

# SOLVANG FIRE DEPARTMENT

## PROTECTING YOUR PROPERTY FROM WILDFIRE

The City of Solvang has several areas that are exposed to the dangers of Wildland fires. The following information can be used to better prepare you and your property before a fire does occur.

### Recommendations for Preparing Your Property

Make sure you have an easy to see address numbers on your house and driveway.

Remove flammable vegetation within a 50-foot horizontal perimeter of any structure.

Do not allow piled brush or dead branches and vegetation to accumulate on your property.

Remove fire fuels from next to your house.

- Such as a woodpile.
- Trim overhanging tree limbs.
- Clean dry leaves from the rain gutters.

Install ¼ inch wire mesh over attic and ground vents to prevent hot embers from blowing in.

Have noncombustible roofing on your house.

Access to your house is critical.

- Remove any limbs or vegetation that extend over the driveway or road that will hamper emergency vehicle access.
- Overhead clearance of 13'6" must be maintained.
- A 10-foot per side clearance along your driveways or road should be kept.
- Maintain adequate clearance around your entire house for quick access by the Fire Department.

## If a Fire is Approaching

**Have evacuation plans already in place.** Be prepared and have a plan to evacuate immediately, and have a separate plan if you are given advance notice.

Consider:

- A meeting point.
- A contact person.
- Plan what valuables you would want to take--momentos, tax and insurance documents, family pictures, etc.
- Take a change of clothes, and personal items such as medications
- Gather your pets early, so you do not have to locate them at the last minute if you need to evacuate.
- Make sure you have proper identification with you with your current address to verify your right to return to your home when it is safe to do so.

Close all windows and doors. Close the inside doors also. That will help slow the possible spread of a fire if your house would catch fire.

Turn on your porch light. This can help firefighters locate your house in heavy smoke or at night.

Park your car heading out of the driveway. Have an extra set of keys available. Keys have been lost or misplaced during the stress of evacuation.

Make sure you know how to open your automatic garage door opener if you lose electricity.

Keep your gas tank at least ½ full at all times. Fires and earthquakes can leave us without electricity, which will make it difficult to get gasoline.

If you are driving in a fire area, close your windows, drive with the lights on, and drive slowly. Have pre-planned and alternate escape routes.

If you do not evacuate, and the fire front approaches, go inside your house, and stay calm. After the fire has passed. Check the roof and surround areas immediately for hot embers. Maintain the checks for several hours for smoldering embers.

Have garden hoses available around your house. **Do not** waste water by wetting down your roof or yard. The radiant heat will evaporate that water as the fire approaches. Save the water for the fire department or to put out embers where they land.

Your careful planning and actions during a fire can save your home. Be prepared. Talk to your neighbors to share your resources. Ask the Fire Department for professional advice and assistance.

**Important: We do not recommend you stay and fight a fire. Your physical fitness, health, proper clothing, and training must be considered. Many civilians have been injured when they put themselves in situations they don't really understand.**