Before, During and After a Wildfire

What to do BEFORE a wildland fire:

▪ Create defensible space to separate your home from flammable vegetation and materials (minimum 100ft PRC 4291).
▪ Adhere to all local fire and building codes and weed abatement ordinances.
▪ Keep all trees and shrub limbs trimmed so they do not come into contact with electrical wires or overhang your chimney. (Do not trim around live power lines yourself, call a professional).
▪ Prune all lower branches 8 feet from the ground.
▪ Keep trees adjacent to buildings free of dead or dying branches.
▪ Stack firewood away from your home and other buildings. (Keep clearance around your piles).
▪ Keep roof surfaces clear of pine needles, leaves and debris at all times.
▪ Install spark arresters for each chimney (PRC 4291).
▪ Clean chimneys and check and maintain spark arresters twice a year.
▪ Keep rain gutters clear of debris at all times.
▪ Use approved fire resistant materials when building, renovating or retrofitting structures.
▪ Install electrical lines underground if possible.
▪ Be sure your house numbers show clearly from the street, both day and night.
▪ Store combustible or flammable materials in approved containers.
▪ Store all important papers in a fireproof container or keep copies at another location.
▪ Make evacuation plans with family members. Include several options with an outside meeting place and contact person. Practice regularly.
▪ Keep battery operated radios and flashlights with additional fresh batteries on hand.

What to do DURING a wildland fire:

▪ Turn on a battery operated radio to get latest emergency information.
▪ If you have a ladder, prop it against the house so you and firefighters have access to roof.
▪ If hoses and adequate water are available set them up. Fill buckets with water.
▪ Remove combustible materials from the area surrounding your house. (Lawnchairs, tables, etc.)
▪ Turn a light on in each room for visibility in case of smoke.
▪ Close all doors and windows, but do not lock them.
▪ Open or take down flammable drape and curtains.
▪ Close all venetian blinds and non-flammable window coverings.
▪ Move upholstered furniture away from windows and sliding glass doors.
▪ Be ready to evacuate all family members and pets when requested to do so.
▪ Turn off air conditioning/air circulation systems.
▪ Detach electrical garage doors. Back in your car and leave the keys in the ignition.
▪ Secure your pets if possible.

What to do AFTER a wildland fire:
▪ Check with fire officials before attempting to return to your home.
▪ Use caution when re-entering a burned area - flare-ups can occur.
▪ Check grounds for hot spots smoldering stumps and vegetation. Use your buckets of water.
▪ Check the roof and exterior areas for sparks and embers.
▪ Check the attic and throughout the house for hidden burning sparks and embers.
▪ Continue to check for problem areas for several days.
▪ Contact 911 if any danger is perceived.
▪ If burning outside your home was extensive, watch for soil erosion.
▪ Consult local experts on the best way to restore and replant your land with fire safe landscaping.

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