

PROTECT YOURSELF AFTER A WILDFIRE

Once the local fire or law enforcement authorities say that it is safe, you may return to your home. Because fire damages the stability of a structure, have a professional examine your home or office and certify that it is safe before you go in.

INSIDE SAFETY

- Use caution when entering burned areas. Hazards may still exist, including hot spots that can ignite or trees that can fall without warning.
- Be careful: avoid walking on smoldering surfaces. After a fire, the ground may contain heat pockets that can cause severe injury or spark another fire.
- Check the attic. If you see smoke or fire, get out of the house and call 911.
- Wear leather gloves to protect your hands and heavy, thick-soled shoes to protect your feet.

OUTSIDE SAFETY

- Look out for power poles that may be unstable due to the fire. Stay away from downed power lines and report them to 911 or the power company's emergency number.
- Watch for ash pits (holes created by burned tree roots that are filled with hot ash), charred trees, smoldering debris, and live embers, and mark them for safety. Warn family and neighbors to keep clear.
- Check the roof and gutters. If possible, wet them down to completely put out any smoldering sparks or embers. If you see that fire is still present, call 911.

COMMUNICATIONS

- Use local alerts, radio, and other information sources, such as FEMA or American Red Cross apps, to get information and advice as soon as it is available.
- Use text messaging or social media to communicate with family and friends. Telephones and cellular phone systems are often overwhelmed following a disaster, so use phones only for emergency calls.

HEALTH AND SANITATION

- Call 911 and seek help immediately if you or someone you're with has been burned. Cool and cover burns to reduce the chance of further injury or infection.
- Discard food exposed to heat, smoke, or soot. When in doubt, throw it out.
- Do not drink, brush teeth, prepare food, or wash/bathe in water until officials indicate the water source is safe.
- Follow the recommendations from your local health department. For example, authorities may recommend tetanus shots because bacteria may be present in contaminated soil.