

FIRE DEPARTMENT

Fire Department

Wildfire Evacuation

The Berkeley hills are exposed to dangerous wildfires that may spread quickly. Hills residents must be ready to evacuate with or without notice from public safety officials.

This webpage provides information about evacuation:

- [When to evacuate](#)
- [How to evacuate](#)
- [Preparing your household to evacuate](#)
- [If you have time, take these steps to help protect your home](#)
- [If you become trapped](#)
- [Returning home after an evacuation](#)

Additional Resources

- Download a [Fire Safety and Suppression Activity Guide](#) and learn more about practicing for emergencies at the [Berkeley Emergency Preparedness Month and Citywide Emergency Exercise](#) page.
- Learn more about how wildfire evacuation differs from hurricane evacuation at the [Hills Emergency Forum](#) page.
- Learn more about Berkeley's wildfire risk in the [2014 Local Hazard Mitigation Plan](#) (see page 3-75).
- For more information about how to prepare your household, your business and your neighborhood for emergencies, visit [Berkeley Ready](#).

When to evacuate

If an evacuation is ordered for your area, leave immediately.

If you see/experience any of the following, consider evacuating on your own:

- **Visible fire in an adjacent home, and/or**
- **Visible fire in a home close by with strong winds, and/or**
- **Strong winds carrying smoke and/or embers through or over your neighborhood.**

If you feel threatened, leave immediately. Do not wait for an evacuation order.

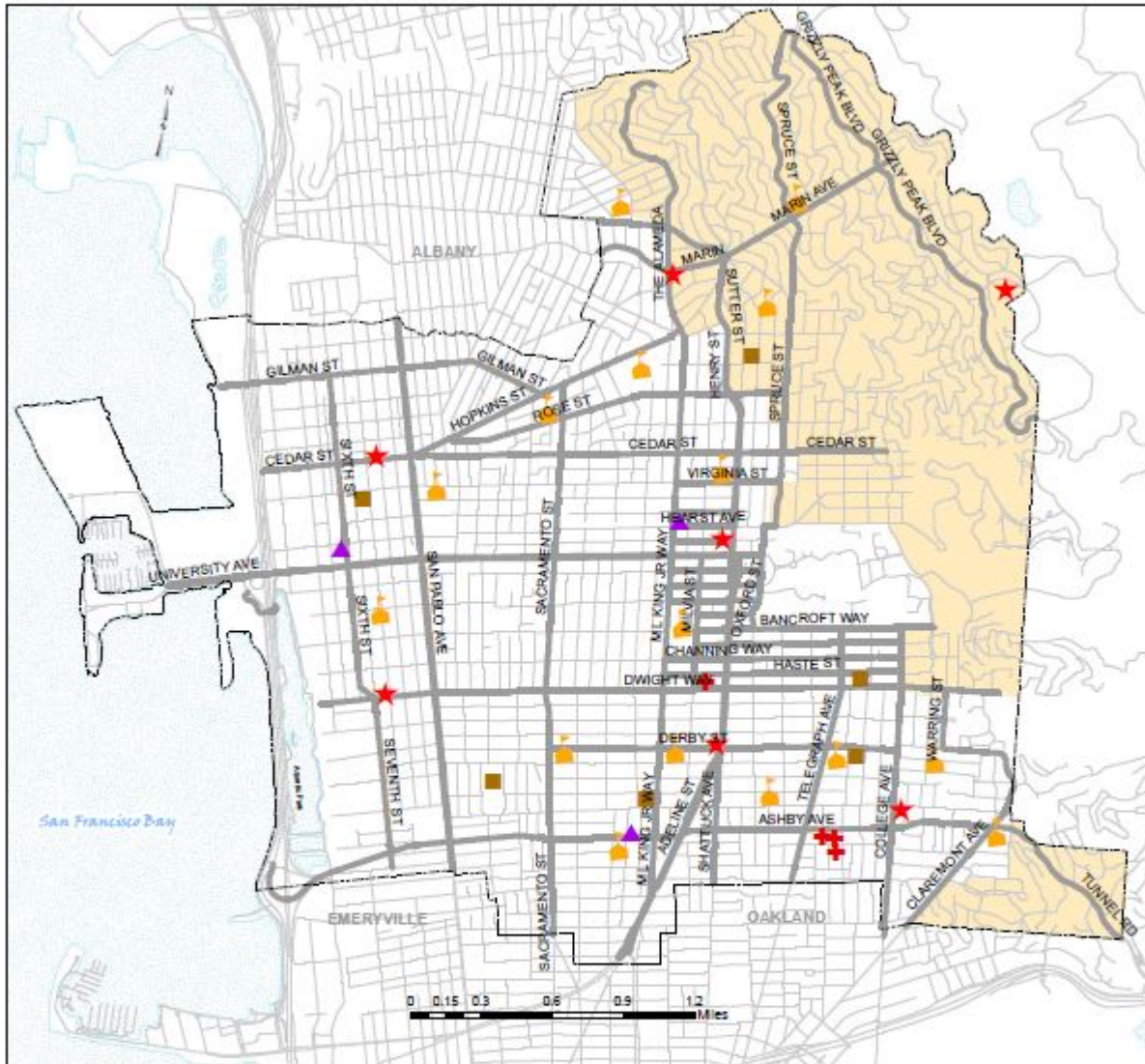
Officials will notify you of an evacuation order as early as possible. In an intense, rapidly growing wildfire, they may not have time to knock on every door.

You must take the initiative to stay informed and aware.

You can monitor radio, television and internet sources for more information. Berkeley's emergency radio stations are 1610 AM, KPFB 89.3 FM, KCBS 740 AM, KQED 88.5 FM, KSOL 98.9 FM (Spanish). Visit the [Emergency Alerting](#) page to learn about systems that may carry emergency information and instructions. **If you feel threatened, leave immediately. Do not wait for an evacuation order.**

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EMERGENCY ACCESS AND EVACUATION NETWORK



- Emergency Access & Evacuation Routes (+ all streets in the Fire Hazard Area)
- Hill Fire Hazard Area
- Fire Station
- Hospital
- School
- Senior Center
- City Recreation Center

This map is for reference purposes only.
Updated June 13, 2011



How to evacuate

If you are instructed to evacuate, leave immediately following all evacuation instructions. Evacuating the area early will help keep roads clear of congestion, letting firefighters move more freely to do their job. **If you feel threatened, evacuate immediately. Do not wait for an evacuation order.**

If you can't drive or roads are blocked:

- The Berkeley hills have many foot paths maintained by the [Berkeley Path Wanderers](#). In some neighborhoods, it will be faster to evacuate on foot paths than on City streets.

If roads are clear and you can drive:

- Drive routes as instructed by officials. Do not block public safety personnel or vehicles while driving. If you encounter blocked roads, consider alternate routes. If you must leave your car, park in a location that does not block traffic (blocking sidewalks is acceptable) and evacuate on foot. **It is critical that you keep the roadways clear for first responders!**

If you need assistance leaving (Can't walk or drive out on your own):

- Check with your neighbors to see if they can give you a ride or assist you in evacuating on foot
- Call 911 if you can't leave your house and need emergency assistance to evacuate
- If first responders come to your door, notify them that you will need assistance evacuating

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Preparing Your Household to Evacuate

If you are instructed to prepare to evacuate, take the following steps. **If you feel threatened, evacuate immediately. Do not wait for an evacuation order.**

Immediate actions:

- Cover up to protect against heat and flying embers. Wear long pants, a long-sleeved shirt, heavy shoes/boots, a cap, a dry bandanna for face cover, and goggles or glasses. 100% cotton or natural materials are preferable.
- With members of your household, identify in advance where to meet if you get separated. Select a common friend or relative to call.
- Assemble items on your [Evacuation Packing List](#)
- Locate your pets and take them with you.

Prepare to drive:

- Back your vehicle into your driveway. Do not block the road.
- Pack items from your [Evacuation Packing List](#) into your vehicle.

- Keep your all vehicle doors and windows closed.
- Carry your car keys with you.
- Be prepared to evacuate on foot.

Evacuation Packing List:

Critical items

- Flashlight
- Cell phone
- Area map marked with at least two evacuation routes

Important items

- Go-kit (if already prepared)
 - Bottle of water and snack
 - Radio
 - Cell phone charger
 - Prescriptions or critical medications
 - Extra eyeglasses or contact lenses
 - Change of clothing and toiletries
 - Extra set of car keys, credit cards, and cash
 - Battery-powered radio and extra batteries
 - Copies of important document
 - Whistle to signal for help
- Pet collar and leads, carriers, medications, water and food
- Essential durable medical equipment, like a walker, cane, or C-Pap machine
- Photos and other critical effects

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If you have time, take these steps to help protect your home

If time allows, follow these checklists to give your home the best chance of surviving a wildfire.

- **If you have been ordered to evacuate, leave immediately. Do not waste time protecting your home.**
- **If you feel threatened, evacuate immediately. Do not wait for an evacuation order.**

Inside the House

- Shut all windows and doors.

- Remove flammable window shades and close metal shutters, especially those in attics.
- Remove lightweight curtains.
- Move flammable furniture to the center of the room, away from windows and doors.
- Leave your lights on so firefighters can see your house under smoky conditions.
- Shut off the air conditioning.

Outside the house

- Gather up flammable items from the exterior of the house (patio furniture, children's toys, door mats, trash cans, etc.) and either bring them inside or move them as far away from your home as possible.
- Move propane BBQ appliances away from structures.
- Connect garden hoses to outside water valves or spigots for use by firefighters. Fill water buckets (5 gallons or less) and place them around the outside of the house.
- Don't leave sprinklers on or water running, they can affect critical water pressure.
- Leave exterior lights on so your home is visible to firefighters in the smoke or darkness of night.
- Have a ladder available and place it at the corner of the house for firefighters to quickly access your roof.
- Seal attic and ground vents with pre-cut plywood or commercial seals. If embers come in through these or other air intakes, they could cause your home to catch on fire.
- Check on neighbors and make sure they are preparing to leave.
- Patrol your property and monitor the fire situation. **Evacuate immediately if you feel threatened. Do not wait for an evacuation order.**

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If you become trapped

In your vehicle:

- Park your vehicle in an area clear of vegetation and power lines. Do not block the road.
- Keep the engine running and headlights on. Roll up windows and set the ventilation system to re-circulate to reduce smoke in the car.
- Cover yourself with wool blanket or jacket.
- Lie on vehicle floor.
- Use your cell phone to call 911. Advise officials that you are trapped and of your location (address or intersection is best).

While on foot:

- Go to an area clear of vegetation -- a ditch, depression, or body of water, if possible.
- Lie face down, cover up your body.
- Use your cell phone to call 911. Advise officials that you are trapped and of your location (address or intersection is best).

While in your home:

- Keep your household together.
- Call 911. Advise officials that you are trapped and of your location (address or intersection is best).
- Fill your sinks and tubs with cold water.
- Keep doors and windows closed but unlocked.
- Stay inside your house.
- Stay away from exterior walls and windows.

Note: It will get hot in the house. But it will be much hotter and more dangerous outside.

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Returning home after an evacuation

Fire officials will determine when it is safe for you to return to your home. This will be done as soon as possible considering safety and accessibility.

- Be alert for downed power lines and other hazards.
- Check your residence carefully for hidden embers or smoldering fires for the next 24 - 72 hours.

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