

# CAL FIRE NEWS RELEASE

## California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection Amador-El Dorado-Sacramento Unit

CONTACT: Teri Mizuhara, Fire Prevention Specialist II, 530.708.2724  
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### Hard Lessons Learned

**Camino** - One home and an outbuilding were destroyed on Saturday afternoon when a person mowing tall dry weeds caused a wildfire that spread quickly to the structures. The fire displaced a Placerville family who escaped with only the clothes on their backs and took the lives of some of the families' pets.

A few hours earlier in Swansboro, a family lost their shed, boat, horse trailer and Jeep when an extension cord used to power an electric fence caused the morning fire.

#### Fire Prevention Tips:

Do not use gas powered equipment after 10 am in the morning or before 7pm in the evening. High summer temperatures and low humidity's combined with very dry vegetation can spell disaster. If it is uncomfortably hot outside, it is dangerous to use gas powered equipment or any equipment that can cause a spark.

Make sure your mower is well maintained. Spark arrestors should be in place and cleared of any buildup. Mowers are designed to cut green materials, cutting dry weeds may cause the chaff to build up on the mow deck and catch fire.

Weedeaters are better designed to cut dry vegetation. Be careful while using a weedeater as they can cause a fire if the weedeater has a metal blade and hits a rock or similar material. Using a weedeater with a plastic string is a safer choice.

Don't forget to let all equipment cool down before refueling, not only can the equipment catch on fire, the gas fumes can ignite and cause a person to catch fire. Only wear cotton or other natural fibers and if your clothing does catch fire, remember to Stop (do not run), Drop (on to the ground in an area clear of flammable vegetation), cover your face with your hands and Roll (back and forth until the fire

is completely out). Always call 9-1-1 and have the paramedics check you out as burns can be deceiving and may not show up for hours.

If you use extension cords outside, make sure that they are in good working condition and are not in an area where they can get stepped on, run over or otherwise compromised. Because of our dry Mediterranean climate and our extremely dry vegetation, it may only take a spark to start a fire which quickly burns out of control.

For more fire and life safety information, please visit our website [www.ReadyForWildfire.org](http://www.ReadyForWildfire.org) or call us at 530.644.2345 and we will send you FREE fire and life safety information.

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