

# CAL FIRE NEWS RELEASE

## California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection

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**RELEASE**  
**DATE:** May 8, 2012

### California Declares May 6-12 “Wildfire Awareness Week” CAL FIRE Encourages Wildfire Preparedness

**Sacramento** – Devastating wildfires threaten California every year, and to ensure Californians are ready, Governor Edmund G. Brown, Jr. declared May 6-12, 2012 as “**Wildfire Awareness Week**”. CAL FIRE is taking advantage of Wildfire Awareness Week to remind residents of the dangers from wildfires and the simple steps they can take to prepare for them.

“Despite a rainy March, this year’s overall precipitation is below average,” said Chief Ken Pimlott, CAL FIRE Director. “As a result of the dry winter, the number of wildfires that CAL FIRE firefighters have responded to is nearly three times that of last year.”

According to the state’s final snow survey on May 1, the statewide snowpack water content is only 40 percent of normal. From January to April, CAL FIRE crews have responded to over 800 wildfires, nearly two and half times the number in 2011 when there were approximately 300. This year’s number of wildfires is above the five-year average as well, where the average is over 600 wildfires.

During Wildfire Awareness Week, CAL FIRE is reminding Californians that when it comes to wildfires, remember “**Ready, Set, Go!**”. Being **Ready** for a wildfire starts by maintaining 100 feet of Defensible Space and hardening homes with fire resistant building materials.

“Before we get into the peak of fire season, residents should prepare themselves, their families and their homes for wildfires,” said Chief Pimlott. “Defensible Space and fire resistant building materials really gives a home the best chance of surviving a wildfire.”

CAL FIRE relaunched its wildfire preparedness website, [www.ReadyForWildfire.org](http://www.ReadyForWildfire.org) with added features and steps to assist homeowners in preparing for wildfires. The site offers tips for residents to make their homes more resistant to wildfires and to ensure that their families are ready to evacuate early and safely when a wildfire strikes.

Wildfire Awareness Week schedule:

- Monday, May 7: Press Conference, CAL FIRE Aviation Management Unit, McClellan at 10 a.m.
- Tuesday, May 8: Press Conference, Lake Temescal Regional Park, Oakland at 10:30 a.m.
- Wednesday, May 9: Press Conference, CAL FIRE Fresno-Kings Unit Headquarters, Sanger at 1 p.m.
- Thursday, May 10: Press Conference & military helicopter demonstration, Camp Pendleton at 8:30 a.m.
- Friday, May 11: Press Conference, CAL FIRE Hemet-Ryan Air Attack Base, Hemet at 11 a.m.

For more information visit [www.fire.ca.gov](http://www.fire.ca.gov) or [www.ReadyForWildfire.org](http://www.ReadyForWildfire.org).