



Emergency Evacuations “What you need to know”



Wildland Fires in Boulder County

- Olde Stage/Neva: January 2009
3000 acres
- Sunshine: March 2006
4.7 acres
- Elk Mountain: February 2006
600 acres
- Plainview: January 2006
2700 acres
- **OVERLAND FIRE: OCTOBER 2003**
8,500 ACRES DESTROYED
12 STRUCTURES DESTROYED
- **WONDERLAND LAKE FIRE: JUNE 2002**
1,500 ACRES DESTROYED
- **WALKER RANCH/EL DORADO FIRE**
SEPTEMBER 2000
1,100 ACRES DESTROYED
- **OLDE STAGE FIRE: NOVEMBER 1990**
3,000 ACRES DESTROYED
15 STRUCTURES DESTROYED
- **BLACK TIGER FIRE: JULY 1989**
2,100 ACRES DESTROYED
44 HOMES AND STRUCTURES
DESTROYED
- **LEFTHAND/BEAVER LAKE FIRE**
SEPTEMBER 1988
2,300 ACRES DESTROYED

Pre-Evacuation

What to do RIGHT NOW!

- **Create a list of your important items ahead of time, and keep this in a handy and readily accessible place.**
 - Medications and prescriptions
 - Pets with carriers, leashes and food
 - Prescription eye ware
 - Changes of clothing
 - Important documents: insurance policies, passports, financial papers, banking information, address or phone book of friends, insurance agencies, doctors, friends and family.
 - Computers
 - Cell phones
 - Family photos

Pre-Evacuation

What to do RIGHT NOW!

- Be familiar with BMFPD's Evacuation Map.
Knowing where you are going and how to get there is critical when a fire is near.
- Establish a meeting point outside of the BMFPD District where you and your family can meet.
- Ensure your gutter and eaves are clear of debris.
- Ensure all flammables and combustibles have been removed from around you home.
- Provide a defensible space around your home.
- **NOTIFY BMFPD IF YOU HAVE ANY SPECIAL NEEDS THAT WILL HAMPER YOUR PLANS FOR EVACUATION.**

When will BMFPD consider an emergency evacuation?

- **Wildfire in neighboring district which is threatening our district,**
 - Complexity of the fire
 - Weather conditions
 - Resources available; engines, aircraft and hand crews
 - Densities of fuels
 - Location of wildfire in relation to our district i.e. topography
- **Wildfire in our district,**
 - All of the same factors above apply to fires in our district
- **Any other type of disaster or larger scale incident**
 - Hazardous materials
 - law enforcement problems
- **Any time we feel the citizens are at risk.**

Why consider evacuation early?

- **Size of fire**
 - How fast is the fire growing?
 - Is the fire crowning or is the fire still on the ground?
- **Fire conditions i.e. wind, humidity, temps**
 - Low RH + high temps + high winds = LARGE FAST MOVING FIRES
 - Dryness of the fuels associated with the fire
- **Location of fire vs. population density**
 - How close the fire is in regards to populated areas of the district
 - Population density will also play a major role in evacuation

Why consider evacuation early?

- **Time needed to assess situation**
 - Incident Commanders need time to assess what is happening
 - Time considerations must be given to evacuation needs
 - Fires are dynamic and change constantly
 - Objectives, strategies and tactics are being considered on initial tone out
 - Where and how many resources are coming and can we get?
 - What time of day is the fire?
 - What is the population density?
 - How long will it take to get 200 homes evacuated?
 - It takes time to get evacuation information and notices out to effected areas

The importance of a timely evacuation!

- **This ensures the safety of you the homeowner**
- **This assists the I.C. in the planning of fire suppression activities**
- **This allows the firefighters to do firefighting**
- **Panic**
 - Human nature when faced with an emergency or crisis
 - High rates of speed going down a hill could equal disaster with our roads
 - Multiple fire trucks and law enforcement are coming into the scene
 - We may encounter massive amounts of smoke making visibility a concern

The importance of a timely evacuation!

- Fire fighters and law enforcement do not have time to plead or argue with anyone in the event of an evacuation.
- Those with special needs residents may take longer to get out. THAT IS WHY WE HAVE DEVELOPED A LIST OF INDIVIDUALS NEEDING ASSISTANCE AHEAD OF TIME.
- It is much easier and safer for both the firefighters and law enforcement to have everyone leave their home.
 - Fire fighters have been drawn into homes trying to convince homeowners to leave. As a result these fire fighters have been killed.

The best course of action a homeowner can take is leave the fire area. Let the firefighters do the job they have trained for.

What do you do as a homeowner if you receive an evacuation notice?

- **Preparation**

- Close all windows and doors
- Close drapes or window coverings
- Leave porch or lights on in the home
- Have a ladder handy for fire fighters for roof access if needed
- Leave hoses attached to outside faucets
- Make water sources such as pools, and cisterns available for firefighters
- Leave doors unlocked to allow firefighters to check homes for any possible fire
- Do not block driveways with vehicles. F.D. apparatus need to access the driveways for triage

**What do you do as a homeowner if you receive
an evacuation notice?**

***HEED THE EVACUATION NOTICE AND
LEAVE IMMEDIATELY***

What do you do as a homeowner if you receive an evacuation notice?

- **Leave the area immediately**
 - Do not try and drive around to see what is going on
 - Do not stop and be a spectator, roads become clogged very quickly, stopping will only add to the congestion and accidents
 - Drive with safety in mind
 - Turn on your headlights so cars can see you. Heavy smoke means bad visibility
- **Once you are out you will not be allowed to return**
 - **Do not try and sneak back in after being evacuated**
 - **Make sure that before you leave you have all your important items**
 - **Law enforcement will be patrolling the area during an evacuation event**

If you choose to stay in place

- **I am highly against having anyone deciding they want to stay!!!!!!**
- **There is strong chance that firefighters will not be able to make it back to you**
- **This puts undue stress and burden on emergency personnel who are trying to evacuate the area and see someone who has stayed behind.**
 - Think about how many people this effects
 - Think about the responders safety

Be Prepared to Evacuate

- **There is the 2nd type of evacuation “Be Prepared to Evacuate”**
 - The fire has not reached the area yet
 - There is a potential for the fire to reach greater distances
 - This gives homeowners time to prep your property

- **What you as a homeowner can do**
 - Remove all flammables and combustibles from around the home
 - Disconnect propane tanks from propane grills
 - Remove patio furniture from the decks
 - Try and do everything possible to allow your home protection against an oncoming wildfire