

Letter: Red Cross Urges Everyone to Get Ready for Wildfire Season

May 14, 2021



May is National Wildfire Awareness Month and the American Red Cross is urging everyone to make their preparations now.

2020's massive wildfires in the west were responsible for 37 deaths and more than \$19 billion in damages. Wildfires are dangerous and can spread quickly, giving you only minutes to evacuate. Protect your household, get ready now.

Here are four simple steps you can take to be prepared:

Create an evacuation plan. Plan multiple routes to local shelters, register family members with special medical needs as required and make plans for pets. If you already have an emergency plan, update and review it with family members so everyone knows what to do if an emergency occurs.

Build an emergency kit with a gallon of water per person, per day, non-perishable food, a flashlight, battery-powered radio, first aid kit, medications, supplies for an infant or pets if applicable, a multi-purpose tool, personal hygiene items, copies of important papers, cell phone chargers, extra cash, blankets, maps of the area and emergency contact information. Because of the pandemic, include a mask for everyone in your

household. If you already have a disaster kit, now is the time make sure the food and water is still OK to consume and that copies of important documents are up to date.

Be informed. Find out how local officials will contact you during a wildfire emergency and how you will get important information, such as evacuation orders.

Download the free Red Cross Emergency app to help keep you and your loved ones safe with real-time alerts, open Red Cross shelter locations and safety advice on wildfires and other emergencies.

Wildfire season is really all year round, but most fires occur between June and August. Learn more about how to prepare your family and prevent wildfires at redcross.org/wildfires.

Gary Strong

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