildfire resources

**9-1-1** EMERGENCY

**2-1-1** LIVE OPERATOR ASSISTANCE

## Resources

Cal Fire | readyforwildfire.org
California Office of Emergency Services | CalOES.ca.gov
Chipping programs | Contact local fire district
Create a disaster kit | redcross.org
Create a home wildfire checklist | readyforwildfire.org
Current fire danger & restrictions | tahoelivingwithfire.com
Forest Service, Lake Tahoe Basin | (530) 543-2600, fs.usda.gov/ltbmu
Forest Service, Tahoe (Truckee region) | (530) 587-3558, fs.usda.gov/tahoe
Nevada Division of Emergency Management | dem.nv.gov
Nevada Division of Forestry | (775) 684-2500, forestry.nv.gov
Nevada Fire Info | nevadafireinfo.org
Placer County Fire Safe Alliance | placer.ca.gov
Prepare for a disaster | tahoelivingwithfire.com/get-prepared
Truckee Travel Alert | visittruckeetahoe.com
Wildfire camera network | alertwildfire.org
Wildfire Evacuation Checklist | livingwithfire.com

## Weather Conditions

US National Weather Service, Reno | weather.gov/rev

## Road Conditions

California | quickmap.dot.ca.gov, (800) 427-7623 or 5-1-1 (while in Calif.)
Nevada | nvroads.com, (877) 687-6237 or 5-1-1 (while in Nevada)

## Hospitals

Barton Health, South Shore | (530) 541-3420, bartonhealth.org
Incline Village Community Hospital | (775) 833-4100, tfhd.com/ivch
Truckee Forest Hospital District (Truckee, North & West Shores)
(530) 587-6011, tfhd.com

## Radio Stations

530 AM/1610 AM/1670 AM | Caltrans road conditions
590 AM | South Shore
93.9 FM/1490 AM | South Shore
102.9 FM | South Shore
101.5 FM | Truckee/North Tahoe

## Sign Up for Emergency Alerts

Tahoe region | tahoealerts.com
California (list of all counties) | calalerts.org
Alpine County (Kirkwood & Markleeville)| alpinecountyca.gov
City of South Lake Tahoe | cityofslt.us
Douglas County | douglascountynv.gov
El Dorado County | ready.edso.org
National alerts on FEMA app | fema.gov
Nevada County | mynevadacounty.com
Northstar | northstarcsd.org
Olympic Valley | ovpsd.org/ovfd
Placer County | placer.ca.gov
Town of Truckee | truckeepolice.com or truckeefire.org
Washoe County | washoecounty.gov

## Track Active Fires

California Fire Map | fire.ca.gov/incidents
National Fire Maps | inciweb.nwcg.gov, fire.airnow.gov
Nevada Fire Map | bit.ly/nv_fire
Tahoe Basin Prescribed Fire Map | bit.ly/tahoe_prescribed_fire
Watch Duty App | watchduty.org

## Electric & Gas Companies

Kirkwood Meadow Public Utility District | (209) 258-4444, kmpud.com
Liberty Energy | (800) 245-6868, california.libertyutilities.com
NV Energy | (775) 834-4100, nvenergy.com
PG&E | (800) 743-5002, pgealerts.alerts.pge.com
Truckee Donner Public Utility District | (530) 587-3896, tdpud.org
Southwest Gas | (877) 860-6020

## House Numbers

Ensure street numbers are at least 4 inches high, reflective and on a contrasting background.

Adobe Stock

## Evacuation Routes & Emergency Guides

Alpine County | alpinecountyca.gov
City of South Lake Tahoe, Meyers, Christmas Valley & Twin Bridges | cityofslt.us
Fallen Leaf Lake | fllcsd.org
Incline Village & Crystal Bay | nltfpd.org
North Lake Tahoe & West Shore | bit.ly/3CRDgtG
Olympic Valley | ovpsd.org
Tahoe Donner | tahoedonner.com
Truckee | truckeefire.org

Hard copies available at local fire districts.

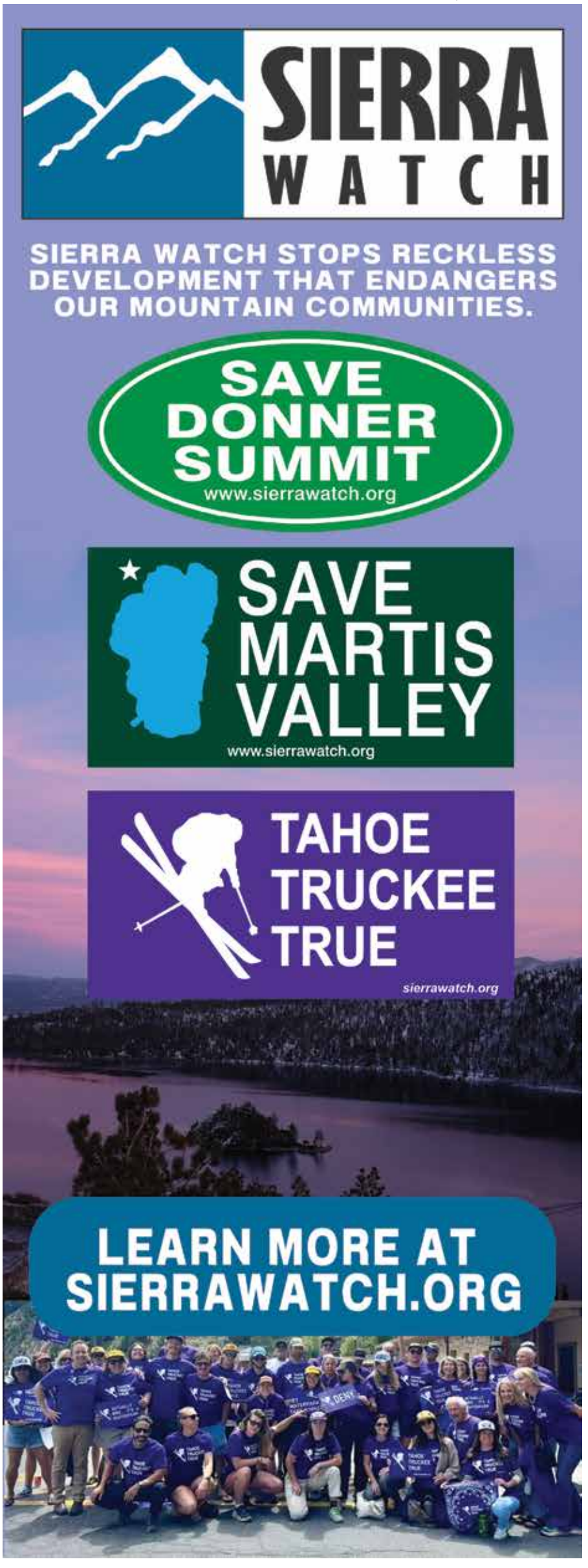
## Fire Districts

See maps page 28 in this guide.

Alpine County (Markleeville) | alpinecountyca.gov
East Shore & Stateline, Tahoe Douglas Fire | (775) 588-3591, tahoefire.org
Fallen Leaf Fire | (530) 544-3300, fllcsd.org
Incline Village & Crystal Bay, North Lake Tahoe Fire | (775) 831-0351, nltfpd.org
Kirkwood Fire Department | (209) 258-4444, kmpud.com
Meyers to Twin Bridges, Lake Valley Fire District
(530) 577-3737, lakevalleyfire.org
North Shore & West Shore (including Meeks Bay District), North Tahoe Fire
(530) 584-2322, ntfire.net
Northstar Fire | (530) 562-1212, northstarcsd.org
Olympic Valley Fire | (530) 583-4692, ovpsd.org
South Lake Tahoe Fire Rescue | (530) 542-6160, cityofslt.us
Truckee, Tahoe Donner, Donner Summit & Glenshire, Truckee Fire
(530) 582-7850, truckeefire.org
West Shore (El Dorado County), Meeks Bay Fire
(530) 525-7548, meeksbayfire.com

## Animal Services

Alpine County | (530) 694-2231, alpinecountyca.gov
Douglas County | (775) 782-9061, communityservices.douglascountynv.gov
El Dorado County | (530) 573-7925, edcgov.us
Humane Society of Truckee-Tahoe, South Lake | (530) 542-2857, hstt.org
Humane Society of Truckee-Tahoe, North Tahoe & Truckee | (530) 587-5948, hstt.org
Nevada County | (530) 265-1471, nevadacountyca.gov
Pet Network Humane Society, Incline Village | (775) 832-4404, petnetwork.org
Placer County | (530) 546-1990, placer.ca.gov
SPCA Northern Nevada | (775) 324-7773, spcanevada.org
Washoe County | (775) 353-8900, washoecounty.gov



# Understand fire warnings, Red Flags

Courtesty Fire Adapted Communities

One of the first steps to being prepared for a wildfire is to understand what wildfire warnings and alerts mean.

Sometimes wildfire alert terminology can be confusing. Do you know the difference between a Fire Weather Watch and a Red Flag Warning? What about the difference between an Evacuation Warning and an Evacuation Order? | tahoelivingwithfire.com

## FIRE WEATHER WATCH

The National Weather Service issues a Fire Weather Watch 12 to 72 hours in advance of hazardous weather conditions. It means critical fire weather is possible but not imminent or occurring. The watch remains in effect until it expires, is canceled or upgraded to a Red Flag Warning.

Both Red Flag Warnings and Fire Weather Watches call for extreme caution. Stay up to date with local fire districts' seasonal restrictions and never use fire when and where it's not allowed. Refer to the map in this guide to determine your fire district.

## RED FLAG WARNING

The National Weather Service issues Red Flag Warnings during weather conditions that could lead to extreme fire behavior within the next 24 hours.

Such conditions include high and sustained wind speeds (averaging 15 mph or greater), low relative humidity (25 percent or less) and temperatures greater than 75 degrees.

During these events, extreme caution is advised. All sources of outdoor flames are prohibited during Red Flag days, including propane and charcoal.

## WILDFIRE EVACUATION ALERTS

If a wildfire ignits during a Red Flag Warning or a Fire Weather Watch, you should know the correct evacuation terminology in case the fire is life-threatening.

Issued by local law enforcement, evacuation orders and evacuation warnings both suggest a threat to life and property, although they are slightly different.

**Evacuation Warning |** An evacuation warning suggests a potential threat to life. Evacuation isn't mandatory at this point, although it is advised and preparation is necessary.

Those who require additional time to evacuate (such as the elderly, disabled and large families with pets and livestock) should leave during a warning. In many instances, evacuation warnings quickly become evacuation orders.

**Evacuation Order |** An evacuation order is mandatory. It suggests there is an immediate threat to life and it is a lawful order to leave. When this type of order is issued, everyone in the given evacuation zone must exit as the zone will be legally closed to the public until further notice.

Never ignore an evacuation order. Doing so puts not only your life at risk, but also the lives of law enforcement and fire personnel. ■

Courtesy Tahoe Network of Fire Adapted Communities

### TahoeLivingWithFire.com

- Check current fire conditions & Red Flag warnings
- Find fire districts around Lake Tahoe
- Find tips for being prepared
- Sign up for emergency alerts

# 2-1-1 Live help for disaster preparedness

In Nevada and Placer counties and in the North Tahoe/Truckee, 211 Connecting Point operators provide community information to callers about wildfire preparedness, power outages including planned outages, winter weather resources, disaster readiness, smoking cessation and resources for housing, Medical and other programs.

Agents are available 24/7, 365 days a year. Para obtener ayuda en español, llame al 2-1-1. From outside the region, call (833) 342-5211. Online chat is also available through the website Monday to Friday from 7 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.

Call agents can help people register for emergency alert messages, identify Evacuation Zones, review your Go Bag and identify extra resources you may need including transportation, medication, medical needs, livestock transport and more. | 211connectingpoint.org

## CALIFORNIA 2-1-1

2-1-1 operates in most counties in California, as well, offering information on a variety of resources including health care, mental health, transportation and services for veterans, seniors and youth. | 211ca.org

## NEVADA 2-1-1

In the state of Nevada, call specialists are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week with translation services in more than 150 languages for free. Calls are confidential with services available for: medical and mental health resources; programs for children, youth and families; food pantries; community crisis and disaster recovery; support for seniors and persons with disabilities and more. Online chat is available through the website or download the free Nevada 211 app. There is also a free Nevada 211 Youth app for ages 12 to 22. | nevada211.org ■

Courtesy Connecting Point

### Nevada & Placer Counties

Call 2-1-1
Outside region call (833) 342-5211
Text ZIP code to 898211
TTY (844) 521-6697

### State of California

Call 2-1-1

### State of Nevada

Call 2-1-1
(866) 535-565
Text ZIP code to 898211

Courtesy Connecting Point

# Power shutoffs for wildfire prevention

Adobe Stock

Utility companies may temporarily turn off power to specific areas to reduce the risk of fires caused by electric infrastructure during weather events, particularly when there is a high risk for wildfires. This action is called a Public Safety Power Shutoff or Public Safety Outage Management.

High winds can break branches or blow other items into power lines, or damage electrical lines directly, possibly starting a wildfire. Under certain conditions utility companies may temporarily shut off power to customers to help prevent wildfires. A number of factors are considered before declaring a shutoff, including:

- High winds and strong gusts
- Dry vegetation that could serve as fuel for a wildfire
- Low humidity
- Real-time observations by a weather sensor network
- Fire threat to electric infrastructure
- Red flag warnings declared by the National Weather Service

## WHO IS AFFECTED?

All customers served by the utility company are affected and everyone should be prepared for the possibility of a shutoff.

**Medical devices |** If you need backup power sources during an outage, contact your utility company and sign up for assistance in advance of an outage. Find a list of local utility companies in this guide. Call and tell them you have a medically fragile household.

**Wells & septic systems |** When power goes out, so do well pumps and septic systems that have a pump. People with wells should have plenty of water on hand for drinking, flushing toilets, etc.

## PREPARING FOR A SHUTOFF

- Confirm your contact information to receive outage and emergency updates.
- Plan for medical needs that may be impacted by a loss of power. If you depend on medications that need refrigeration or medical devices that require power, call your utility company for assistance.
- Create an emergency kit composed of items such as flashlights, batteries, first aid supplies, non-perishable food and water.
- Keep your cell phones and other electronic devices fully charged. Consider purchasing a back-up battery device or car charger.
- Keep a full tank of gas and cash on hand for emergency purchases, as gas stations, ATMs and bank services may be impacted during an outage.
- Keep your refrigerator and freezer closed to prevent your food from spoiling.
- Unplug appliances to prevent hazards or damage when service is restored.
- Consider purchasing a generator for your home.
- Know how to manually open a garage door.
- Keep hard copies of important information and phone numbers.

## RESTORING POWER

Once the threat has passed, utility companies will restore power to transmission lines once it's determined safe to turn power on. This may take up to 24 hours to complete. ■

Sources: California Public Utilities Commission, NV Energy and 2-1-1.

### Medical assistance

If you need immediate medical assistance during a planned outage, call 9-1-1 or go to your nearest ER or Urgent Care. Hospitals are open during planned outages.

### Electric & gas companies

Kirkwood Meadow Public Utility District | (209) 258-4444, kmpud.com

Liberty Energy | (800) 245-6868, california.libertyutilities.com

NV Energy | (775) 834-4100, nvenergy.com

PG&E | (800) 743-5002, pgealerts.alerts.pge.com

Truckee Donner Public Utility District (530) 587-3896, tdpud.org

Southwest Gas | (877) 860-6020

## Wildfire preparedness events

### WILDFIRE TALK

Aug. 16 | Donner Memorial State Park, Truckee
A free educational program about managing fire with cultural burning.
5:30 p.m. | sierrastateparks.org/events

### FIND MORE EVENTS

- tahoelivingwithfire.com/get-involved.
- Visit local fire district websites.
- Sign up for local fire district newsletters.

## GREEN WASTE DAYS

**Douglas County**
Douglas Disposal Transfer Station
902 Dump Rd., Gardnerville, NV
Tuesday-Saturday
douglasdisposal.com

**El Dorado, Placer & Truckee residents**
Drop off, Eastern Regional Landfill
waste101.com/green-waste

**Incline Village & Crystal Bay**
Curbside pickup Sept. 30-Nov. 1
wm.com

**Northstar**
Curbside pickup: Aug. 25
northstarcsd.org

**Olympic Valley**
Aug. 10, Sept. 14 & Oct. 12
Across from fire department
ovpsd.org

**South Lake Tahoe**
Residential: Free drop off Mon.-Sat.
Commercial:
Free drop off Sept. 6 & Oct. 11
South Tahoe Refuse,
southtahoerefuse.com

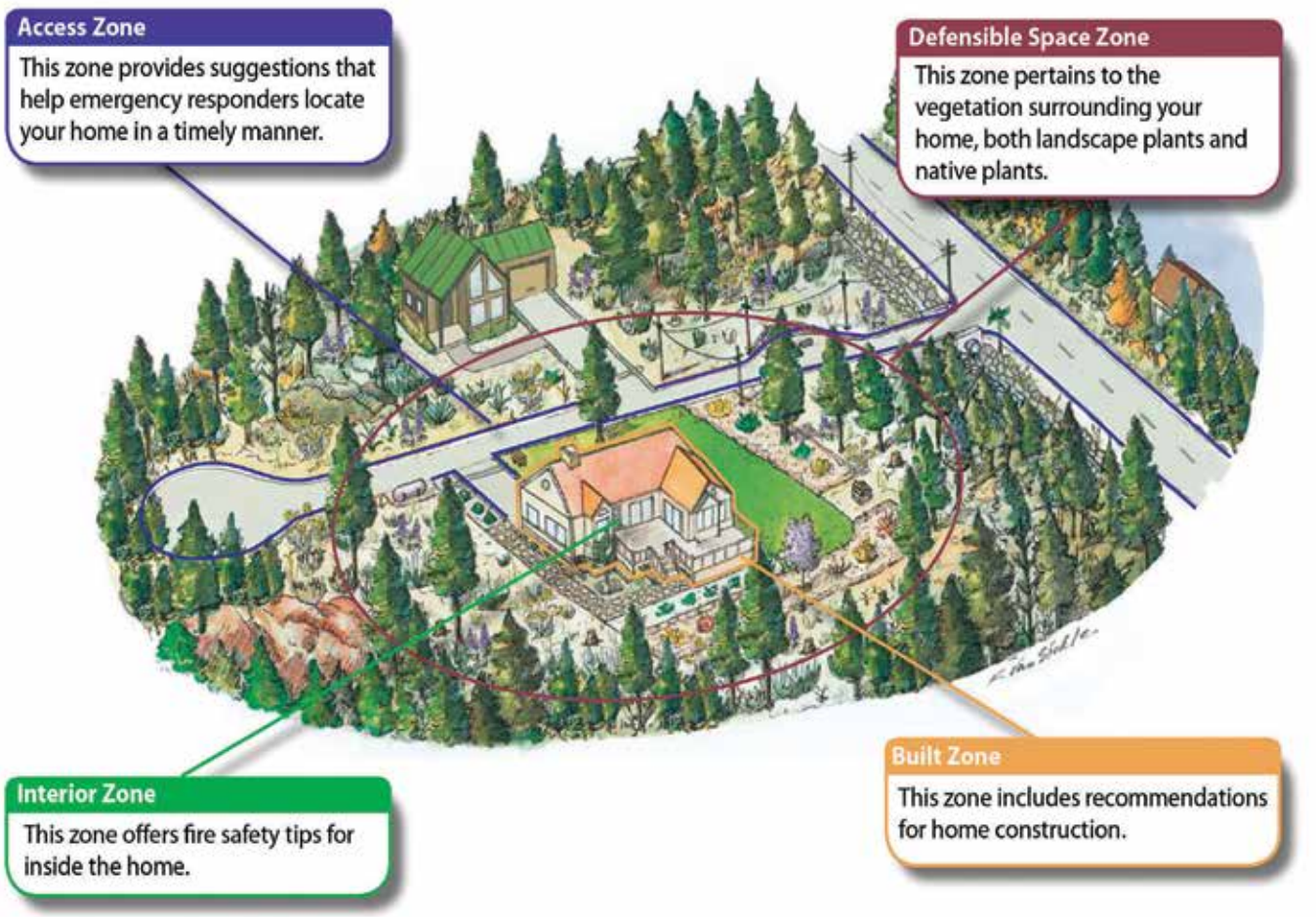
**Truckee**
Free curbside pickup until Oct. 12
truckeefire.org

*TAHOE GUIDE'S WILDFIRE PREPAREDNESS GUIDE* IS GENEROUSLY SPONSORED BY

Liberty™
PET NETWORK LAKE TAHOE
TTSD Tahoe Truckee Sierra Disposal
BOREAL
WOOD WARD®

# Defensible space protects homes

COURTESY TAHOE REGIONAL PLANNING AGENCY




Courtesy UNR Cooperative Extension

If a wildfire breaks out, will firefighters be able to save your home? Having defensible space around your home will mean the difference between whether firefighters can save your home or not.

The term defensible space refers to the area between a house and an oncoming wildfire where the vegetation has been managed to reduce the wildfire threat and allow firefighters to safely defend the house. If firefighters are not available, defensible space also improves the likelihood of a home surviving without assistance.

## DEFENSIBLE SPACE ZONE

The size of the defensible space is usually expressed as a distance extending outward from the house in all directions. The recommended distance is not the same for every home. It varies depending on the vegetation surrounding the home and steepness of slope.

Once the recommended distance for defensible space is known, mark it by tying strips of cloth or flagging to shrubs. This becomes the Defensible Space Zone.

If the Defensible Space Zone exceeds your property boundaries, talk to neighbors about creating defensible space and offer to help with the work. It is important to note that the effectiveness of the Defensible Space Zone improves when entire neighborhoods implement defensible space practices.

Adjoining landowners may be local, state or federal agencies. Contact information for the largest public landowners is provided in the sidebar with this article.

## REMOVE DEAD VEGETATION, DEBRIS

Remove dead and dying vegetation including:

- Dead and dying trees
- Dead native and ornamental shrubs
- Dead branches
- Dried grass, weeds and flowers
- Exposed branches from fallen trees that are embedded into the ground

For fallen pine needles and leaves:

- Within 5 feet of the house, remove routinely throughout fire season.
- From 5 feet to 30 feet of the house, remove every spring.
- More than 30 feet from the house, do not allow fallen needles and leaves to exceed a depth of 3 inches.

## THIN NATIVE VEGETATION

Within the Defensible Space Zone, native trees and shrubs (Jeffrey pine, white fir and manzanita) should not occur in dense stands. Dense stands of trees and shrubs pose a significant wildfire threat.

Within 30 feet of the house, the canopies of individual or small groups of several trees should be separated by 10 feet to 30 feet. Cutting of live trees with trunks greater than 14 inches in diameter requires a permit. Contact local fire professionals or TRPA to have trees evaluated and marked for removal.

## REMOVE LADDER FUEL

Vegetation that can carry a fire from low-growing plants to taller plants is called ladder fuel. In areas where trees have been thinned as noted above, lower tree branches should be removed to a height of at least 10 feet. Shrubs and trees growing under the drip line should also be removed.

Irrigated, well-maintained lawns and flower beds, as well as low-growing ground covers can be present under the tree's drip line if they would not allow a fire to ignite the tree. Removal of tree branches should not exceed one third of the total tree height. Removing more than this can be detrimental to the tree's health. For tips on proper tree pruning, contact a Cooperative Extension office.

## LEAN, CLEAN & GREEN AREA

Create a Lean, Clean and Green Area extending 5 to 30 feet from the house. The first goal is to eliminate easily ignitable fuels, or kindling, near the house. This will help prevent embers from starting a fire in a yard. The second goal is to keep fire intensity low if it does ignite near the house.

- Remove dead and drying vegetation and debris regularly.
- Wood and bark mulches can be used in this area, but not in a widespread manner and areas should be separated by noncombustible materials.
- Native shrubs should be substantially reduced in this area. Individual specimens or small groups can be retained as long as they are kept healthy and vigorous, pruned and would not allow a fire to travel rapidly across the area.
- Use low-growing (less than 18 inches tall), irrigated, herbaceous plants, such as lawn, clover, erosion-control grasses, flowers, some ground covers and succulents that are recommended for the area.
- Ornamental, deciduous trees and shrubs can be used as specimens or in small groups. They should be irrigated, kept healthy and vigorous, free of dead leaves and wood, and arranged so that they could not rapidly transmit fire.
- Ornamental evergreen shrubs and trees such as juniper, mugo pine, Austrian pine and others, should not be used within this area.
- Clear all flammable vegetation from within 10 feet of a propane tank.
- Remove tree limbs that are within 10 feet of a chimney, house, deck and roof. Remove limbs that are encroaching on power lines.

## NONCOMBUSTIBLE AREA

Create a Noncombustible Area at least 5 feet wide around the base of the house. It should consist of noncombustible landscape materials and ignition-resistant, low-volume plants.

## MAINTAIN DEFENSIBLE SPACE ZONE

Maintaining a defensible space is an ongoing activity. Plants grow back and flammable vegetation needs to be routinely removed and disposed of properly.

## RENTER, LANDLORD RESPONSIBILITIES

Renters should review their lease with the landlord and establish a plan for defensible space and clearly understand who is responsible for landscaping maintenance of things such as removing pine needles, trimming shrubs and other maintenance needs. Download the Long-Term Renters guide at tahoelivingwithfire.com.■

CalFire

## Defensible space resources

California Cooperative Extension offices | ucanr.edu

Contractor list for landscaping & defensible space, TRPA bit.ly/trpa_contractors

Firesafe Landscaping in Tahoe | naes.agnt.unr.edu

Landscape mulches | livingwithfire.com

Living with Fire homeowner's guide | trpa.gov

Long-term renters' guide | tahoelivingwithfire.com

Nevada Cooperative Extension offices | extension.unr.edu

Placer County defensible space funding | placer.ca.gov

Tree removal, TRPA | (775) 589-5294, trpa.gov

Tree removal, local fire districts | Refer to list below

### Chipping & defensible space inspections

(through local fire departments) Refer to maps on Page 28

East Shore & Stateline, Tahoe Douglas Fire | (775) 588-3591, tahoefire.org

Fallen Leaf Fire | (530) 544-3300, fllcsd.org

Incline Village & Crystal Bay, North Lake Tahoe Fire | (775) 831-0351, nltfpd.org

Meyers to Twin Bridges, Lake Valley Fire | (530) 577-2447, lakevalleyfire.org

North & West Shores (including Meeks Bay District), North Tahoe Fire | (530) 584-2322, ntfire.net

Northstar Fire | (530) 562-1212, northstarcsd.org

Olympic Valley Fire | (530) 583-4692, ovpsd.org

South Lake Tahoe Fire | (530) 542-6037, cityofslt.us

Truckee Fire | truckeefire.org/dspace

### Defensible space on public lands

When the area needed to create an effective defensible space exceeds your property boundaries, you'll need to contact the adjacent property owner to discuss opportunities to work cooperatively. In the Lake Tahoe Basin, your neighbor could be a government agency.

Below is a list of some of the largest government landholders in the region; some properties may be owned by local utility districts, as well. Contact them if you have concerns about vegetation and defensible space near your home.

California State Parks | (530) 583-2240
California Tahoe Conservancy | (530) 543-6047
Nevada Division of State Lands | (775) 684-2720
Nevada Division of State Parks | (775) 831-0494
USDA Forest Service, Lake Tahoe Basin | (530) 543-2600

# Fire Adapted Communities & Firewise USA

## WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?

COURTESY TAHOE NETWORK OF FIRE ADAPTED COMMUNITIES

Tahoe Network of Fire Adapted Communities helps residents and visitors in the Lake Tahoe Basin prepare for wildfires. Led by Tahoe Resource Conservation District (Tahoe RCD) in coordination with local fire districts, the program builds community connections by assisting neighborhoods in wildfire preparedness efforts. To achieve fire-adapted status, neighborhoods can take various actions such as making evacuation plans, creating personal Go Bags and signing up for emergency alerts. The first step in becoming a fire-adapted community is appointing a neighborhood leader to coordinate with Tahoe RCD staff.

Key activities include hosting community workdays where neighbors come together to create defensible space by clearing flammable debris. The Fire Adapted Communities program offers resources and services to support these efforts, including publications and assistance, free defensible space inspections and chipping services provided by local fire districts. This work is funded by the Southern Nevada Public Land Management Act.

Firewise USA, also facilitated by Tahoe RCD, is a nationally recognized program within the Fire Adapted Communities framework. While the programs complement each other, Firewise USA provides national recognition to communities that complete specific wildfire prevention criteria. Communities can work toward becoming both Fire Adapted and Firewise simultaneously.

The FAC program is a comprehensive local network offering resources and guidance for wildfire preparedness, while Firewise is a national program under this umbrella, providing recognition for communities that meet certain wildfire prevention standards. Many actions, such as neighborhood workdays, contribute to both programs, helping to reduce wildfire risk and strengthen community bonds.

To join or start a Fire Adapted Community or Firewise USA neighborhood, visit Tahoe Living With Fire for more information or contact the Fire Adapted Communities Program at the Tahoe Resource Conservation District at (530) 543-1501 ext. 114 or fire@tahoercd.org. | tahoelivingwithfire.com/get-involved ■

## Campfires Tahoe's biggest threat

### Tips for using, putting out campfires

Abandoned campfires that aren't properly doused are the biggest wildfire threat in the Tahoe Basin and are also one of the most preventable, according to USDA Forest Service. In the Tahoe region, campfires are only allowed in metal fire rings in designated campgrounds (fires using a ring of rocks are not allowed).

Use these tips for safely building and putting out a campfire. Find more tips at fs.usda.gov/visit/know-you-go.

### Before you build a fire

- Check with the local, state or federal agency that manages the campground where you are camping to see if fires are allowed. Restrictions may vary by agency and location and can change daily or hourly depending on conditions.
- Keep open fires and fuel-burning appliances far enough away from the tent to prevent ignition from sparks, flames and heat.
- Never use a flame or any other heating device inside a tent.
- Have a shovel and bucket of water nearby before lighting a fire.
- Keep fires small and bring firewood purchased locally. Firewood brought from another area could bring invasive pests.
- Don't burn dangerous things like aerosol cans, pressurized containers, glass or aluminum cans, which can explode, shatter and/or create harmful fumes or dust.
- Never leave a fire unattended.

### Put out the fire completely

- Allow the wood to burn completely to ash, if possible.
- Put out a campfire by slowly pouring water onto the fire and stirring with a shovel.
- Continue adding and stirring until all materials are cool to the touch.
- If it's too hot to touch, it's too hot to leave.
- Do not bury your fire. The coals can smolder and re-ignite for hours.

# Be Ember Aware

## PROTECT YOUR HOME FROM FIRE DANGER

COURTESY UNR COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

**EMBER AWARE GUIDE**
EXTENSION.UNR.EDU

During a wildfire, thousands of embers can rain down on your home. If these embers become lodged in something easily ignited on or near your house, the home will be in jeopardy of burning.

Common materials that become embers during wildfire include pine cones, branches, tree bark and wooden shingles. Depending on fire intensity, wind speed and the size of materials that are burning, embers can be carried more than a mile ahead of the fire.

By being ember aware and taking action ahead of time, a homeowner can substantially reduce the ember threat. Download the Ember Aware Guide from the University of Nevada Extension. | extension.unr.edu

**1. WOOD ROOF** Replace wood shake and shingle roofs with fire-resistant materials.

**2. ROOF OPENINGS** Plug openings in roof coverings such as the open ends of barrel tiles, with non-combustible materials.

**3. ROOF DEBRIS** Routinely remove plant debris such as pine needles, leaves, branches and bark from the roof.

**4. SKYLIGHTS** Replace plastic skylights with types constructed of double-pane glass. One of the panes should be tempered glass. Close skylights if wildfire is threatening.

**5. SPARK ARRESTER** Install an approved spark arrester on chimneys.

**6. WINDOWS** Replace single-pane, non-tempered glass windows with multiple-pane, tempered-glass types. Close all windows if wildfire is threatening.

**7. VENTS** Cover attic, eave and foundation vents with 1/8-inch wire mesh or install new vent types designed to prevent ember entry. If wildfire is threatening, consider covering vent openings.

**8. RAIN GUTTERS** Keep rain gutters free of debris. Consider using rain gutter covers.

**9. SIDING** Fill gaps in siding and trim materials with caulk and replace siding in poor condition.

**10. WOODPILES** Move firewood stacks and scrap lumber piles at least 30 feet from buildings.

**11. PATIO FURNITURE** Place combustible patio furniture such as lounges, tables and hammocks inside the house or garage if wildfire is threatening.

**12. DECK BOARDS** Replace deck boards that are less than 1-inch thick or that are in poor condition with thicker, good condition boards. Use metal flashing between the deck and the house.

**13. DECK DEBRIS** Remove plant debris from the gaps between deck boards, the gap between the deck and house, any debris on top of the deck.

**14. PORCH & DECK ACCESSORIES** If wildfire is threatening, remove combustible materials from the porch and deck including newspapers, wicker baskets, door mats, pine cones and dried flower arrangements and place BBQ propane tanks indoors.

**15. UNDER THE DECK** Remove plant debris, wood piles and other easily ignited materials from under decks. Consider enclosing the open sides of the deck with siding materials that are properly vented or 1/8-inch wire mesh to reduce maintenance and deter ember entry. Do not use wooden lattice.

**16. FLOWER BOXES** Remove wooden flower boxes from beneath windows if wildfire is threatening.

**17. EAVES** Cover open eaves with sheathing such as plywood or fiber-cement board. Use tongue-and-groove joints or other intricate joint types and don't use butt joints.

**18. FLOWERBEDS** Replace wood mulches with noncombustible types and remove plant debris, including dried grass and flowers, dead leaves and dead branches from flowerbeds. Replace ornamental junipers with low-growing deciduous shrubs or flowers.

**19. VEHICLES** Close vehicle windows. Back into the garage and close the garage door or park away from the house.

**20. GARAGE DOOR** Adjust garage doors to achieve as tight a fit as possible with the door frame. Consider using trim around the opening to reduce gaps.

**21. GARBAGE CANS AND RECYCLING BINS** Use garbage cans covered with tight-fitting lids near the house or other buildings. Move newspaper recycling bins indoors.

**22. WOODEN FENCES** Maintain wooden fences in good condition and create a noncombustible fence section or gate next to the house for at least 5 feet.

Courtesy TRCD

## Wildfire Home Retrofit Guide

The Wildfire Home Retrofit Guide is available for free download, with recommendations to retrofit homes. During a wildfire, 60 to 90 percent of home loss is due to embers. Depending on a fire's intensity and wind speed, embers can travel more than a mile ahead of a flame front. Thus, even a home blocks away from a fire can be at risk of ignition.

The Wildfire Home Retrofit Guide recommends a coupled approach that considers both the vegetation surrounding a home and the home's construction materials. It includes recommendations for ember-vulnerable components of a home including roofs, rain gutters, eaves, vents, siding, skylights, windows, decks, chimneys and fences. These recommendations range from routine maintenance (removing pine needles from roofs and gutters), to DIY projects (installing 1/8th-inch metal mesh screening to vents), to full retrofits (replacing a wood-shake roof). | tahoelivingwithfire.com

## Residential burn permits required

Burning vegetation when clearing a property is often not allowed in the Tahoe Sierra due to the high threat of wildfires and requires a Burn Permit.

### VERIFY

All homeowners must verify that burning is allowed in their county and that it is a permissive burn day, before igniting a burn. Start by visiting burnpermit.fire.ca.gov/current-burn-status. Next, visit burnpermit.fire.ca.gov and enter your address to see if you can obtain a permit through CalFire or if you need to contact your local fire department. It may take a week or longer to obtain a permit, so plan in advance.

### ALTERNATIVES

Using alternative methods is preferable to burning, which impacts air quality. | burnpermit.fire.ca.gov

# Home hardening

## TIPS FOR PROTECTING YOUR HOME FROM WILDFIRE DANGER

COURTESY CALFIRE

Adobe Stock

Preparing or hardening your home for wildfire involves understanding the risks and taking proactive steps. Your home can be threatened by:

- Direct flames. Typically coming from a wildfire or a neighboring house
- Radiant heat. Typically coming from nearby burning objects
- Flying embers. Embers can be particularly destructive – capable of igniting homes up to a mile away.

Increase your home's chances of survival when wildfire strikes by taking steps to harden your home. This includes retrofitting your home for wildfire-resistance. Download the Wildfire Home Retro Fit Guide for information on home improvements you can make to increase your wildfire resistance.

These improvements include roofs and vents, gutters, eaves, decks, windows, fencing and siding, garage and outbuildings.

As well, homeowners should make sure defensible space is in place, including using fire-resistant landscaping materials.

These same threats exist for businesses and business owners should also prepare properties for wildfire safety.

### RETRO FITS

Home hardening for wildfire protection can be a costly and labor-intensive process. Consider these retro fit suggestions from CalFire from low-cost tips and steps to take, to things to keep in mind during necessary home upgrades.

- Regularly clean roof, gutters, decks and the base of walls to avoid the accumulation of fallen leaves, needles and other flammable materials.
- Ensure that all combustible materials are removed from underneath, on top of or within 5 feet of a deck.
- Remove vegetation or other combustible materials that are within 5 feet of windows and glass doors.
- Replace wood mulch products within 5 feet of all structures with noncombustible products such as dirt, stone or gravel.
- Remove all dead or dying grass, plants, shrubs, trees, branches, leaves, weeds and pine needles within 30 feet of all structures or to the property line.
- Ensure exposed firewood is stored at least 30 feet away from structures or completely covered in a fire-resistant material that will not allow embers to penetrate. Additionally, make sure you have 10 feet of clearance around your wood piles.
- Be sure to store combustible outdoor furnishings away from your home when not in use.
- Remember to properly store retractable awnings and umbrellas when not in use so they do not collect leaves and embers.
- When it is time to replace your roof, replace it with a Class A fire rated roof or other Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) approved product.
- Block any spaces between your roof covering and sheathing with noncombustible materials (bird stops).
- Install a noncombustible gutter cover on gutters to prevent the accumulation of leaves and debris.
- Cover chimney and stovepipe outlets with a noncombustible, corrosion-resistant metal mesh screen (spark arrestor), with 3/8-inch to 1/2-inch openings.
- Install ember and flame-resistant vents. Consult local building officials and hire a licensed contractor for this project as these modifications may reduce airflow.
- Caulk and plug gaps greater than 1/8 inch around exposed rafters and blocking to prevent ember intrusion into the attic or other enclosed spaces.
- Inspect exterior siding for dry rot, gaps, cracks and warping. Caulk or plug gaps greater than 1/8 inch in siding and replace any damaged boards, including those with dry rot.
- Install weather stripping to gaps greater than 1/8 inch between garage doors and door frames to prevent ember intrusion. The weather stripping must be compliant with UL Standard 10C.
- When it's time to replace windows, replace them with multi-paned windows that have at least one pane of tempered glass.
- When it's time to replace your siding or deck, use compliant noncombustible, ignition-resistant or other WUI products.
- Cover openings to operable skylights with noncombustible metal mesh screen with openings in the screen not to exceed 1/8 inch.
- Install a minimum 6-inch metal flashing, applied vertically on the exterior of the wall at the deck-to-wall intersection to protect the combustible siding material. ■

## Home Hardening Resources

**Business preparation**
ibhs.org/wildfirereadybusiness

**Home Hardening Self-Assessment**
bit.ly/wildfire_survey

**Spark arrestors**
bit.ly/spark_arrester

**University of California resources**
ucanr.edu/sites/fire

**Wildfire Home Retro Guide**
bit.ly/fire_retrofit

**Wildland Urban Interface Approved products**
bit.ly/wildland_products

# Prepare your family for a wildfire

COURTESY TAHOE FIRE & FUELS TEAM & CAL FIRE

Adobe Stock

Residents and visitors need to be prepared to evacuate in the event of an emergency. Take the time to prepare a wildfire action plan and use this checklist to prepare your family and home.

## WILDFIRE ACTION PLAN

- Meet with household members. Explain dangers to children & work as a team to prepare.
- Discuss what to do about power outages & personal injuries.
- Post emergency phone numbers near phones (cell service may be down in an emergency)
- Know how to turn off the water, gas & electricity.
- Select a safe meeting point in case you are separated.
- Complete a family communications plan that includes contact information for family members, work & school (provided in this guide).
- Teach children how to make phone calls.
- Have kids memorize their parents' full names, street addresses and phone numbers.
- Complete an inventory of home contents & photograph/video the house & landscape. Place files in your Go Bag & store a second copy elsewhere.
- Identify escape routes & safe places. Draw an escape plan highlighting two routes out of each room. Be sure everyone in your family knows them. Practice the plan with your kids.
- Prepare an EVACUATED sign (provided in this guide). Select a site to post signs where they will be clearly visible from the street. Place the sign in a plastic sheet to protect against the elements.
- Prepare to address the special needs of vulnerable populations, including the elderly & people with medical issues or disabilities.
- If the family member is dependent upon medications, equipment or has special dietary needs, plan to bring those items with you. Documentation about insurance & medical conditions should also accompany the person.
- Plan transportation in advance for anyone with special needs.
- Make sure dogs & cats wear properly fitted collars with identification, vaccination, microchip & license tags.
- Exchange veterinary information with neighbors & file a permission slip with the veterinarian authorizing emergency care for your animals.
- Make sure all vehicles, trailers & pet carriers needed for evacuation are serviced & ready to be used. Label carriers and trailers with your contact information, your vet's information and any health information including medications.
- Have photos of each family member and each pet in case you become separated.
- Assemble a Go Bag for each family member and each pet.
- Keep fire extinguishers in your home and train your family on their use. Regularly inspect them for proper functionality and expiration dates.

## Follow the Six Ps for immediate evacuations

1. People & pets
2. Papers, phone numbers & important documents
3. Prescriptions, vitamins & eyeglasses
4. Pictures & irreplaceable memorabilia
5. Personal computer hard drive & disks
6. Plastic (credit cards, ATM cards) & cash

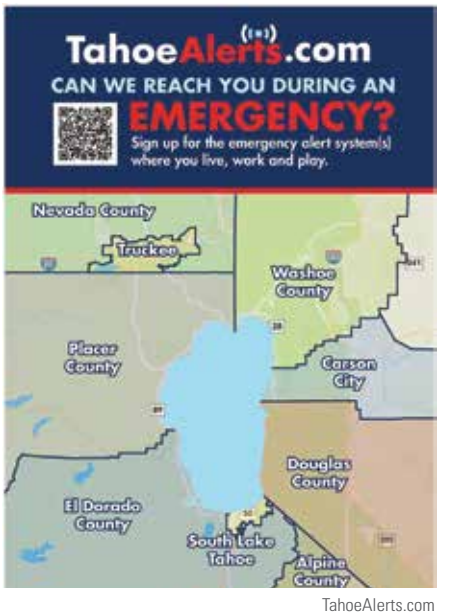
## TahoeAlerts.com Easily sign up for alerts

Visit TahoeAlerts.com to sign up for emergency alerts.

Anyone who lives, works or recreates in the Tahoe Basin and surrounding communities can use the system, which includes Placer, Nevada, Washoe, El Dorado, Douglas and Alpine counties, along with the Town of Truckee, City of South Lake Tahoe and Carson City.

### SIGN UP

- Visit TahoeAlerts.com.
- Click the search box & type in an address.
- Click "Use current location."
- Click within the map.
- Follow links to sign up for alerts.




TahoeAlerts.com

# FAMILY COMMUNICATION PLAN

Fill out this form, take a picture of it with your phone and place it where it can easily be found by everyone in your household. Copy the form and keep it in your emergency supply kits. This will allow all family members to have access to this key information in case you get separated. Learn more at ready.gov/prepare

## WHEN WE HAVE TO EVACUATE, WE WILL MEET AT:

_____

_____

## OUR LOCAL EMERGENCY CONTACT PERSON IS:

Name:_____
Address:_____
Phone:_____
Email:_____
Social Media:_____

## OUR OUT-OF-AREA EMERGENCY CONTACT PERSON IS:

Name:_____
Relationship:_____
Phone:_____
Email:_____

## OTHER IMPORTANT CONTACTS/PHONE NUMBERS:

Emergency 9-1-1
Local Fire Department:_____
Local Police:_____
Poison Control:_____
Hospital/Clinic:_____
Doctor:_____
Pediatrician:_____
Dentist:_____
Pharmacy:_____
Medical Insurance:_____
Other:_____
Homeowners Insurance:_____
Auto Insurance:_____
Other:_____
Veterinarian:_____
Kennel:_____
Electric Company:_____
Gas Company:_____
Water Company:_____
Alternate Transportation:_____
Other:_____
Other:_____

## OUR 2 EVACUATION ROUTES ARE:

_____

_____

_____

## OTHER EMERGENCY MEETING PLACES

Indoor:_____
Instructions:_____

Neighborhood:_____
Instructions:_____

Out-of-Neighborhood:_____
Address:_____
Instructions:_____

Out-of-Town:_____
Address:_____
Instructions:_____

## HOUSEHOLD INFORMATION

Home Address:_____
Number of people in household:_____

Family Member Name:_____
Phone:_____
Email:_____
Social Media:_____
Medical Information:_____

Family Member Name:_____
Phone:_____
Email:_____
Social Media:_____
Medical Information:_____

Family Member Name:_____
Phone:_____
Email:_____
Social Media:_____
Medical Information:_____

Family Member Name:_____
Phone:_____
Email:_____
Social Media:_____
Medical Information:_____

## SCHOOL/CHILDCARE/CAREGIVER & WORKPLACE EMERGENCY PLANS

Name:_____
For Household member:_____
Address:_____
Website:_____
Phone:_____
Email:_____
Emergency Plan/Pick-Up:_____

Name:_____
For Household member:_____
Address:_____
Website:_____
Phone:_____
Email:_____
Emergency Plan/Pick-Up:_____

Name:_____
For Household member:_____
Address:_____
Website:_____
Phone:_____
Email:_____
Emergency Plan/Pick-Up:_____

Name:_____
For Household member:_____
Address:_____
Website:_____
Phone:_____
Email:_____
Emergency Plan/Pick-Up:_____

Abigail Gallup | ©Tahoe Guide

# PREPARE A WILDFIRE GO BAG

**GO BAG**
Contains a 3-day supply of food, clothing and medications for each family member & pet.

Adobe Stock

If you were told to get ready for an evacuation or to evacuate immediately, do you have a Go Bag of essential items ready? If not, there's no better time than right now to put it together.

A Go Bag should be prepared before an emergency, be easily accessible and filled with at least a three-day supply of items needed to help you quickly and safely evacuate your home.

You should have a Go Bag for each member of your family and each of your pets.

## ESSENTIALS:

- Clothing & personal toiletries
- Face masks or coverings
- Inventory of home contents & photographs/videotape of the house & landscape
- An inventory checklist for insurance claims
- Flashlight, portable radio tuned to an emergency radio station & extra batteries changed annually
- Extra set of car & house keys
- Contact information for family, friends & physicians
- Cash & extra credit cards
- Medications & prescription glasses
- Water & non-perishable food
- First-Aid kit
- Pack a Pet Go Bag for each pet (see below)
- Important records – passports, birth certificates, titles, medical records, etc.
- Electronic chargers
- Paper map marked with Evacuation Routes (especially if are visiting or don't live here full time)
- Multitool

## OTHER ITEMS TO PACK:

- Hand sanitizer/wipes
- Books & magazines
- Games, cards & toys
- Trash bags
- Rain poncho
- Blankets
- Laundry detergent
- Rubber gloves
- Sleeping bag & tent
- Family heirlooms & photos
- Computers & hard drives

## PREPARE A PET GO BAG

- Several days of food, water & prescriptions for each pet
- Copy of vaccination records
- Can opener
- Leashes, harnesses & collars
- Up-to-date ID tags
- Crate/carriers (label with pet's name, contact info and vet's info)
- Food & water dishes
- Booties to protect paws
- Toys & blankets
- Litter box, litter & scoop for cats
- Doggie bags
- Treats
- Laminated photo of you and your pet (for proof of ownership if separated)

Always keep a sturdy pair of shoes and a flashlight near your bed and handy in case of a sudden evacuation at night. ■

Courtesy Tahoe Fire & Fuels Team & Cal Fire

# EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS FOR ELDERLY, DISABLED

Adobe Stock

The elderly, those with cognitive and physical disabilities, sensory impairments and/or chronic health conditions need more time to evacuate during an emergency. Hearing and vision impairment also increases the risk of harm during an emergency. Taking the time to prepare an evacuation plan and Go Bag is essential during a crisis.

## ASSESS LIMITATIONS, NEEDS

Take note of your physical limitations and medical needs. Can you walk long distances or do you require medical equipment? Do you require daily medication?

Discuss your findings with your health care provider to identify potential solutions and accommodations in advance.

## HEARING & VISUAL IMPAIRMENTS

Evaluate your hearing and vision capabilities. Do you find it hard to hear alarms or have difficulty reading small print? Is your eyeglass prescription up to date? Are your hearing aids in good working order?

If you haven't addressed your hearing or vision loss, seek diagnoses and treatments, such as hearing aids and glasses.

Consider investing in specialized alarms and emergency equipment designed for people with sensory impairments.

## MANAGE STRESS

Stress is an inevitable consequence of emergencies and can aggravate existing health conditions like heart disease and asthma; it can impair cognitive function, affecting decision-making; and it can lead to panic, which can be paralyzing in emergencies.

A well-thought-out emergency plan can reduce the risk of stress-induced errors. Share and practice your plan with your caregivers and support network, which can provide a sense of control and reduce stress levels.

## MEDICAL DEVICES

If you use medical devices that require power to operate, contact your local electric agency to discuss options for alternative power supplies, if available. You can also register to receive notifications of planned power outages in advance.

## TRANSPORTATION

If you rely on others for transportation, ensure you have access to a vehicle that can take you and any necessary equipment (such as a wheelchair, oxygen machine or other assistive device) out of harm's way is essential. | ncoa.org ■

Courtesy National Council on Aging

**Resources for specific health issues**

Cancer | cancer.gov

Diabetes | cdc.gov/diabetes

Dialysis patients | kcercoalition.com

Mental health
samhsa.gov/disaster-preparedness

Respiratory issues | lung.org

Service animals | adata.org

Wheelchair users
unitedspinal.org/ready-to-roll

# WILDFIRE EVACUATION CHECKLIST

## GO BAG ESSENTIALS

- ○ Important documents (bank, IRS, trust, investment, insurance policy, birth certificates, medical records)
- ○ ATM, credit and debit cards and cash in small bills
- ○ Medications, Rx numbers and vaccination records for humans and pets
- ○ Non-perishable food and water for 72 hours
- ○ Driver's license, passport
- ○ Computer backup files & passwords
- ○ Inventory of home contents (consider making a video inventory now, prior to an emergency)
- ○ Photographs of the exterior of the house and landscape
- ○ Address book including medical and veterinarian contact information
- ○ Cell phone charger, car charger and battery packs
- ○ Personal toiletries
- ○ Enough clothing for 3-5 days
- ○ Family heirlooms, photo albums and videos
- ○ Batteries

## PREPARE FAMILY MEMBERS

- ○ If possible, evacuate all family members not essential to preparing the house for wildfire
- ○ Plan several evacuation routes from your home
- ○ Designate a safe meeting place and contact person
- ○ Relay your plans to a contact person
- ○ Designate a "safe area" where people can wait out a wildfire (i.e., ballfields, irrigated pastures or parking lots)
- ○ Register for a local emergency notification system such as "reverse 9-1-1" or "CodeRED"
- ○ Ask your county emergency management for details
- ○ Update personal information and cell phone numbers in databases

## WHAT TO WEAR

- ○ Wear only cotton or wool clothes, including long pants, long-sleeved shirt or jacket, a hat, and boots
- ○ Carry gloves, water to drink, and goggles
- ○ Keep your cell phone, a flashlight, and portable radio with you at all times
- ○ Tune in to a local radio station and listen for instructions
- ○ Have N95 or P100 mask

## PREPARE VEHICLE

- ○ Keep your vehicle's gas tank full
- ○ If you can lift your garage door manually, place vehicle in the garage pointing out with the keys in the ignition and disconnect the electric garage door opener. If not, park in your driveway facing out
- ○ Roll up the car windows
- ○ Close the garage door
- ○ Place essential items in the car
- ○ If you do not drive, make other arrangements for transportation in advance
- ○ Close garage door when you leave

## INSIDE THE HOME

- ○ Close all interior doors
- ○ Leave a light on in each room
- ○ Remove lightweight, non-fire-resistant curtains and other combustible materials from around windows
- ○ Close fire-resistant drapes, shutters, and blinds
- ○ Turn off all pilot lights
- ○ Move overstuffed furniture, such as couches and easy chairs, to the center of the room
- ○ Close fireplace damper
- ○ Close or block off any doggie-doors
- ○ Lock-up firearms or valuables

## OUTSIDE THE HOME

- ○ Place combustible patio furniture and barbecues in the house, garage or away from the home
- ○ Shut off propane at the tank or natural gas at the meter, and clear the area of combustible material
- ○ Close all exterior vents, doors, and windows
- ○ Leave gates unlocked
- ○ Turn on outside lights
- ○ If available and if there's time, cover windows, attic openings, and vents with plywood that is at least one-half inch thick
- ○ Ensure that all garden hoses are connected to faucets and turned off
- ○ Don't leave sprinklers on, or water running; they can affect critical water pressure
- ○ Ensure that house numbers and street signs are visible and reflective if possible

## PREPARE PETS

- ○ Have identification on your animal
- ○ Many animal species can be microchipped (Microchipping is a permanent form of identification for your pet)
- ○ Have veterinary records and medications in one easy-to-find place
- ○ Pro Tip: A gallon bag can keep them dry and catch any pills that may fall out of a container that isn't securely shut
- ○ Transport food, water and bowls in easy-to-carry, sealed containers
- ○ Have a buddy system
- ○ Can your neighbors help if you are not home during an evacuation?
- ○ Do you have a family member or friend that can help house your animals should you need to be evacuated for an extended time? This can be especially helpful for livestock and poultry
- ○ Dogs and small pets should be securely crated with only one animal per carrier
- ○ Normally well-behaved pets can panic and run away during a stressful event; a carrier can keep them safe
- ○ Remove any non-essential items from carriers or cages, as unsecured items can injure a pet during transport

## PREPARE HORSES, LIVESTOCK & OTHER LARGE ANIMALS

- ○ Have a livestock trailer and reliable vehicle for towing the trailer
- ○ Practice loading your livestock into the trailer and towing it before an emergency

Remember, animals are likely to be stressed due to the smell of smoke, the sounds of sirens or the flashing lights of first responder vehicles. Remain calm and do not wait until the last minute to evacuate. Take animals with you; do not leave them unless there is no other choice. If you must leave animals behind, notify your local animal service agency as soon as possible.

## Animal Services / Servicios para animales

Alpine County | (530) 694-2231, alpinecountyca.gov

Douglas County | (775) 782-9061, communityservices.douglascountynv.gov

El Dorado County | (530) 573-7925, edcgov.us

Humane Society of Truckee-Tahoe, South Lake | (530) 542-2857, hstt.org

Humane Society of Truckee-Tahoe, North Tahoe & Truckee | (530) 587-5948, hstt.org

Nevada County | (530) 265-1471, nevadacountyca.gov

Pet Network Humane Society, Incline Village | (775) 832-4404, petnetwork.org

Placer County | (530) 546-1990, placer.ca.gov

SPCA Northern Nevada | (775) 324-7773, spcanevada.org

Washoe County | (775) 353-8900, washoecounty.gov

Abigail Gallup | © Tahoe Guide

# IS YOUR HOME READY FOR DISASTER

Download a Home Inventory Checklist | naic.org

Adobe Stock

Preparing your home for a natural disaster or fire includes checking that insurance coverage is adequate and creating an up-to-date home inventory. Keep a copy of your home inventory in a firebox and with your Go Bag.

## CHECK INSURANCE COVERAGE

Check your policy limits and coverage annually and make sure the policy reflects the correct square footage, features in the home and any recent improvements. Consider purchasing building code upgrade coverage. Keep a list of insurance contacts and policy details in your Go Bag.

**What's covered |** The details matter. Understand if you have a replacement cost policy that pays to replace all your items at current market price or an actual cash value policy that takes depreciation into account and pays less for aged items.

**Home improvements |** If you make home improvements, be sure to update your coverage including for new countertops, floors, etc.

**Maintain insurance |** If your home is paid off, be sure to maintain homeowner's insurance. Without insurance, you likely won't have the funds to rebuild.

**Renters |** Renters can lose everything in a fire and be left to start over, so be sure to have renters insurance for your belongings. Many insurers bundle coverage with an auto insurance policy at affordable prices.

Additionally, if you are under a mandatory evacuation, insurance may cover additional living expenses. Make sure to save all hotel and meal receipts for a refund. Read your policy carefully to understand what it covers.

## PREPARE A HOME INVENTORY

Filing insurance claims will be easier if you have an accurate home inventory by documenting the contents of your home. Use a smartphone to make a video of your belongings, including vehicles and equipment. Keep the inventory and photos outside the home or stored in the cloud.

**Make an inventory |** Video or photograph each room of the home. Remember to document drawers and closets. Don't forget the garage and sheds. Download the Home Inventory app from the National Association of Insurance Commissioners or use the Household Inventory List developed by University of Nevada Cooperative Extension (available for download at YourTahoeGuide/fire).

**Document value |** Keep a record of prices of items and where and when you purchased them. Make note of important or expensive items like electronics, appliances, sports equipment, TVs, computers, jewelry, etc.

**Save receipts |** Save receipts for all major purchases and store them in the cloud or a fireproof case. | ready.gov/plan, readyforwildfire.org ■

Courtesy Cal Fire & FEMA

# CREATE A DISASTER SURVIVAL KIT

Every household needs to have a disaster survival kit in case of a long-term disaster whether its wildfire danger, power outages caused by dangerous weather or from other types of disasters.

It will also prove crucial after you return to your home after an evacuation or a disaster. You'll need food and supplies on hand as power, water and gas may be out for extended periods of time and there may be limited resources, like food and gasoline, available.

## BASIC SUPPLIES:

- Water. 1 gallon per person, per day, 2-week supply. Include water for pets.
- Food. 2-week supply of non-perishable, easy-to-prepare items. Manual can opener if using canned items.
- Portable gas stove with extra canisters
- Flashlights & extra batteries
- Battery-powered, solar or hand-cranked radio
- First aid kit
- Know CPR. Take a class, if needed. Visit redcross.org.
- Medications & medical supplies. 2-week supply including hearing aid batteries, glasses, syringes, etc.
- Baby supplies. Bottles and 2-week supply of formula, baby food, diapers, etc.
- Multi-purpose tool
- Sanitation & personal hygiene items
- Copies of personal documents (medication list and pertinent medical information, proof of address, deed/lease to home, passports, birth certificates, insurance policies)
- Cell phone with chargers, including a solar or battery-operated charger
- Family & emergency contact information (paper copy)
- Extra cash
- Emergency blankets or sleeping bags
- Paper maps of the area
- Games & activities for children
- Pet supplies with 2 weeks of food
- Two-way radios
- Extra set of car & house keys
- Whistle
- N95 or P100 face masks
- Matches in a waterproof container
- Rain gear
- Towels
- Work gloves
- Tools & supplies for securing your home
- Extra clothing, hat & sturdy shoes
- Plastic sheeting
- Duct tape
- Scissors
- Household liquid bleach
- Fire extinguisher (know how to use it)
- Disposable paper plates, cups & utensils (biodegradable preferred)
- Moist towelettes, garbage bags & plastic ties for personal sanitation
- Non-sparking wrench & pliers for turning off utilities
- Locate all utilities shut offs in advance and know how to turn them off

## MAKE A FIRST AID KIT

(For a family of 4)

Adobe Stock

- Required medications & medical supplies for family members
- 2 absorbent compress dressings (5 x 9 inches)
- 25 adhesive bandages (assorted sizes)
- 1 adhesive cloth tape (10 yards x 1 inch)
- 5 antibiotic ointment packets
- 5 antiseptic wipe packets
- 2 packets of aspirin (81 mg each)
- 1 emergency blanket
- 1 breathing barrier (with one-way valve)
- 1 instant cold compress
- 2 pair of nonlatex gloves (size to fit adults)
- 2 hydrocortisone ointment packets
- 1 3 in. gauze roll (roller) bandage
- 1 roller bandage (4 inches wide)
- 5 3 in. x 3 in. sterile gauze pads
- 5 sterile gauze pads (4 x 4 inches)
- Oral thermometer (non-mercury/nonglass)
- 2 triangular bandages
- Tweezers
- Emergency First Aid guide (paper copy)
- Check the kit regularly & replace expired items.

Courtesy American Red Cross & FEMA

# Staying healthy

## FOOD FOR GO BAGS, HOME DISASTER KIT

BY PRIYA HUTNER

Use shelf-stable pantry items to make nutritious meals on a grill or camp stove.

The risk of wildfires is terrifying and the time to prepare for the possibility of fire is now. Along with other emergency preparations, it is essential to ensure that food and supplies are on hand in the event of an evacuation and upon returning home. Healthy foods and snacks can be beneficial during a stressful situation.

Emergency service organizations recommend having a three-day supply of non-perishable food and water in your Go Bag. It is also recommended to have at least two weeks' worth of food in your pantry in case of a disaster when there may be no power and there will be a lack of resources in the community.

### FOOD FOR GO BAGS

Have these items already packed in a Go Bag for each family member:

- Water. 1 gallon per person, per day. Include water for pets.
- Protein bars
- Dried fruit & nuts
- Supplies for sandwiches
- Bread or crackers with peanut butter and jelly

### DURING AN EVACUATION

If you have a cooler and ice packs, take things in the fridge that don't need to be cooked; they may otherwise go bad if there is a power outage.

Cheese, deli meats, carrots and celery kept in a cooler will help extend the life of perishables. Fresh fruits like apples, stone fruits and citrus do not need refrigeration. Seaweed snacks are loaded with vitamins and are good for you. Consider taking a thermos of hot water for tea or coffee.

### STOCK UP FOR A DISASTER

When you return home after an evacuation, there might not be power and grocery stores and gas stations might be closed. A gas grill with extra propane or a camp stove can help with meal preparation.

Depending on how long the evacuation lasts and if the power went out, many items in the fridge may have gone bad. Freezer items may or may not be good. If the freezer is still cold, then use those items first. If ice is available, use coolers to help keep items cool. Be mindful and smell anything questionable. Cook foods in the freezer that may have defrosted.

### STOCK THE PANTRY

There are several things to keep in the pantry that have a long shelf life and need no refrigeration.

- Beans, grains (rice and oats), cereal, dried nuts and fruit, crackers and tortillas.
- Some meats, like salami, do not need refrigeration.
- Shelf-stable products like tinned fish, chicken or meats.
- Shelf-stable milk or nondairy nut milk.
- Soup stocks.
- Dehydrated vegetables (purchased or made with a home dehydrator) can be reconstituted with water and cooked in soups or grains.
- Squash, potatoes, sweet potatoes, onions and other root vegetables do not need refrigeration and can be cooked on a grill.
- MREs, dehydrated backpacking meals and healthy shelf-stable meals.
- Storage in Tahoe can be an issue with bears. Never leave coolers or food outside or in your car.

Adobe Stock

## Red Lentil & Butternut Squash in Coconut Curry

From the Kitchen of Priya Hutner, The Seasoned Sage

4 C water
1½ C dry red lentils
1½ C basmati rice or shelf stable rice
1 onion, chopped
1 C butternut squash, peeled & cubed
1 sweet potato peeled & cubed
1 can coconut milk
1½ t coarse salt
1½ t garlic powder
1 t ground turmeric
1 t ground cumin
1 t ground curry
1 t fresh ground pepper
¼ t red chili flakes, optional

OPTIONAL:

2 stalks celery, sliced
2 carrots, sliced
¼ C unsweetened shredded coconut

Add water in a large pot on the stove (gas, camp stove or BBQ grill).

Add red lentils, rice and diced onion to water and bring to a boil, then reduce heat and simmer for 10 minutes. Add vegetables, coconut milk and spices and mix well. Simmer for 15 to 20 minutes or until rice and lentils are cooked and vegetables are fork tender. Top with shredded coconut.

If using shelf stable rice, omit adding the rice and cook as instructed. Serve lentils and vegetables over rice.

**Read this article at YourTahoeGuide.com/fire** for Priya's recipe for Rice & Beach Tortillas on the grill.

# Emergency business planning

## PLAN FOR BUSINESS CONTINUITY, GO BAG

Adobe Stock

Businesses also need to prepare for disasters by formulating an emergency plan for operating during a disaster, secure important documents and passwords, and practice drills and procedures with employees.

### CREATE A WILDFIRE PLAN

- Create a business continuity plan for emergencies. Establish an emergency team responsible for developing and implementing the business continuity plan.
- Determine who will act for last-minute building prep to move combustible items and inventory indoors and remove any debris.
- Define evacuation procedures for employees and customers. Identify evacuation routes, meeting location and communication protocols.
- Implement an IT data backup and recovery system off-site or utilize a cloud-based location.
- Identify alternate facilities or workspaces where your business could operate in case the primary location becomes inaccessible.
- Create a communication plan for employees and customers during an event. Develop procedures for sharing updates and emergency procedures.
- Develop an employee support plan. The plan may include guidelines for remote work and resources for mental health.
- Conduct regular training and simulation drills.
- Check insurance coverage annually and update it when purchasing new inventory or equipment.
- If your business has garages, parking structure gates or roller doors, know (or ensure tenants know) how to open these doors when the power is out.

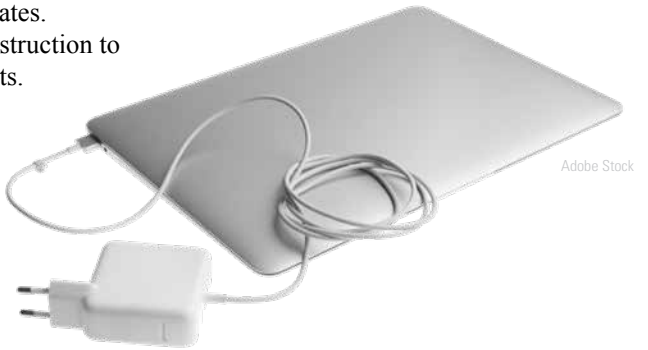
### PREPARE BUILDINGS & PROPERTY

- Check and maintain the roof and gutters regularly.
- Ensure the building has defensible space.
- Install ember-resistant vents. Clean vent screens periodically.
- Install spark arrestors on all chimneys.
- Clear and maintain all buildings of debris regularly.
- Choose noncombustible furniture like metal or cast aluminum furniture.
- Ensure any items like planters or mats are small enough to easily be moved inside on Red Flag days.
- Remove all vegetation from under decks and stairs.
- Enclose the area under decks or stairs to keep debris and embers out.
- Consider upgrading to a fire-resistant roof, windows and doors.
- Ensure street numbers are at least 4 inches high, reflective and on a contrasting background.
- Ensure there is access for emergency vehicles, including for gates, which should open inward.
- Have a key box for gates.
- Ensure there is no obstruction to accessing fire hydrants.

### PREPARE BUSINESS GO BAG

- Chargers and cables for all devices and laptops.
- List of emergency contacts and passwords.
- Extra office & vehicle keys or pass cards.
- Office phone list (including personnel emergency contacts' information)
- Office floor plans (to aid in possible search/rescue efforts)
- Disaster Plan or Emergency Procedure Manual
- Flash drive with critical documents, employee information, emergency plans/procedures, asset inventories & insurance information.
- Backup drives (consider cloud backups)
- First Aid kit
- Basic office supplies (pen & paper)

Courtesy Insurance Institute for Business & Home Safety and SCORE


Adobe Stock

## Prepare your car for evacuation

Adobe Stock

In case of a wildfire, you don't want to have to worry if your vehicle is ready for an evacuation. Take steps now to pack an emergency kit in the car and to make sure your car has all maintenance up to date. | ready.gov/car

### CAR EMERGENCY KIT

In case you are stranded, keep an emergency supply kit in your car to include:

- Jumper cables
- Flares or reflective triangle
- Car cell phone charger
- Blanket
- Map
- Cat litter or sand (for better tire traction)

### MAINTAIN YOUR CAR

Perform routine maintenance when called for and check:

- Antifreeze levels
- Battery and ignition system
- Brakes
- Exhaust system
- Fuel and air filters
- Heater and defroster
- Lights and flashing hazard lights
- Oil
- Thermostat
- Windshield wiper equipment and washer fluid level

### CAR SAFETY TIPS

- Keep your gas tank full in case of evacuation or power outages.
- Install good tires and make sure they have enough tread.
- Do not drive through flooded areas. Six inches of water can cause a vehicle to lose control or possibly stall. A foot of water will float many cars.
- Be aware of areas where floodwaters have receded. Roads may have weakened and could collapse under the weight of a car.
- If a power line falls on your car, you are at risk of electrical shock. Stay inside until a trained person removes the wire.
- If it becomes hard to control the car, pull over, stop the car and set the parking brake.
- If the emergency could affect the stability of the roadway, avoid overpasses, bridges, power lines, signs and other hazards

Courtesy Ready.gov

# Time to evacuate

It's important to follow local notices and heed them immediately. Always leave early during an Evacuation Warning, if possible, to give yourself plenty of time. | readyforwildfire.org

## DURING AN EVACUATION WARNING

### Inside the house

- Pack a Go Bag or Emergency Kit, if not already prepared (details in this guide). Place in the car.
- Check that your Wildfire Action Plan is up to date. Find details in this guide.
- Know your community's emergency plan, evacuation routes and destinations.
- Close all windows and doors but leave them unlocked.
- Take down flammable window treatments like shades and curtains, and close metal shutters.
- Clear away light curtains.
- Move anything that burns easily to the middle of rooms, away from windows and doors.
- Turn off the gas at the meter and pilot lights.
- Charge devices and consider getting backup batteries in case power outages continue.
- Bring supplies such as water and non-perishable food for the car ride, along with what's packed in a Go Bag.
- Leave lights on so firefighters can see inside your house in smoke.
- Switch off the air conditioning.

### Outside the house

- Bring in flammable items from outside like patio furniture, toys, doormats and trash bins. Alternatively, place them in a pool.
- Shut off propane tanks.
- Move grills and other propane BBQ appliances away from the house.
- Attach garden hoses to outside taps for firefighter to use and fill buckets with water to scatter around.
- Do NOT leave sprinklers or water running as it can lower critical water pressure.
- Keep exterior lights on to make your home visible in smoky or dark conditions.
- Park your car in the driveway, facing outwards, loaded and ready, with all doors and windows shut.
- Have a ladder handy for firefighter roof access.
- Seal attic and ground vents with plywood or commercial seals.
- Fill up your gas tank and consider downloading a fuel app to check for outages along your evacuation route.

Adobe Stock

- Keep an eye on the fire situation and don't wait for an evacuation order if you feel at risk.
- Check with neighbors to ensure they're also prepared.

## ANIMALS

- Keep pets close and ready to go. Put a Pet Go Bag in the car.
- Plan for farm animal evacuation early, arranging transport and safe locations.
- Call the local animal control or humane society if you need assistance.

### If you must leave pets

- Leave pets indoors, not chained outside.
- Use a safe room without windows and good ventilation.
- Leave dry food and fresh water in non-spill containers for several days.
- Fill a bathtub with water.

## DURING AN EVACUATION ORDER

- Leave immediately and use the designated route.
- Download the FEMA app for a list of open shelters.
- Listen to a battery-powered radio and follow local instructions.
- Take your emergency supply kit.
- Take your pets with you but understand that only service animals may be allowed in public shelters. Plan how you will care for your pets in an emergency now.
- Let friends and family know before you leave and when you arrive.
- Leave a note telling others when you left and where you are going. Use the EVACUATION sign provided in this guide. Place in a plastic sleeve.
- Wear sturdy shoes and clothing that provides some protection such as long pants, long-sleeved shirts and a hat.
- Check with neighbors who may need a ride.
- Follow recommended evacuation routes. Do not take shortcuts, they may be blocked.
- Stay off Forest Service roads, which may be blocked or in use by fire personnel.
- Be alert for road hazards such as washed-out roads or bridges and downed power lines. Do not drive into flooded areas.
- Avoid downed power or utility lines, they may be live with deadly voltage. Stay away and report them immediately or call 9-1-1. Never exit your vehicle if a downed line is over your vehicle.

## IF TIME ALLOWS

- Call or email the out-of-state contact in your family communications plan. Tell them where you are going.
- Unplug electrical equipment such as radios, televisions and small appliances. Leave freezers and refrigerators plugged in unless there is a risk of flooding.
- If there is damage to your home and you are instructed to do so, shut off water, gas and electricity before leaving.

## AFTER AN EVACUATION

If you are returning to disaster-affected areas, after significant events prepare for disruptions to daily activities and remember that returning home before storm debris is cleared is dangerous. Prepare your Disaster Survival Kit in advance; find details in this guide.

- Only use generators outside and away from your home.
- NEVER run a generator inside a home or garage or connect it to your home's electrical system.

Courtesy Cal Fire

**FIND A SHELTER**
FEMA app | fema.gov
Red Cross 24/7 help | (844) 236-0153

Smell natural gas?
See downed powerlines?
**LEAVE THE AREA & CALL 9-1-1**

### Follow the Six Ps for immediate evacuations

1. People & pets
2. Papers, phone numbers & important documents
3. Prescriptions, vitamins & eyeglasses
4. Pictures & irreplaceable memorabilia
5. Personal computer hard drive & disks
6. Plastic (credit cards, ATM cards) & cash

### Animal services

Alpine County | (530) 694-2231, alpinecountyca.gov

Douglas County | (775) 782-9061, communityservices.douglascountynv.gov

El Dorado County | (530) 573-7925, edcgov.us

Humane Society of Truckee-Tahoe
South Lake | (530) 542-2857
North Tahoe & Truckee | (530) 587-5948
hstt.org

Nevada County | (530) 265-1471, nevadacountyca.gov

Pet Network Humane Society, Incline Village | (775) 832-4404, petnetwork.org

Placer County | (530) 546-1990, placer.ca.gov

SPCA Northern Nevada
(775) 324-7773, spcanevada.org

Washoe County | (775) 353-8900
washoecounty.gov

# Evacuation Status Levels

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Signing up for emergency alerts will provide valuable time and information before a disaster occurs, helping to make sure you and your family remain safe during an emergency. Find a list of how to sign up for local alerts in this guide.

Emergency alerts provide immediate notification on cell phones and other mobile devices when emergencies happen in areas that may be, or currently are, under evacuation warnings or orders.

Tune into local radio stations for updated emergency alerts as there may be no cell service. Find a list of stations in this guide. | news.caloes.ca.gov

**CALL 9-1-1**
If you are stuck in an **Evacuation ORDER** zone without transportation and there is an immediate threat to your life.

**CALL 2-1-1**
If you are in an **Evacuation WARNING** zone and you need transportation.

## EVACUATION TERMINOLOGY

**Advisory |** A notice to be on alert and follow recommendations.

**Evacuation Warning |** Potential threat to life and/or property. Those who require additional time to evacuate such as the elderly and disabled, and those with pets and livestock, should leave now. Find details on preparing a Go Bag in this guide.

**Evacuation Order |** Immediate threat to life. This is a lawful order to leave now. The area is lawfully closed to public access.

**Shelter in Place |** Go indoors. Shut and lock doors and windows. Prepare to selfsustain until further notice and/or contacted by emergency personnel for additional direction. Read how to prepare a Disaster Survival Kit in this guide.

**Evacuation Order(s) Lifted |** The formal announcement of lifting evacuations in an area currently under evacuation.

**Hard Closure |** Closed to all traffic except fire and law enforcement.

**Soft Closure |** Closed to all traffic except fire, law enforcement and critical incident resources such as utility companies and road crews.

**Resident Only Closure |** Soft closure with the additional allowance of residents and local government agencies assisting with response and recovery. ID may be required to reenter.

**Clear To Repopulate |** It is safe to return to your home. Be aware of your surroundings and go through the returning home checklist.

**Normal |** There is no current knowledge of threats affecting your area and that you can carry on with normal activity.

Courtesy California Governor's Office of Emergency Services

Adobe Stock

# SAVE WATER FOR FIREFIGHTERS

## Do NOT leave sprinklers, irrigation running

If you need to evacuate, do not leave water running on your lawn or home, it diminishes water pressure in systems used by firefighters.

During the Caldor Fire in 2021, water purveyors around Lake Tahoe reported an alarming trend of residents leaving irrigation, garden hoses and sprinklers on roofs actively running when they evacuated their homes. This can leave tanks dangerously low when firefighters need fast access to water from fire hydrants to protect homes.

Residents also called fire districts during the Caldor Fire to ask if they should spray down roofs and vegetation before evacuating. This is not effective, as the roof will dry quickly, as will the vegetation, which doesn't protect the home itself. Wide-scale activation of sprinklers and garden hoses dramatically reduces water pressure in the entire region.

Evacuation preparedness efforts are better spent on removing combustible materials away from homes. Learn more about defensible space and home hardening in this guide. | tahoelivingwithfire.com

# TRAPPED

## Tips for surviving a wildfire

Be sure to follow local fire warnings and evacuation notices in the event of a wildfire. If you do become trapped in your home, car or in the open, follow these tips to survive until help arrives.

### IN A VEHICLE

- Stay calm.
- Park your vehicle in an area clear of vegetation.
- Close all vehicle windows & vents.
- Cover yourself with a wool blanket or jacket.
- Lie on the vehicle floor.
- Call 9-1-1.

### ON FOOT

- Stay calm.
- Go to an area clear of vegetation, a ditch or depression on level ground if possible.
- Lie face down, cover up your body.
- Call 9-1-1.

### AT HOME

- Stay calm, keep your family together.
- Call 9-1-1.
- Inform authorities of your location.
- Fill sinks & tubs with cold water.
- Keep doors and windows closed but unlocked.
- Stay inside your house.
- Stay away from outside walls & windows.

Courtesy Cal Fire

Fill out and post where visible for rescue personnel if you need to evacuate.
Cut on dotted line to fit into plastic sleeve.

Coloque un lugar visible para el personal de rescate si necesita evacuar.
Corte por la línea de puntos para que quepa en la funda de plástico.

COURTESY

TAHOE GUIDE

# WE HAVE EVACUATED

TOTAL # OCCUPANTS:_____ ALL EVACUATED ON:_____

Name/age:_____

Name/age:_____

Name/age:_____

Name/age:_____

Name/age:_____

Pets:_____

Others:_____

MAIN CONTACT INFO:_____

_____

Vehicle Driven:_____ License Plate #:_____

Evacuated to:_____

_____

Emergency contact/s:_____

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# Lake Tahoe Basin Fire Protection Districts

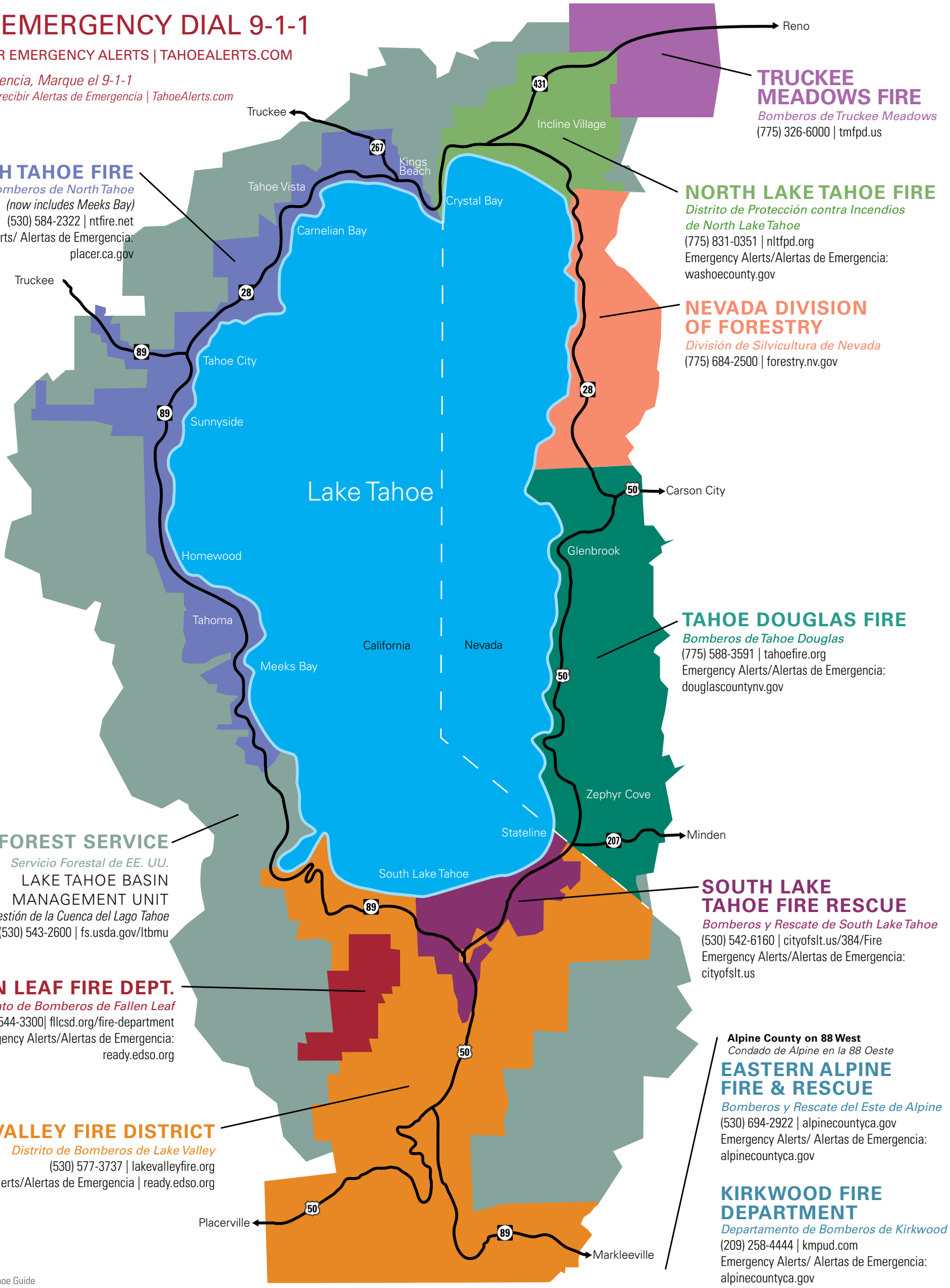
*Distritos de Protección contra Incendios de la Cuenca del Lago Tahoe (Lake Tahoe Basin)*

## IN AN EMERGENCY DIAL 9-1-1

SIGN UP FOR EMERGENCY ALERTS | TAHOEALERTS.COM

*En una Emergencia, Marque el 9-1-1*

*Regístrese para recibir Alertas de Emergencia | TahoeAlerts.com*




### NORTH TAHOE FIRE

*Distrito de Bomberos de North Tahoe*
*(now includes Meeks Bay)*
(530) 584-2322 | ntfire.net
Emergency Alerts/ Alertas de Emergencia:
placer.ca.gov

### TRUCKEE MEADOWS FIRE

*Bomberos de Truckee Meadows*
(775) 326-6000 | tmfpd.us

### NORTH LAKE TAHOE FIRE

*Distrito de Protección contra Incendios de North Lake Tahoe*
(775) 831-0351 | nltfpd.org
Emergency Alerts/Alertas de Emergencia:
washoecounty.gov

### NEVADA DIVISION OF FORESTRY

*División de Silvicultura de Nevada*
(775) 684-2500 | forestry.nv.gov

### TAHOE DOUGLAS FIRE

*Bomberos de Tahoe Douglas*
(775) 588-3591 | tahoefire.org
Emergency Alerts/Alertas de Emergencia:
douglascountynv.gov

### USDA FOREST SERVICE

*Servicio Forestal de EE. UU.*
LAKE TAHOE BASIN MANAGEMENT UNIT
*Unidad de Gestión de la Cuenca del Lago Tahoe*
(530) 543-2600 | fs.usda.gov/ltbmu

### SOUTH LAKE TAHOE FIRE RESCUE

*Bomberos y Rescate de South Lake Tahoe*
(530) 542-6160 | cityofslt.us/384/Fire
Emergency Alerts/Alertas de Emergencia:
cityofslt.us

### FALLEN LEAF FIRE DEPT.

*Departamento de Bomberos de Fallen Leaf*
(530) 544-3300| fllcsd.org/fire-department
Emergency Alerts/Alertas de Emergencia:
ready.edso.org

### LAKE VALLEY FIRE DISTRICT

*Distrito de Bomberos de Lake Valley*
(530) 577-3737 | lakevalleyfire.org
Emergency Alerts/Alertas de Emergencia | ready.edso.org

**Alpine County on 88 West**
*Condado de Alpine en la 88 Oeste*

### EASTERN ALPINE FIRE & RESCUE

*Bomberos y Rescate del Este de Alpine*
(530) 694-2922 | alpinecountyca.gov
Emergency Alerts/ Alertas de Emergencia:
alpinecountyca.gov

### KIRKWOOD FIRE DEPARTMENT

*Departamento de Bomberos de Kirkwood*
(209) 258-4444 | kmpud.com
Emergency Alerts/ Alertas de Emergencia:
alpinecountyca.gov

Abigail Gallup | ©Tahoe Guide

# Truckee & North Tahoe Fire Protection Districts

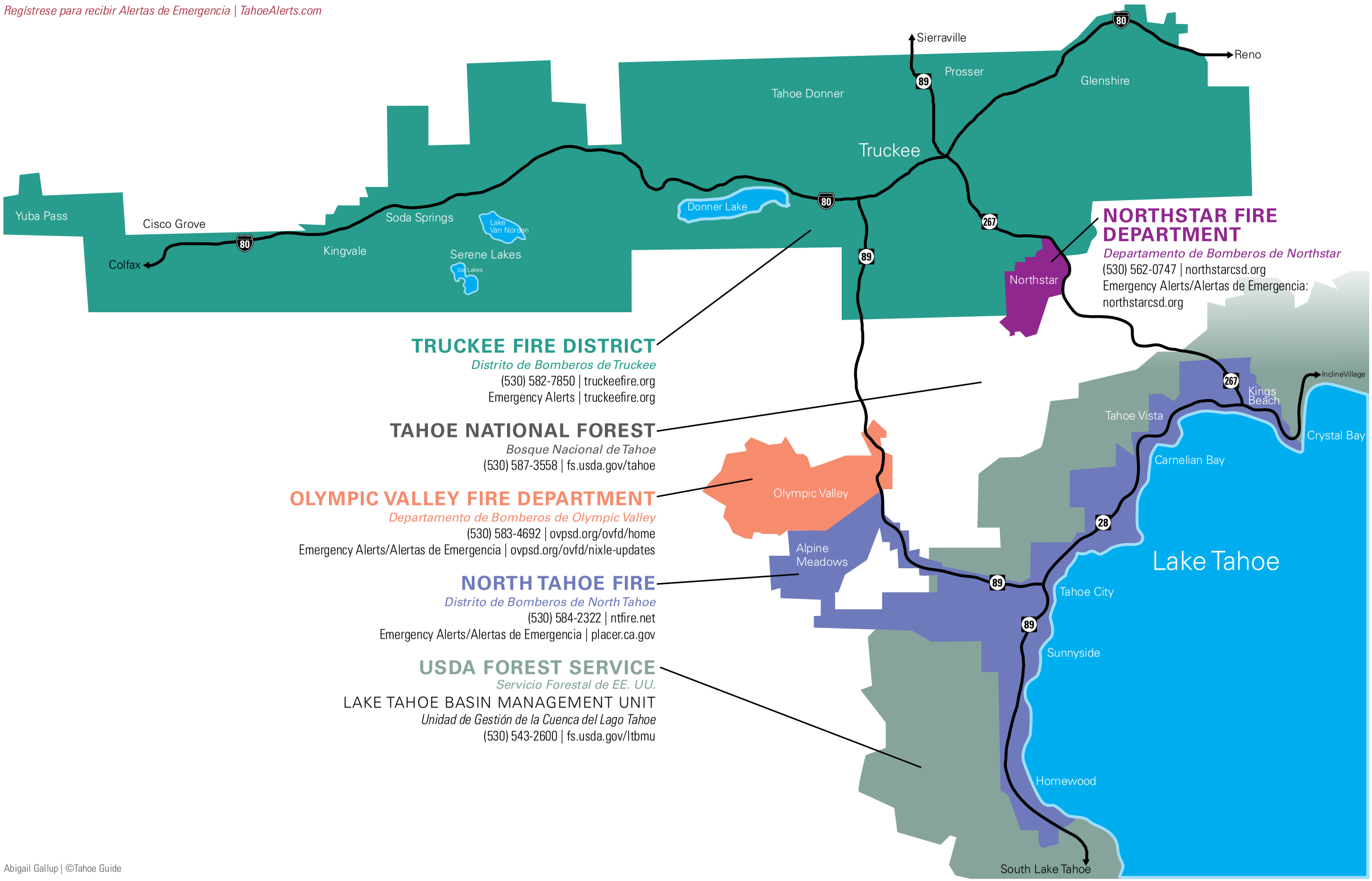
*Distritos de Protección contra Incendios de Truckee y North Tahoe*

## IN AN EMERGENCY DIAL 9-1-1

SIGN UP FOR EMERGENCY ALERTS | TAHOEALERTS.COM

*En una Emergencia, Marque el 9-1-1*

*Regístrese para recibir Alertas de Emergencia | TahoeAlerts.com*




**TRUCKEE FIRE DISTRICT**
*Distrito de Bomberos de Truckee*
(530) 582-7850 | truckeefire.org
Emergency Alerts | truckeefire.org

**TAHOE NATIONAL FOREST**
*Bosque Nacional de Tahoe*
(530) 587-3558 | fs.usda.gov/tahoe

**OLYMPIC VALLEY FIRE DEPARTMENT**
*Departamento de Bomberos de Olympic Valley*
(530) 583-4692 | ovpsd.org/ovfd/home
Emergency Alerts/Alertas de Emergencia | ovpsd.org/ovfd/nixle-updates

**NORTH TAHOE FIRE**
*Distrito de Bomberos de North Tahoe*
(530) 584-2322 | ntfire.net
Emergency Alerts/Alertas de Emergencia | placer.ca.gov

**USDA FOREST SERVICE**
*Servicio Forestal de EE. UU.*
LAKE TAHOE BASIN MANAGEMENT UNIT
*Unidad de Gestión de la Cuenca del Lago Tahoe*
(530) 543-2600 | fs.usda.gov/ltbmu

**NORTHSTAR FIRE DEPARTMENT**
*Departamento de Bomberos de Northstar*
(530) 562-0747 | northstarcsd.org
Emergency Alerts/Alertas de Emergencia:
northstarcsd.org

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