



Wildfire Evacuation Preparedness for Residential Facility Staff



Preparedness Checklist

A wildfire is an unplanned fire in a natural area. Wildfires affect everyone. They can destroy homes and take lives. They can spread fast and cause disruptions in travel, power, communications, and retail locations such as grocery stores. Parts of the US are warmer and drier, causing wildfires to grow bigger and become more destructive. More people are living in areas at risk for wildfires. But we can take action to prepare. Prepare now to protect yourself, your loved ones, and the individuals you serve.

What to Do: Before



Create a Personal and Family Preparedness Plan (You and Your Home)

- Plan ahead now with your family so each person knows what to do by themselves to be safe, so that you can focus on your job during an emergency.
- Refer to the [American Red Cross Preparedness Essentials-Preparedness Checklist](#) for ways you and your household can prepare for an emergency.
- Make sure you include these elements in your plans:
 - Know about the local risks in your community.
 - How you will communicate and reconnect with your family.
 - Create a go-kit for yourself at work and for every member in your family.
 - Learn emergency skills such as First Aid, and CPR.
 - Learn how to monitor for evacuation warnings and orders.
- Practice your plans so that every member of your household knows what to do in an emergency.
- If you will be needed at home and unable to stay on the job, notify your employer so that they can pre-plan alternate coverage.



Review and Understand Your Facility's Emergency Plan (You and Your Workplace)

- Be aware of the State of California's laws and licensing requirements that your facility is required to follow.
 - **Adult Facilities:** <https://www.cdss.ca.gov/Portals/9/Additional-Resources/Forms-and-Brochures/2020/I-L/LIC610D.pdf?ver=2021-12-30-170017-277>
 - **Senior Care Facilities:** <https://www.cdss.ca.gov/Portals/9/FMUForms/I-L/LIC610E.pdf?ver=2019-03-26-090806-887>
- Review your facility's plans for building evacuation, transportation to alternate facilities, shelters, and returning to the facility to ensure continuity of care of your clients.
 - Ensure you are familiar with staff responsibilities, facility checklists and/or assignments during an emergency as per your facility plan, and LIC 610D item B or 610E.
 - Include maps showing accountability zones, assembly points, exits, and emergency supplies.
 - Review staff roles for caring and accounting for all clients during all stages of an evacuation including communications, transportation, sheltering, and medical needs.
 - Make sure the plan includes accessible communications and alerts for staff, clients, and family members.



Communications

- Prepare for when a decision to evacuate is made, make sure that your plan includes notifying the Regional Center and Community Care Licensing.
 - The Department of Social Services may send out emergency notifications. Know how these notifications work and know how to respond.
- **Local Emergency Management**
 - Monitor weather alerts - Sign up for [free emergency alerts](#) from your local government.
 - Establish where you can learn about evacuation routes and shelters for your clients.
- **All Facility Staff, Clients, and Families**
 - Have a process that everyone knows during the evacuation for communicating with staff, clients, shelters, transportation, and families. Keep contact information up to date.
 - Be prepared to communicate at important stages of the evacuation: the initial warning, the decision to evacuate, shelter location, ongoing updates, and return to a facility.



Know Your Role in the Emergency Plan

Having an emergency plan that is effective, practiced by staff and clients, and reviewed often is vital for everyone's safety during a wildfire. Make sure you know your responsibilities in the plan and practice it at least quarterly for each shift.



Evacuation

- Once a decision to evacuate has been made, make sure you have a process in place to evacuate your clients safely, and efficiently document client movement.
- Ensure you include individual client records, medications, assistive and medical devices, notes on any dietary needs, comfort items, and go- kits. For the individuals comfort item, think of an item that would help them feel calm while evacuating.
- Make sure you have your own go-kit and any needed personal items for staying with the individuals served during the evacuation.



Transportation

- Review your facility's transportation plan.
- Have a back-up plan in case your initial transportation plan is no longer possible.
- Plan to maintain needed care and medical assistance during travel.
- Have a plan for accounting for your clients throughout each stage of the transportation process.
- Document all client transfers such as if a shelter location is changed or if an individual served leaves the shelter to go with friends or family, or to receive medical care.



Sheltering

While the individuals are in a shelter, your continued care still is needed.

- Learn what supplies and capabilities you can expect at potential shelters and what you may need to supplement.
- Verify a shelter can accommodate individual's dietary needs.
- Review and update plans to transport clients to any needed medical appointments while at a shelter (e.g. dialysis).
- Have a plan in place to continue documenting staff rounds, care provided, and any concerns.



Practice Your Plan

Ensuring everyone knows what to expect during an evacuation is vital.

- Disasters are stressful for everyone. To reduce stress, on you and your individuals served, be prepared for what to expect.
- Individuals served and staff should practice their evacuation plan together so that everyone will know what their role will be.
- Ensure each segment of your plan is practiced (e.g. building evacuation, transportation, sheltering).
- After you have practiced your plan, document and make any needed changes to improve it. Then, practice it again.

What to Do: During



Plan to Stay Connected

- Continue to monitor local alerts and warnings.
- During increased risk of evacuation:
 - Prepare clients for possible evacuation order.
 - Stay connected to [local alert systems](#) to find out about evacuation updates and shelters.
 - Ensure adequate staffing will be available if an evacuation is needed.
 - Validate that transportation is ready and available.
 - Notify families of a potential evacuation.



Providing Continual Care

When individuals arrive at a shelter or alternate location, continued client care by facility staff is still needed.

- Document when individuals check into the shelter and make sure they have any needed medication, equipment and personal supplies.
- Alert shelter staff of any potential unique needs of individuals served.
- Document all care provided to individuals served throughout the entire evacuation process.
- Communicate with families and facility leadership to advise them of status updates of the individuals (i.e. safely at the shelter).
- Arrange transportation and in-transit care for any needed procedures that cannot be provided at the shelter.
- Notify external medical services that are scheduled to visit the client of their new location.
- When it's safe to move back, follow the plan to:
 - Ensure the facility is safe and ready for individuals to return home.
 - Notify families of return to facility, or if they moved to another location.
 - Arrange for transportation to return to a facility. Ensure that individuals are accounted for during the transportation process and when they arrive.
 - Notify external medical services that are scheduled to visit the client of their new location.

What to Do: After



- Re-establish standard care at facility.
- Consider a review to assess any physical, mental, or other health issues.
- Have a plan to provide mental health support to staff and individuals who may need help coping from the stress of the emergency.
- Create an after-action report. Identify what worked, the problems encountered, and any needed improvements to the evacuation plan. Be sure to include feedback from the individuals you serve.
- Incorporate these changes into your training and when you practice your plan.

Prepare so you can protect. |

For more information, visit redcross.org/prepare |

Download the Emergency App

