



City of
OAKLAND
California

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Northern California Wildfires are Important Reminders to Increase Fire Prevention Measures

Oakland, CA — The City of Oakland and the Oakland Fire Department encourage residents to take extra precautions to help reduce wildfire risk. California is in its fourth consecutive year of severe drought and the wildfires that have burned thousands of acres in Lake, Napa, Calaveras and Amador counties serve as a reminder to all Oaklanders to follow fire prevention measures and be prepared.

Approximately 90% of all wildfires in California are caused by human activity, according to the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE). That is why we need the community's help to reduce wildfire risk.

“We can achieve a greater level of fire safety by working with our community and with our wildfire prevention partners,” said Oakland Fire Chief Teresa Deloach Reed. “We love our beautiful Oakland hills and we want people to increase preparedness and be extremely aware of any potential fire risk during this very dry season.”

Oakland's wildland-urban interface is one of the most severe wildfire-risk areas in the nation, due to densely packed housing (approximately 21,000 homes in an area of about 16.5 sq.mi). The 1991 Firestorm still ranks as one of the largest fire disasters ever.

OFD working to reduce fire risk

The Oakland Fire Department has taken aggressive steps to reduce fire risk. Over the past year, OFD has:

- Reduced fuels along major roadways, large open spaces, City lots and park lands.
- Continued its efforts with the vegetation management inspection program to ensure all properties are kept in a “fire-safe” manner.
- Provided a free vegetation chipping and removal program.

How you can help

Keep your property fire-safe

All property owners in the Wildfire Assessment District are required to maintain their property in a fire-safe manner. Oakland Fire Department requirements include:

- Keep a 30-foot defensible space around all buildings/structures.
- Additional defensible space outward to 100 feet from all buildings and surrounding, neighboring structures may be required.
- Keep a 10-foot minimum clearance next to the roadside; more may be required.
- Remove all portions of trees within 10 feet of chimney and/or stovepipe outlets.
- Spark arrestors are required on all fireplaces.
- Keep trees adjacent to or overhanging structures free of dead/dying wood.
- Keep roofs free of leaves, needles, or other dead/dying wood.
- Provide street address numbers on buildings/structures that are clearly visible from the roadside; minimum height: 4 inches, and in a contrasting color.
- Remove all tree limbs within six feet of the ground.
- Remove dead/dying vegetation from property.
- When clearing vegetation, use care when operating electric and gas powered equipment such as lawnmowers, one small spark may start a fire; a string trimmer is much safer.

General fire prevention tips

- Never discard lit cigarettes.
- Never burn landscape debris like leaves or branches on NO Burn Days or when it's windy or areas where not allowed.
- Never mow or trim dry grass on a Red Flag Warning Day. (Mow before 10 a.m. on a day when its not hot and windy).
- Never use lawn mowers in dry vegetation.
- Never pull your vehicle over in dry grass.
- Report any suspicious activities to prevent arson.

Be prepared

- Subscribe to red flag warnings when fire danger is most severe: <http://bit.ly/1OtWOqc>
- Take an emergency preparedness class through CORE. www.oaklandcore.com.
- Join in Creek to Bay Day on Saturday, September 19, and other volunteer cleanup events throughout the year to reduce the fuel loads while beautifying Oakland

Additional Resources

For more information about steps you can take to reduce wildfire risk:

- Oakland Fire Department: <http://www2.oaklandnet.com/Government/o/OFD/s/WildfireDistrict/Resources/HomeownersResources/index.htm>
- For general compliance standards and guidelines, [download the 2015 Inspection Notice](#).
- Review the Homeowner's Guide to Fire Prevention in the Oakland Hills at <http://bit.ly/1Klevd7>
- CAL FIRE prevention and preparedness information: www.ReadyforWildfire.org

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