

# Bull Run Mountain Estates Community Evacuation Guide

## Evacuating To Safety



A Wildfire Evacuation Guide for Residents and Visitors



## Wildfire

For many people, the words "wildfire" and "Virginia" might not seem to go together, but wildfire risk is a genuine concern. Each year, about 1,600 wildfires consume a total of 8,000-10,000 acres of forest and grassland in the state. During extreme drought related conditions these numbers may double. However fires don't need to be large to be devastating, for every 10 acres that burn in Virginia, a home or other structure is damaged or would have been had it not been for the response of the first responders with the forestry and fire departments.

## Local Conditions

A wildfire can ignite your home through radiation, convection or firebrands. These three ignition sources need to be understood in order to make your home and the surrounding area less susceptible to ignition.

A house can ignite when exposed to very high temperatures even if the flames do not come in direct contact with the structure. This is called radiation heat transfer. Ignition of your home by radiation is more likely when it is exposed to a very large fire within close range for a sustained period of time. By clearing large trees and heavy brush, and choosing building materials that can withstand high temperatures, your home is less likely to ignite by radiative heat transfer.

Ignition of a house by convective heat transfer requires the fire to come in direct contact with the structure. Even a very small flame can ignite a house if it comes in contact with the house for a long enough period of time. By clearing even small amounts of vegetation, choosing nonflammable siding and deck material, and building on a minimal slope, your home is much less likely to ignite by convective heat transfer. Firebrands are pieces of burning materials that detach from a fire and are carried by the wind. Severe wildland fires can produce heavy firebrand showers that can travel large distances (one mile or more). The chance of a firebrand igniting your home will depend on the size of the firebrand, and the materials, design and construction of your home. By choosing a fire rated roof and nonflammable siding and deck material, you can reduce the risk of your house igniting from firebrands.

**Even with all of the mitigation efforts underway, the risk of uncontrolled wildfire is at historical proportions.**



# What you can do

Take personal responsibility for your own safety:

1. Develop an Evacuation Plan
2. Assemble an Evacuation Kit
3. Develop a Neighborhood Network
4. Practice your Evacuation Plan
5. Stay Informed
6. Evacuate when told to do so



**Prepare Now!**



**Evacuate Early!**



**Evacuate Safely!**

## 1. Develop an Evacuation Plan

Your Evacuation Plan should be simple enough to be followed when under stress, detailed enough to cover these key elements and understood by everyone.



- ✓ Identify your evacuation routes:
  - At least two ways out of your neighborhood
  - At least two ways off the mountain

The evacuation routes determined by authorities will be dependent upon many factors including which way the wildfire is moving. Primary evacuation routes are included as a map attached to this guidance.

**Exit Bull Run Mountain to Mountain Road. Utilize New Road to the North, Logmill Road in the Central Region, and Mountain Road to the South to go to Evergreen Country Club. This will be the initial collection point.**

- ✓ Identify when you will evacuate:  
Typically you should evacuate when you:
  - Become aware of an approaching wildfire
  - Feel threatened
  - When public safety officials advise you to leave the area

Keep in mind that wildfires starting in mountainous areas or in valley communities may quickly threaten the mountain communities.

When time allows, evacuation orders will be provided by WTOP Radio 103.5 FM, Comcast Cable Channel 23, and the PW Community Alert Network which will alert by cell phone, pager, or email.

**Keep your car fuel tank at least ½ full at all times and be sure your vehicle is in good working order at all times.**

- ✓ Identify shut-off valves for:
  - Electricity – Leave electricity on to power well pumps and porch lights.
  - Gas
  - Water
  - LPG or propane
- ✓ Identify a family meeting place  
A family meeting place should be someplace that is:
  - A temporary place to assemble before moving on to an evacuation center
  - Safely outside of the evacuation area
  - Doesn't interfere with emergency response activities
  - Easily traveled to by family members

Remember family members may be coming from different locations such as work, school, appointments, home or other locations. If unable to reach home, all family members must have a place to meet and regroup.

✓ Identify Evacuation Center Locations

Evacuation Center Locations will be determined by public safety officials and possibly the American Red Cross at the time of the evacuation. Evacuation Center locations will be based upon the location of the wildfire, evacuation routes used and numbers of evacuees anticipated.

**Initial evacuation collection point will be the Evergreen Country Club. If necessary people will be directed to shelters from there. Shelter locations will be announced through radio and television media or you may contact the 24-hour automated phone line PWC-INFO (703-792-4636).**



✓ Identify an Out of Area Emergency Contact

- Someone out of the telephone area code or out of State
- Available to receive calls and pass messages
- Everyone needs to know the contact's phone number
- Cordless phones will not work in a power outage, always maintain an older style plug in telephone

*During a major emergency or disaster, local telephone circuits may become over loaded whereas long distance circuits remain accessible. Identify a relative or friend who lives out of the area (out of the area code or even out of state) who can be used to check in with or pass messages back and forth to your immediate family members that may have gotten separated from you during the evacuation.*

✓ Special Considerations for Evacuations and Care of:

- Children and Infants
- Elderly
- Dependent Adults
- Persons with Special Needs such as medical and mental special care
- Pets, Livestock and Horses

Special needs populations require special evacuation assistance. Special needs populations are those persons that cannot evacuate themselves without assistance. Don't rely on public safety agencies to evacuate you, your family or pets and livestock. Work with your neighbors to develop the assistance that you or they may need during an evacuation. Identify those living alone or those needing special assistance and plan today how you will evacuate them during an emergency.

## 2. Develop an Evacuation Kit

An evacuation kit should be readily available and visible at all times, updated frequently and located near the front door of your house or in your car.

### *Items to include in your Evacuation Kit include:*

- Copy of your Evacuation Plan
- Evacuation map and local area map
- Important family documents and telephone numbers
- Prescription medicines and eyeglasses
- First Aid kit
- At least one change of clothing, pillow and blankets
- Flashlight with extra batteries
- Hygiene supplies
- Entertainment material for all family members
- Food and water for all family members
- Cash and coin for emergency purchases
- Extra set of car keys
- Special items for infant, children, elderly or those with special needs
- Safety glasses or goggles, and bandana for blowing wind and fire embers
- Emergency tools including work gloves, sturdy shoes, and battery operated radio
- Essential valuables
- Cell phone and charger



## 3. Develop a Neighborhood Network

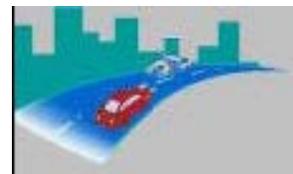
- ✓ Work with neighbors to identify:
  - People with special needs
  - People who need transportation to the evacuation center
- ✓ Work with neighbors to coordinate the evacuation of pets, livestock and horses.
- ✓ Work with neighbors to identify utilities that may require shutting down in your absence.
- ✓ Work with neighbors to identify those protective actions that are required around your home when wildfire approaches.
- ✓ Work with neighbors to develop a neighborhood communication plan, which includes a telephone notification tree to notify others in case of emergency or evacuation.



You may not always be at home during times of wildfire. You need your neighbors to help protect your family, pets, livestock and house in your absence!

## 4. Practice your Evacuation Plan

- ✓ Quiz your children periodically so they remember what to do in case of wildfire.
- ✓ Conduct regular fire and emergency drills.
- ✓ Drive evacuation routes so you remain familiar with emergency travel routes and road conditions.
- ✓ Maintain your evacuation kit with fresh batteries, food, water and important family documents.
- ✓ Be sure that all visitors and guests know and understand your evacuation plan and evacuation routes.



Practice, practice and practice. Repetition breeds the automatic response you will need when having to act under stress during emergencies.



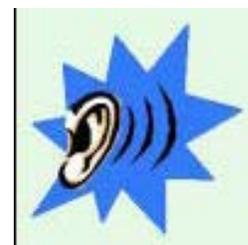
## 5. Stay Informed

- ✓ Stay Informed on current Weather and Fire Threat.

**National Weather Service Eastern Region HQ**  
Telephone: (703) 260-0107 - follow the prompts  
Web Link: <http://www.erh.noaa.gov/>

**Virginia Department of Forestry weather info page**  
Web Link:

<http://www.dof.virginia.gov/fire/weather.shtml>



- ✓ Stay Informed on current emergency plans and preparations.

**Prince William County**  
**Department of Fire and Rescue**  
(703) 792-6800

**Prince William County**  
**Emergency Management & Preparedness**  
(703) 792-6500

**Prince William County**

**Dial 9-1-1 for Emergencies**

## 6. Evacuate when told to do so

**Evacuate immediately if told to do so! Evacuate when you become aware of an approaching wildfire. Evacuate if you feel threatened.**

**Evacuate before it becomes too late!**

- ✓ Listen to your car radio or battery-powered radio and follow the instructions of local emergency officials.
- ✓ Park your vehicle facing outward and place your keys in the ignition.
- ✓ Locate all family members and pets to prepare for evacuation.
- ✓ Prepare livestock and horses for transportation.
- ✓ Wear protective clothing and sturdy shoes. Wear 100% cotton clothing to include long sleeve shirt, long pants and hat. Have goggles available in case of winds or flying fire embers and a dry bandana or handkerchief to cover your mouth and nose.
- ✓ Place your evacuation kit in your car.
- ✓ Place a ladder outside for roof access for firefighters.
- ✓ Place a connected garden hose and buckets full of water around the outside of the house.
- ✓ Assemble firefighting tools near the house, including: shovel, rake, hoe, etc.
- ✓ Move propane BBQ appliances away from structures.
- ✓ Remove all combustible material such as lawn and patio furniture, doormats and decorations from around the perimeter of your house.
- ✓ Remove combustible window furnishings from around all windows.
- ✓ Leave lights on in the house and doors unlocked.
- ✓ Leave windows closed and heating/air conditioning off.



## The Evacuation Process

**Officials will determine the areas to be evacuated and the routes to use depending upon the fire's location, fire behavior, wind, terrain, etc.**

- Law enforcement agencies are typically responsible for enforcing an evacuation order. Follow their directions promptly and exactly!
- You will be advised of potential evacuations as early as possible. You must take the initiative to stay informed and aware.
- Listen to your radio/TV and for announcements from law enforcement and emergency personnel.
- You may be directed to a temporary assembly area off the mountain to await transfer to an evacuation center.
- When heavy smoke reduces visibility, movement may be restricted only to escorted convoys.
- Always drive cautiously!

# Returning Home



**Officials will determine when it is safe for you to return to your home. This will be done as soon as possible with primary consideration given safety and accessibility.**

- Local officials will follow a Re-Entry Plan in working towards getting you back into your neighborhood.
- This will typically take place when it is safe for you, safe for emergency personnel, safe for utility workers and routes are open and accessible.
- Prior to re-entry utilities will need to be repaired and in service, sewer and sanitation will need to be repaired, running water will need to be available and essential services will need to be available such as gas, medical services and food.

These things take time. **BE PATIENT.** The safety of you and the safety of emergency service personnel are the priority.

- When you do return home:
  - Be alert for downed power lines and other hazards.
  - Check propane tanks, regulators, and lines before turning gas on.
  - Check your residence carefully for hidden embers or smoldering fires.
  - Contact your insurance company if you have suffered loss or damage.





# When Wildfire Approaches



- ❑ **If you see a wildfire, call 9-1-1.** Don't assume that someone else has already called. Describe the location of the fire, speak slowly and clearly, and answer any questions asked by the dispatcher.
- ❑ **Evacuate when wildfire approaches, you feel threatened, or directed by public safety officials.** Check with local radio and television stations for evacuation instructions and information. Once the evacuation order is given, please follow all directives from fire and law enforcement personnel. Evacuate your pets, livestock and all family members who are not essential to preparing the home. Anyone with medical or physical limitations and the young and the elderly should be evacuated immediately

## BEFORE THE FIRE APPROACHES YOUR HOUSE

- ❑ **Park vehicles facing out with windows rolled up and keys in the ignition.** Disconnect any automatic garage door openers so that doors can still be opened by hand if the power goes out. Close all garage doors.
- ❑ **Place your evacuation kit and important valuables in your vehicle.** Place valuable papers, mementoes and anything "you can't live without" inside the car in the garage, ready for quick departure. Any pets still with you should also be put in the car right before leaving.
- ❑ **Shut Off Gas.** Shutoff any natural gas, propane, or fuel oil supplies at the source.
- ❑ **Close outside** attic, eaves and basement vents, windows, doors, pet doors, etc.
- ❑ **Remove any combustible items** from around the house, including woodpiles, lawn furniture, barbecue grills, tarp coverings, newspapers or doormats, etc. Move them outside of your defensible space.
- ❑ **Place a garden hose and buckets full of water around your house.** Connect garden hoses. Fill any pools, hot tubs, garbage cans, tubs or other large containers with water. Please do not leave any water hoses or sprinklers on when you leave your residence; this reduces the available water to fight the fire. If you have gas-powered pumps for water make sure they are fueled and ready.
- ❑ **Place aluminum ground ladders** outside your house for firefighting use.
- ❑ **Close Inside** Close all doors inside the house to prevent draft. Open the damper on your fireplace, but close the fireplace screen. Remove flammable drapes and curtains. Close all shutters, metal blinds or heavy non-combustible window coverings to reduce radiant heat.
- ❑ **Leave electricity on.** Turn on outside lights and leave a light on in every room to make the house more visible in heavy smoke. Turn off heating and air conditioning.

## PREPARING TO LEAVE

- ❑ **Don't Lock Up.** Leave doors and windows closed but unlocked. It may be necessary for firefighters to gain quick entry into your home to fight fire. The entire area will be isolated and patrolled by sheriff's deputies or police.
- ❑ **Cover up** by wearing 100% cotton long pants, long sleeved shirt, boots (leather preferred), goggles, hat and bandana for your face.
- ❑ **Notify** your out of area contact of your intended evacuation destination.
- ❑ **Leave a note** attached to your front door for neighbors and public safety officials advising of your evacuation destination and telephone number if available.

# If You Become Trapped – Stay Calm!

## **Survival in a Vehicle:**

- This is dangerous and should only be done in an emergency, but you can survive the firestorm if you stay in your car. It is much less dangerous than trying to run from a fire on foot.
- Roll up windows and close air vents. Drive slowly with headlights on. Watch for other vehicles and pedestrians. Do not drive through heavy smoke.
- If you have to stop, park away from the heaviest trees and brush. Turn headlights on and ignition off. Keep windows rolled up and air vents closed.
- Get on the floor and cover up with a wool or 100% cotton blanket or coat.
- Stay in the vehicle until the main fire passes. Do not run! Engine may stall and not restart. Air currents may rock the car. Some smoke and sparks may enter the vehicle. Temperature inside will increase. Metal gas tanks rarely explode.
- Use your cell phone to call 9-1-1 and notify officials of your situation and location.

## **While on foot:**

- The best temporary shelter is in a sparse fuel area. On a steep mountainside, the backside is safer. Avoid canyons, natural "chimneys" and saddles.
- If a road is nearby, lie face down along the road cut or in the ditch on the uphill side. Cover yourself with anything that will shield you from the fire's heat.
- Seek a depression with sparse fuel. Clear fuel away from the area while the fire is approaching and then lie face down in the depression and cover yourself. Stay down until after the fire passes!
- Cover mouth and nose and cover up your body with cotton clothing or a large cotton coat or blanket.
- Use your cell phone to call 9-1-1 and notify officials of your situation and location.

## **While at home:**

- Keep your family together.
- Call 9-1-1 to notify officials of your situation and location.
- Fill sinks and tubs with cold water.
- Keep doors and windows closed, but unlocked.
- Stay inside your house.
- Stay away from outside walls and windows.
- If your house catches fire, move to the far end of the house and close windows and inside doors to restrict the spread of the fire. When it is safe to do so, exit your house and move to a "blackened" area of your property or neighborhood that has already burned. It is safer to be in an area that has already burned than an area not yet burned.

***It will get hot in the house, but this is much safer than being outside and exposed to flames and dangerous fire gases.***

## **After the fire passes:**

- Check your family and neighbors.
- Check roof and exterior of house for fire.
- Check under decks and inside attic for fire.
- Check your yard for burning trees, woodpiles (between pieces of firewood), etc.
- Extinguish embers and sparks. The water you put into your pool or hot tub and other containers will come in handy now. If the power is out, try connecting a hose to the outlet on your water heater.
- Continue to check for fires, embers and sparks for at least 12 to 24 hours after the fire has passed.

## MY EVACUATION PLAN

### Evacuation Routes out of my neighborhood

Primary:

\_\_\_\_\_

Alternate:

\_\_\_\_\_

### Evacuation Routes off the mountain

If wildfire approaches from the North:

\_\_\_\_\_

If wildfire approaches from the South:

\_\_\_\_\_

If wildfire approaches from the East:

\_\_\_\_\_

If wildfire approaches from the West:

\_\_\_\_\_

### Designated Family Meeting Place (outside evacuation area)

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

### Evacuation Tasks (identify family member assigned to each task)

Ready exterior of house for evacuation

(Combustibles, propane, hose, water, ladders)

\_\_\_\_\_

Ready interior of house for evacuation

(Windows, window furnishings, air conditioning)

\_\_\_\_\_

Ready vehicle for evacuation

\_\_\_\_\_

Ready evacuation kit and important valuables

\_\_\_\_\_

Ready pets and livestock for evacuation

\_\_\_\_\_

Ready children and elderly members for evacuation

\_\_\_\_\_

Leave note for neighbors and public safety officials

\_\_\_\_\_

## IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS

### Emergency 9-1-1

#### Out of Area Emergency Contact

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Neighborhood Contact for Evacuation Assistance

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Children's Schools & Childcare

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Veterinary & Animal Boarding Services

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**Prince William County Fire & Rescue** 703.792.6800

**Virginia Department of Forestry** 434.977.6555

**Prince William County Police** 703.792.6500

**American Red Cross – Prince William** 703.368.4511

