



# 2008 FIRE SEASON

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Presented by:

Battalion Chief Matt McCaslin

# Today's Presentation

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- Historical look at Large Fires in Santa Cruz
- Last years three BIG fires in Santa Cruz
- State & Area Fire Coordination
- How citizens can be better prepared

# Low Fuel Moistures & Low Relative Humidity's = WILDLAND FIRES

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# Fire Season Nearly Year Round

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- On Tuesday Dec. 9<sup>th</sup>...
- Ventura County
- ½ acre fire blooms to 30 acres from the wind.



# Major Local Fires

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- 1948 Pine Mountain Fire (Newell Creek)  
19,000 Acres
- 1954 Ben Lomond Dump Fire  
1,500 Acres 24 Buildings
- 1960 Gazos Creek (Pescadero)  
2,500 Acres
- 1980 Last Chance (Big Basin) 400 Acres

# 1985 Lexington Fire

## 14,000 Acres      42 Homes



- Largest Mutual Aid Fire in California's History  
(at that time)



# 2002 CROY FIRE

3,127 Acres      31 Homes

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# 2008 Fires Santa Cruz County

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# Summit Fire

May 22, 2008 5:20am



# Summit Fire Location



- Summit Road & Mayman Flats
- Between Corralitos and Loma Prieta

# Summit Fire

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- 4,270 Acres
- 63 Homes & 69 Outbuildings
- Cost \$14.85 Million



# Summit Fire Evacuation & Security

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# Evacuation Centers

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# Summit Fire

## Governor Praises Work of Firefighters

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- Supervisor Tony Campos asks Governor Schwarzenegger for Emergency Declaration
- Declaration allows for statewide resources & \$



# Summit Fire Volunteer Animal Rescue

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# Summit Fire Resources

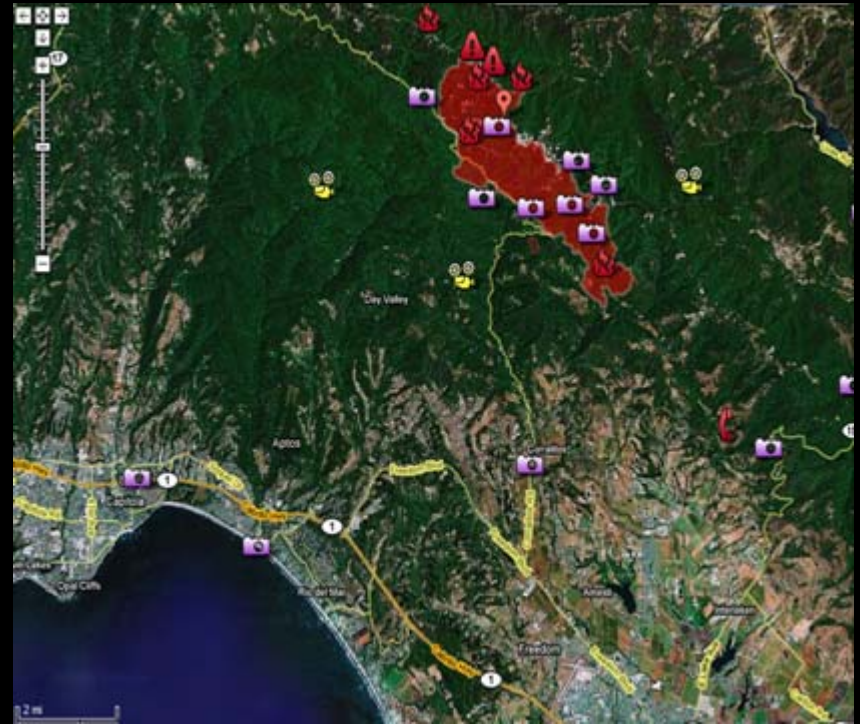
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- 2,683 Firefighters
- 83 Crews
- 2 Air Tankers
- C-130 Tanker
- 13 Helicopters
- 259 Engines
- 37 Water Tenders
- 54 Dozers



# Summit Fire

## Contained May 27<sup>th</sup> 6:00pm





# During Summit Fire Quail Hollow Fire

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# During Summit Fire Quail Hollow Fire

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15 Acres

Handled all by  
“In County  
Resources”





# Martin Fire

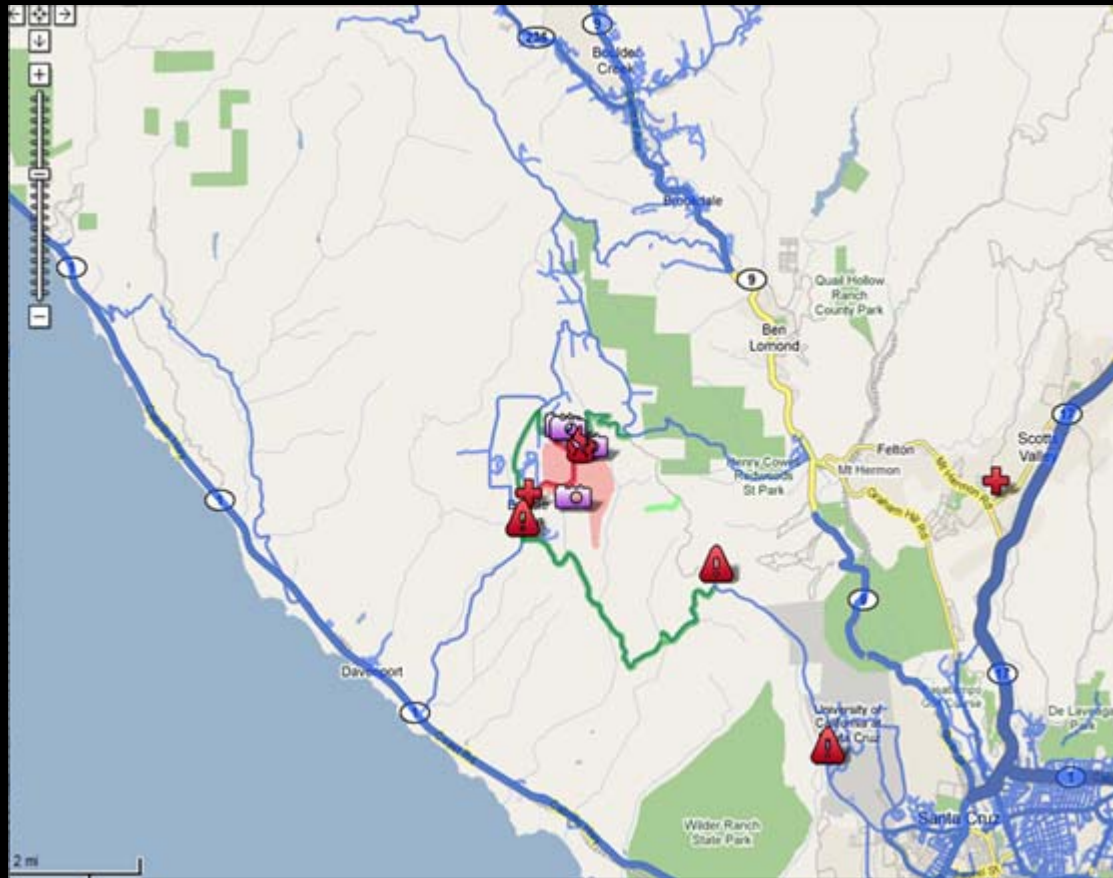
June 11, 2008 2:54pm

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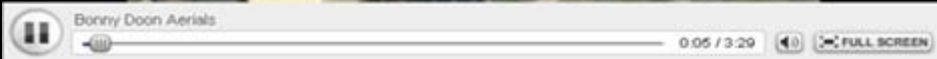
# Martin Fire Location



- Bonny Doon Ecological Reserve
- Martin Road East of Bonny Doon
- N. of Smith Grade Rd.

# Martin Fire

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- 520 Acres
- 11 Homes
- Cost \$4.9 Million



# Martin Smoke Column from Westside Santa Cruz City



# Bonny Doon Airport Staging & Base Camp

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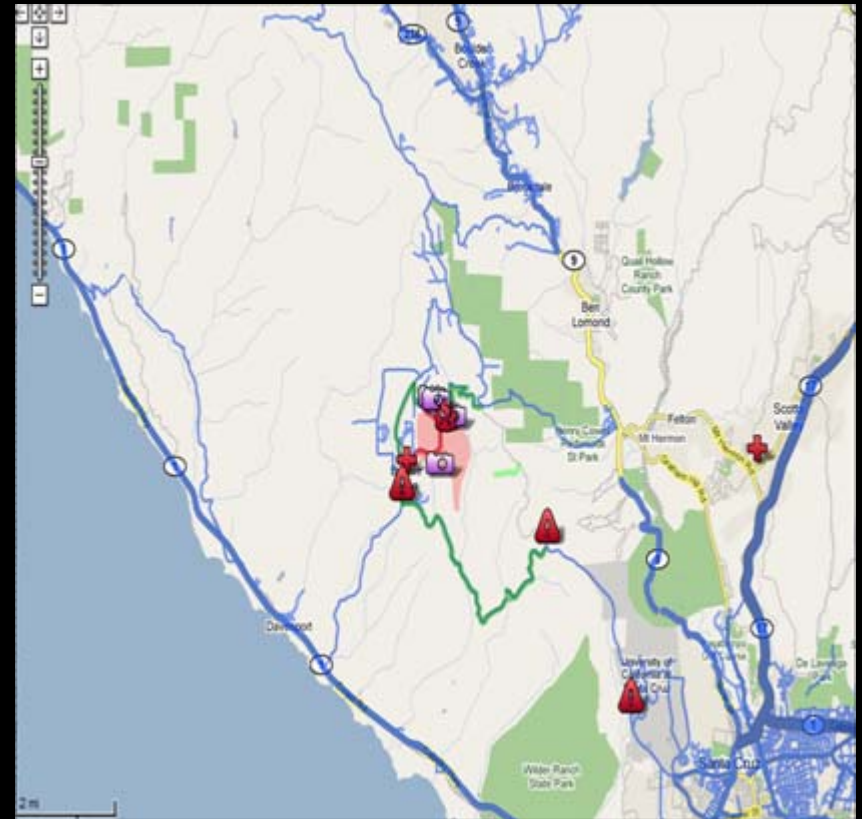




# Martin Fire

## Contained June 16<sup>th</sup> 6:00pm

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# Trabing Fire

June 20, 2008 2:10 pm

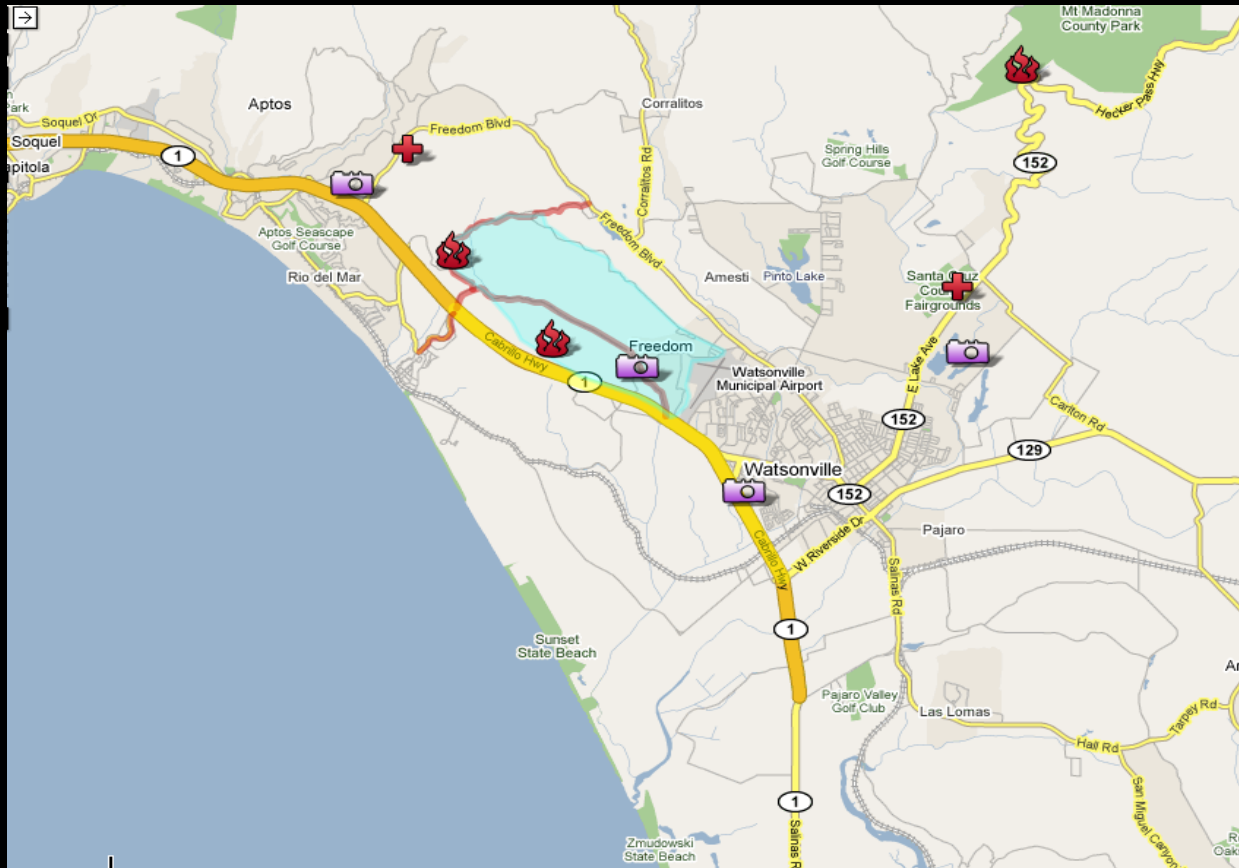
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***TRABING FIRE***



# Trabing Fire Location



- Highway 1 near Buena Vista
- Larkin Valley Road area South and West from Freedom Blvd.

# Trabing Fire



- 620 Acres
- 26 Homes



# Trabing Fire from East Cliff Drive

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# Trabing Fire From Watsonville Community Hospital Rooftop



# Fire from Watsonville looking North

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# Highway 1 Completely Shut Down

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# Trabing fire taken from Seascape











# New Lightning Fires

## June 21st

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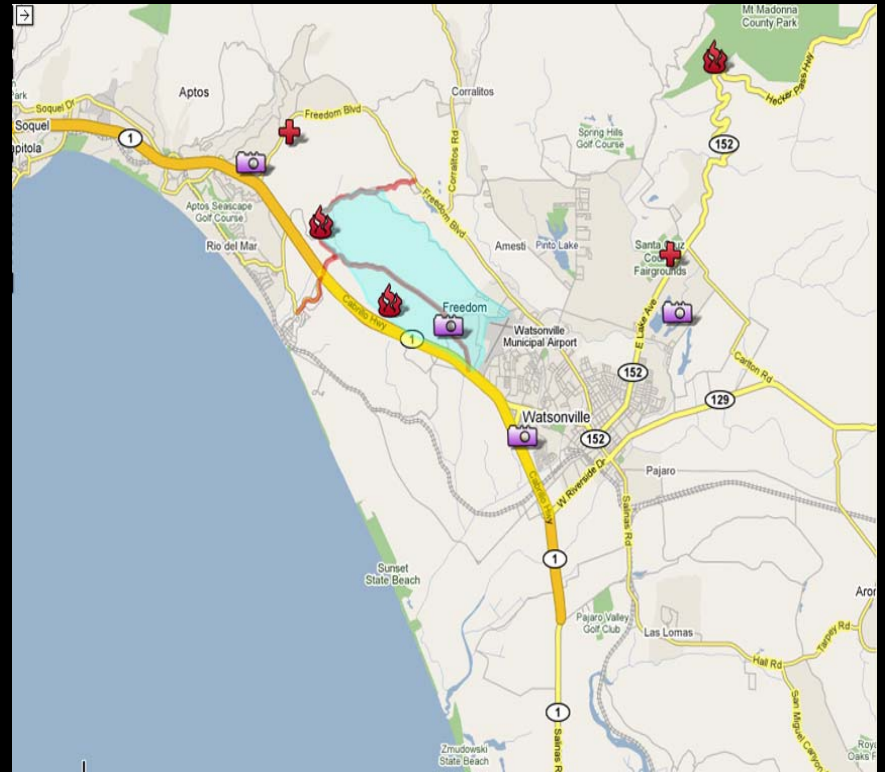
- 15 new fires
- Several 2+ Acres



# Trabing Fire

## Contained June 22 6:30 pm

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# Tankers

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# Helicopters

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# Dozers

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# Hand Crews

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# Engines

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# Engines Tool up Too!

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# Engine on Mobile Attack

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# Engine on Holding Action

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# Engines on Structure Protection

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# Engine Strike Teams

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# 2007 Witch Fire Strike Team Visit from President Bush

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# Fire Camps





# Daily Briefings

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# 80% of homes ignite from embers and small fires starting around the home!

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- Clean Roof & Gutters
- Provide 100' Clearance
- Cover all openings to house
- Keep all combustibles away from the house





# Evacuation Checklist

## What to Take

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- Food & Water
- Medications
- First Aid Kit
- Pets
- Cell Phones
- Important Documents
- Jewelry
- Check book, Credit Cards, etc.





# Don't Wait to Evacuate

## If Advised to Evacuate, Do So Immediately

- Wear protective clothing—sturdy shoes, cotton or woolen clothing, long pants, a long-sleeved shirt, gloves, and a handkerchief to protect your face.
- Take your Disaster Supplies Kit.
- Lock your home.
- Tell someone when you left and where you are going.
- Choose a route away from fire hazards. Watch for changes in the speed and direction of fire and smoke.

## If You're sure You Have Time, Take Steps to Protect Your Home Inside:

- Close windows, vents, doors, venetian blinds or non-combustible window coverings, and heavy drapes. Remove lightweight curtains.
- Shut off gas at the meter. Turn off pilot lights.
- Open fireplace damper. Close fireplace screens.
- Move flammable furniture into the center of the home away from windows and sliding-glass doors
- Turn on a light in each room to increase the visibility of your home in heavy smoke.





# Wildfire Protection Begins at Home

## Practice Wildfire Safety

- People start most wildfires...find out how you can promote and practice wildfire safety.
- Contact your local fire department, health department, or forestry office for information on fire laws. Make sure that fire vehicles can get to your home. Clearly mark all driveway entrances and display your name and address.
- Report hazardous conditions that could cause a wildfire.
- Teach children about fire safety. Keep matches out of their reach.
- Post fire emergency telephone numbers.
- Plan several escape routes away from your home by car and by foot.
- Talk to your neighbors about wildfire safety. Plan how the neighborhood could work together after a wildfire. Make a list of your neighbors' skills, such as medical or technical. Consider how you could help neighbors who have special needs, such as elderly or disabled persons. Make plans to take care of children who may be on their own if parents can't get home.

## Protect Your Home

- Regularly clean roof and gutters.
- Inspect chimneys at least twice a year. Clean them at least once a year. Keep the dampers in good working order. Equip chimneys and stovepipes with a spark arrester that meets the requirements of National Fire Protection Association Code 211. (Contact your local fire department for exact specifications.)
- Use 1/2-inch mesh screen beneath porches, decks, floor areas, and the home itself. Also, screen openings to floors, roof, and attic. Install a smoke detector on each level of your home, especially near bedrooms; test monthly and change the batteries at least once each year.
- Teach each family member how to use the fire extinguisher (ABC type) and show them where it's kept.
- Keep a ladder that will reach the roof.
- Consider installing protective shutters or heavy fire-resistant drapes.
- Keep handy household items that can be used as fire tools: a rake, ax, handsaw or chainsaw, bucket, and shovel.



# 100-Foot Safety Zone New Law

## Create a 30- to 100-Foot Safety Zone Around Your Home.

- Within this area, you can take steps to reduce potential exposure to flames and radiant heat. Homes built in pine forests should have a minimum safety zone of 100 feet. If your home sits on a steep slope, standard protective measures may not suffice. Contact your local fire department or forestry office for additional information.
- Rake leaves, dead limbs, and twigs. Clear all flammable vegetation.
- Remove leaves and rubbish from under structures and dispose of them properly.
- Thin a 15-foot space between tree crowns, and remove limbs within 15 feet of the ground.
- Remove dead branches that extend over the roof.
- Prune tree branches and shrubs within 15 feet of a stovepipe or chimney outlet.
- Ask the power company to clear branches from power lines.
- Remove vines from the walls of the home.
- Mow grass regularly.
- Clear a 10-foot area around propane tanks and the barbecue. Place a screen over the grill—use non-flammable material with mesh no coarser than one-quarter inch.
- Regularly dispose of newspapers and rubbish at an approved site. Follow local burning regulations.
- Place stove, fireplace, and grill ashes in a metal bucket, soak in water for two days, then bury the cold ashes in mineral soil.  
Store gasoline, oily rags, and other flammable materials in approved safety cans. Place cans in a safe location away from the base of buildings.
- Stack firewood at least 100 feet away and uphill from your home. Clear combustible material within 20 feet. Use only UL-approved wood burning devices.



# Family Disaster Planning

## Create a Family Disaster Plan

Wildfire and other types of disasters—hurricane, flood, tornado, earthquake, hazardous materials spill, winter storm—can strike quickly and without warning. You can cope with disaster by preparing in advance and working together. Meet with your family to create a disaster plan. **To get started. . .**

- Contact your local Red Cross chapter
- Find out about the hazards in your community.
- Ask how you would be warned.
- Find out how to prepare for each type of disaster.

## Meet With Your Family

- Discuss the types of disasters that could occur.
- Explain how to prepare and respond to each type of disaster.
- Discuss where to go and what to bring if advised to evacuate.
- Practice what you have discussed.

## Plan How Your Family Will Stay in Contact if Separated by Disaster

### Pick two meeting places:

1. A place a safe distance from your home in case of a home fire.
  2. A place outside your neighborhood in case you can't return home.
- Choose an out-of-state friend as a "check-in contact" for everyone to call.



# Outside Preparations

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## Outside:

- Seal attic and ground vents with pre-cut plywood or commercial seals.
- Turn off propane tanks.
- Place combustible patio furniture inside.
- Connect the garden hose to outside taps.
- Set up the portable gasoline-powered pump.
- Place lawn sprinklers on the roof and near above-ground fuel tanks. Wet the roof.
- Wet or remove shrubs within 15 feet of the home.
- Gather fire tools.







A GOOD DAY  
FIREFIGHTING...

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Everyone gets a safe  
return ticket home.