

Emergency EVACUATION in Boulder Mountain Fire Protection District

In the event of a wildfire or other significant emergency . . . You may receive a mandatory or voluntary evacuation notification via an emergency call back system (commonly referred to as “Reverse 911”) advising you to evacuate. *Given fire behavior, and the predominately dry and windy conditions in our area, residents should take these notifications very seriously and evacuate immediately.*



In an emergency, time is critical.

- When* an evacuation is ordered, the absolute best opportunity people and pets will have for survival is to be evacuated during that initial window of opportunity; the same goes for keepsakes and valuables.
- If you are home when the evacuation is ordered, being organized to properly evacuate people, pets, and possessions is essential.
- If you are not home when the evacuation is ordered, you will not be able to get back into the evacuated area – the authorities will not allow it (*for good reason*).
- Neither firefighters nor other emergency personnel will likely be deployed for pet rescue.
- Coordinating with neighbors *in advance of an emergency* is the only way to provide for timely evacuation of people, pets, and possessions.

In close cooperation with the Chief and other BMFPD personnel, the BMFPD Third Arm has composed guidelines and other helpful tools to assist in your advanced preparation for an evacuation situation.

There are items available on the BMFPD website that can help you with emergency preparedness to prepare for an evacuation and/or other emergency situations:



1. The **POD Guidebook** contains information and procedures for organizing a neighborhood POD – a small group of neighbors organized to help each other in the event of an evacuation.
2. **POD Organization Information** – an informative presentation that provides additional helpful information in addition to the Guidebook.
3. An **Evacuation Guide** that provides some general tips on what you can do to prepare your family and your home for a wildland fire event. [*This document*]
4. A **Pet/Owner Information Form** that specifies information about you and your pets that would be helpful to others in the event that someone other than you evacuates your pets to ensure that your pets are well provided for and you and your pets are reunited.
5. A **Pet Evacuation Checklist** (including recommendations for a pet “overnight kit”) to help you organize for the evacuation of your pets and ensure that your pet(s) have the supplies they need.

In this guide you will find many helpful tips and other information that will help you prepare for an evacuation situation. There are also a number of helpful references through which you can obtain even more helpful emergency information (see list of websites at the end of this guide).

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Your First Responsibility:

Prepare for evacuating people, pets & possessions:

Whether you, or someone else, evacuates your family, pets, and possessions there are certain things you should do **now** (*much in advance of any emergency*) to prepare for that event.

- How would you organize in advance for evacuating if you were at home at the time of an evacuation? What would you want to have ready to make evacuating fast, easy, and complete?
- How would you organize in advance for evacuating if you were not at home when the emergency happens? What would you want in place to enable someone else to successfully evacuate your family, pets, and possessions?

Your Second Responsibility:

Have a back-up plan. Work with your neighbors, in advance of any emergency, so that everyone knows what to do when it happens. Provide for the evacuation of your family, pets, and possessions if you happen to be away from home when an evacuation order occurs.

- Form a "POD." A specific group of neighbors who agree to provide mutual evacuation assistance in emergency situations.
- Ensure that everyone in your POD is familiar with your pets and knows exactly what to do in an emergency situation.

Preparing your Home for Evacuation

Many homes have been saved because proper mitigation work had been completed and the home had good "defensible space." You can obtain a free mitigation plan and advice on defensible space by contacting the BMFPD Mitigation department (303-440-0235).

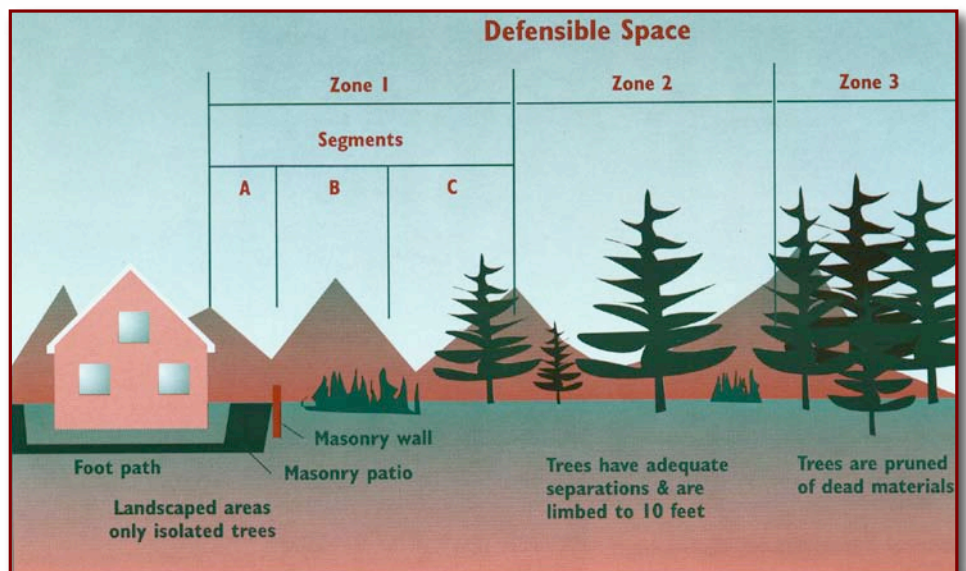
Two things to consider if you are thinking about work on your home are: replacing a wood shake roof with class A fire resistant roofing material; replacing wood decks with fire resistant decking materials.

Obvious things you can do in advance, *and on a regular basis*, to help your home survive a wildland fire include:

- Ensure your gutters and eaves are clear of all debris (e.g. pine needles)
- Remove all flammable and combustible materials from around your home (firewood should be stacked distant from the structure)

It is important to note that **safety of firefighters is of primary importance** to BMFPD and firefighters will not be deployed to defend a structure if conditions are too dangerous. In making a determination about the defensibility of any given structure important factors that are considered include: defensible space; mitigation; fire resistant construction materials; safe ingress and egress to the structure for personnel and equipment (e.g. will your driveway accommodate the fire engine?).

There is other helpful information about properly maintaining your property available on the BMFPD website, or by calling the BMFPD Mitigation department.



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When a wildland fire is threatening, **if time allows**, here are some of the things that you can do before evacuating the area:

- Close (not lock) all windows and doors
- Close drapes or window coverings
- Leave porch or other lights on in the home
- Leave doors unlocked to allow firefighters to check homes for any possible fire
- Leave garage door unlocked (but not open/raised)
- Disconnect propane tanks from propane grills and put the tank in the garage
- Remove patio furniture from the decks
- Leave water hoses attached to outside faucets (do not turn faucets on; do not leave sprinklers on; do not leave hoses running)
- Have a ladder handy for fire fighters for roof access if needed
- Remove all flammables and combustibles from around the home (remember the broom on the deck and the welcome mats in front of exterior doors)
- Make water sources such as pools, and cisterns available for firefighters
- Do not block driveways with vehicles – fire apparatus needs access the driveways
- Use common sense – Try to do everything possible to protect against an oncoming wildfire

What to take

Create a list of what goes with you in an evacuation ahead of time, and keep this in a handy and readily accessible place.

- Medications and prescriptions
- Prescription eye ware
- Changes of clothing
- Computers
- Cell phones (with chargers)
- Family photos
- Keepsakes & heirlooms
- Cash and change
- Insurance policies & Agent information
- Passports and other ID
- Banking & Financial information
- Contract information for friends, family, etc.
- Doctor and medical information
- Supplies for infants (formula, etc.)
- Local maps
- *See separate section about **pets**...*

Consider capturing as many of your important documents and pictures as possible in electronic document format and storing them on an external hard drive that can be easily taken with you in the event of an evacuation. It is relatively easy to use a scanner and computer to create PDF files of documents, pictures, etc. If you are really organized you can even keep a small portable hard drive with back-up copy of all your computer files (including important documents) in a safe deposit box. Tips on what to include in your list of important documents are included in the “Emergency Financial First Aid Kit (EFFAK)” available from FEMA at their website:

(www.ready.gov/america/getakit/index.html).

Family Plan

Have a plan for evacuating your home in an emergency that every member of your family knows. If various family members are likely to be in different locations for significant parts of the day (school, work, etc.), make sure that you have a plan about where and how to meet if you are apart when an evacuation is ordered.

Every member of the family who is home when an evacuation is ordered can help with the execution of your evacuation plan. Make sure that everyone knows his or her part.

Know your evacuation route(s). There are maps of evacuation routes in the Boulder Mountain Fire Protection District available in a variety of places including the BMFPD website (www.bouldermountainfire.org). Some homes have access to more than one evacuation route –

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make sure you know about all of them. Sometimes a fire will block the use of the most obvious escape route that you know.

There are a number of websites that provide other suggestions. See the list of informative websites contained in this Guide.

Special Needs

If there are individuals with special needs in your household, please notify the BMFPD Chief to ensure that BMFPD emergency responders know about your needs and that we know what assistance you might need in an evacuation or other emergency situations.

Ensure that you will receive the Evacuation Notice

Boulder County has had its share of difficulties with the automatic call system to provide notice of evacuation to everyone in the area that the Incident Commander wants evacuated. Suffice to say that there are some additional issues if you do not have a “land line” telephone (i.e. phone services provided over an actual hard wire connection). If you have VOIP phone service or just rely entirely on mobile phone connection you may not automatically receive notice of evacuation.

Here is the best way to do everything that you can to ensure that you get the evacuation notice when it is issued – go to the following website:

https://ww2.everbridge.net/citizen/EverbridgeGateway.action?body=home&gis_alias_id=160781

You may also want to check out the Emergency Mass Notification System FAQs at:

www.boulercounty.org/find/fag/pages/massnotificationfaq.aspx

Pet Identification

It is strongly recommended that your pet have proper identification, such as collars with tags and/or a micro-chip. As an alternative to wearing ID, identification collars and tags should be placed inside the pet’s crate, “Over-night Bag,” and/or “Gather and Go” kit. There are additional forms and other pet-related information available on the BMFPD website.

Pet Information

Each pet owner/guardian should have a **Pet Information** form filled out with the following information:

- Pet Name
- Pet Breed
- Pet Gender
- Dietary needs
- Written consent, or denial, for medical treatment (e.g. if pet is injured as a result of the emergency situation)
- Alternate caretaker contact information
- Pet owner/guardian’s address and contact information
- Medical conditions and/or Rx needs
- Vet Name and Phone Number
- Need-to-know personality traits

“Gather and Go” Kit Contents

Each pet owner/guardian should consider having the following tools, equipment, items in order to enable helpful neighbors (or others) to evacuate your pets in your absence. It is suggested that these supplies be assembled in advance and placed in, or near, your pet crate(s).

- Heavy work gloves
- Masking tape
- Sharpie pen
- Old pillowcase, towel, small blanket (to capture and transport small animals)
- Pet Evacuation Notice (blank copy, ready to be completed and placed on the front door upon evacuation) – *notice to firefighters and emergency personnel*
- Evacuation confirmation ribbon
- Leash and/or harness
- Muzzle

You may want a duplicate “gather and go” kit to use in collecting and transporting the pets of others.

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Pet "Over-night Bag" Contents

Each pet owner/guardian should have the following equipment/items in order to: (1) quickly evacuate your own pets, or, (2) enable helpful neighbors to evacuate your pets in your absence. It is suggested that these supplies be assembled in advance, placed into a bag, and kept in or near your pet crate(s).

- Pet treats
- Water for your pet
- Toys
- Food & water bowls
- Hammock
- Pet food
- Medications (or at least note re: location of meds)
- Litter box and litter
- Bed & blanket
- Other: _____

Resource Information

LOCAL: BMFPD – www.bouldermountainfire.org , (303) 440-0235
Boulder County – www.bouldercounty.org/live/safety/law/pages/emerservinfo.aspx
On-line Radio – www.radioreference.com/apps/audio/?ctid=247
BCSO - Animal Control Dispatch, (303) 441-4444
City of Boulder Animal Control, (303) 441-3374
BMFPD Third Arm, Chairman, Bob Loveman, (303) 926-0204

STATE: Colorado SART – www.coloradoSART.org
Colorado Division of Emergency Management –
<http://dola.colorado.gov/dem/index/html>
Ready Colorado – www.readycolorado.com
Colorado Department of Agriculture: Division of Animal Industry –
www.ag.state.co.us/animals/animals
Colorado State University Cooperative Extension –
<http://coloradodisasterhelp.colostate.edu/>
Red Cross – www.preparecolorado.org

NATIONAL: Department of Homeland Security – www.ready.gov, www.disasterhelp.gov
Federal Emergency Management Agency – www.fema.gov
American Red Cross – www.redcross.org
Extension Disaster Education Network – www.agctr.lsu.edu/eden
Citizen Corps and CERT – www.citizencorps.gov
American Veterinary Medical Association –
www.avma.org/disaster/default.asp