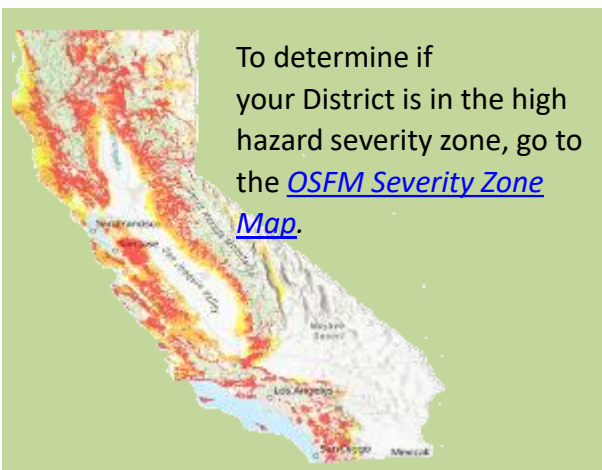


We don't know when or where wildfires will hit, but we do know California wildfire season can start in early spring and continue through late fall.

What steps can your District take to mitigate the effects of wildfires? How can your District become resilient during this ever-changing exposure? Read on for guidance on detecting your District's vulnerabilities and the importance of planning ahead.

Existing law requires CAL FIRE to identify "very high fire hazard severity zones" in the State. It also requires agencies, located in the high hazard severity zones, to have an elevated defensible space program. Contact [OSFM](#) for program requirements.



To determine if your District is in the high hazard severity zone, go to the [OSFM Severity Zone Map](#).

➤ CREATE DEFENSIBLE SPACE

Protecting your property and buildings is a key consideration in mitigating wildfire losses. Evaluating your vulnerabilities will help you identify actions prior to a wildfire.

Defensible space is meant to slow the spread of wildfires. It is a buffer created between a building and the landscape or wildland area surrounding it. The following is a condensed version of CAL FIRE's defensible space zones. Additional information is available at readyforwildfire.org.

Remember to check your local government and fire agencies for any additional defensible space or weed abatement ordinance requirements. Refer to the CAL FIRE website for additional details.

ZONE 0 Start Closest to Your Structure to be Ember-Resident - The first 5 feet from your structure is the most important. Keeping the area clear will help prevent embers from igniting materials. Embers can travel miles ahead of the active front.

ZONE 1 Lean, Clean and Green Zone - Extends 30 feet from structures. Remove all dead foliage, also remove from roofs and rain gutters. Trim trees to keep branches at least 10 feet from other trees and remove branches that hang over the roof. Remove or prune flammable plants, especially near windows. If there is a chimney, keep dead branches 10 feet away and relocate wood piles to Zone 2. Contact CAL FIRE for additional clearance requirements for commercial gas storage tanks or other flammable materials storage buildings. CAL FIRE recommends considering fire smart landscaping as an added measure of protection.

PLANNING AHEAD FOR WILDFIRE SEASON

ZONE 2 Reduce Fuel Zone - Extends from 30 feet to 100 feet out from structures or to the property line, whichever is closer. Cut grass to no more than 4 inches and remove dead foliage and small branches. Review CAL FIRE guidance on spacing based on the type and size of plants, trees, and land slope. Ensure exposed wood piles have at least 10 feet of clearance in all directions.



Windows – Wildfire heat can cause windows to break even before the building is on fire which allows flying embers to enter the building. Single-paned and large windows are particularly vulnerable. Consider dual-paned windows to reduce of breakage. Installing screens may also reduce embers from entering the building. Remember to keep plants trimmed near windows.

➤ CONDUCT AN ASSET INVENTORY

Make certain your interior and exterior assets are documented, preferably with photos and/or videos. Document information such as building names, values, content values, GPS coordinates, property descriptions, serial numbers, purchase and replacement cost values, etc. Make duplicates and store this information in a secure location.

➤ HARDEN YOUR BUILDINGS

There are generally three ways your buildings can be exposed to wildfire; direct flames from a wildfire or other neighboring burning buildings, radiant heat from nearby burning plants or structures; or flying embers. Areas to consider include:

Roofs - Wood or shingle roofs are at high risk of being destroyed during a wildfire. Materials such as composition, metal, clay or tile are recommended. Remove vegetative debris from roofs and keep rain gutters clear or enclose rain gutters to prevent accumulation of plant debris.

Vents – Cover vent openings with tightly woven metal mesh to reduce openings for flying embers. Consider ember and flame-resistant vents such as Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) vents.

➤ DEVELOP EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Planning includes developing emergency response procedures to guide the District when an emergency event occurs. Taking the time to develop customized plans is essential; however, it's equally important to train, test and practice the procedures to ensure they are effective. Emergency procedures include, but are not limited to the following programs:

Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP)

COOP is part of the fundamental mission of public entities. The changing threat environment and the severity of natural and man-made disasters highlight the need for careful planning that enables agencies to continue their essential functions across a broad spectrum of emergencies disrupting normal operations.

PLANNING AHEAD FOR WILDFIRE SEASON

COOP Continued: The COOP process focuses on two questions, (1) What operations performed by the District are critical and essential? and (2) What resources are required to continue those essential operations during an emergency or disruption? Development resources area available at [FEMA Continuity Resource Toolkit](#).

Wildfire Emergency Recovery Assistance Plan

The optimum time to identify emergency recovery resources is before a wildfire incident occurs. Research local, state, and federal resources available to your District as well as your employees and develop an action plan that will be ready if needed.

- [FEMA Assistance](#) for Governments and Private Non-Profits After a Disaster
- [FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant Programs Post Fire](#)
- California Office of Emergency Services (OES) [Wildfire Recovery Resources](#)

Cal/OSHA Emergency Action Plan (CCR3220)

The standard requires California employers to have an [Emergency Action Plan](#) (EAP) in place. The purpose of the EAP is to establish emergency response procedures to safeguard employees and on-site visitors in the event of an emergency. It outlines evacuation procedures, shelter-in-place procedures, emergency kits, emergency shelter in place supplies, and other relevant procedures based on potential emergencies that may occur.

In addition to general procedures, the EAP should include procedures for specific types of emergencies, such as fires, earthquakes, floods, utility outage, etc.

Cal/OSHA Fire Prevention Plan (CCR3221)

Cal/OSHA requires California employers to have a [Fire Prevention Plan](#). The plan focuses on the fire control equipment and systems in place. Procedures must be developed to identify potential fire hazards, ignitions sources, and control measures.

Cal/OSHA Wildfire Smoke Protection (CCR 5141.1)

Cal/OSHA has adopted the [Wildfire Smoke Standard](#) to help protect employees who work outdoors during wildfire smoke conditions.



The standard applies to worksites where the current Air Quality Index (AQI) for airborne particulate matter (PM2.5) is 151 or greater and where it is reasonably anticipated employees could be exposed to wildfire smoke. Review the standard for applicable exceptions.

Access to the AQI is available through the Air Now App or at [airnow.gov](#). The Weather App on Smart phones also provide air quality data.



For additional guidance take a look at the SDRMA Wildfire Smoke Protection Advisory at SDRMA [MemberPlus](#) under the Risk Control dropdown.