



Fire Safety News

Serving the communities of Castle Creek, Champagne Village, Deer Springs, West Lilac, Hidden Meadows, Jesmond Dene, Rimrock and the Welk Resort

June 22, 2017

Ready, Set, Evacuate



Wildfires can result in jammed freeways, as happened during the Gopher Fire last August. In this photo the southbound lanes are empty because they were closed to cars.

Are You Ready?

Scenario-Based Exercise Will Help You Prepare for Next Wildfire

In 2007, when a firestorm marched from the Cuyamacas to the coast and besieged San Diego County for a solid week, 515,000 people were ordered to evacuate. This was one-sixth of the county's population and constituted the largest single fire evacuation in the nation's history. It was chaos.

Hidden Meadows residents were not spared. Cars were backed up from Interstate 15 through the Meadows as residents tried to escape an oncoming inferno.

The flames bypassed Hidden Meadows and the Deer Springs Fire Protection District, and the fire taught harsh lessons. The countywide casualty statistics remain staggering:

- 10 civilian deaths
- 23 civilian injuries
- 89 firefighter injuries
- 6,200 responders on the front lines
- 369,000 acres, or 13 percent of the county's land area, burned
- 1,600 homes destroyed
- 800 outbuildings destroyed.
- \$1.5 billion in property damage

Ten years have passed since the Witch Creek, Harris, Rice Canyon and Poomacha fires paralyzed the county for that week in October. Many of us recall the event with feelings of fear, anxiety and panic.

But does it have to be that way?

The lesson of the 2007 firestorm is that most of the county was woefully unprepared for such a full-scale evacuation. The unfortunate truth is that as those fires fade into memory, so do the lessons they taught us. We have either forgotten them, or crowded them from our consciousness.

Which raises this question:

Are you ready?

If a countywide fire were to strike in 2017, would you know what to do? What to pack? How to prepare your house? Where to go?

Too many of us don't.

On July 15, at 10 a.m. in the Hidden Meadows Community Center Pavilion, the Deer Springs Fire Safe Council will present a Hidden Meadows Scenario-Based Evacuation Exercise to educate you on how to prepare for an evacuation. The Fire Safe Council has prepared this presentation along with the Deer Springs Fire Protection District and the Champagne Village Disaster Committee.

The program is unique, because it will present a possible fire scenario – a fire breaking out in Moosa Canyon – and walk you step by step on what to do as the fire advances toward the neighborhood.

- How much time will you have to get out?
- What will emergency responders be doing?
- What should you pack?
- Where should you go?
- How will you keep your family safe?
- Where will they be?
- How will you reach them if cell phones aren't working?

Nothing is more important than keeping your family safe in the time of an emergency, and this seminar is designed to help you do that.

Presenters include CAL FIRE Battalion Chief and Deer Springs Fire Chief Nick Brown; a CAL FIRE evacuation expert; Deer Springs Fire Safe Council President Craig Cook; and Greg Lorton and Susan Robinson of the Deer Springs Fire Safe Council and Champagne Village Disaster Committee. Representatives of the San Diego County Sheriff's Department and Caltrans are also expected to be on hand to answer questions.

One of the missions of the Deer Springs Fire Safe Council is to educate residents about the danger of wildfire so we can be ready for the next fire. We hope you join us to learn what you can do to prepare for an emergency evacuation.

All residents of the Deer Springs Fire Protection District are invited to attend this exercise, although it is tailored for Hidden Meadows. Future presentations are planned for other Deer Springs Fire District neighborhoods, including Jesmond Dene/North Broadway, the Treasures, and West Lilac. A similar presentation was delivered recently for Champagne Village residents.

The Hidden Meadows Community Center Pavilion is located at 28208 Meadow Glen Way West.

Hidden Meadows Scenario-Based Evacuation Exercise
10:00 AM Saturday, July 15
Hidden Meadows Community Center Pavilion (Swimming Pool Complex)
28208 Meadow Glen Way West

- [Are You Ready? Join our Exercise](#)
- [Harden Your Structure Against Fire](#)
- [This is a Test](#)

- [Fire Safety Tip](#)
- [Safety Class Shifted](#)
- [Helpful Phone Numbers](#)
- [Fire Stations](#)



Keep Wildfire Away from Your Door

The wildfires that struck San Diego County in 2007 taught us a great deal about wildfire and how it penetrates a home's defenses. One big takeaway from that fire is that embers take flight on the wind and act as paratroopers, expanding the fire front by starting new spot fires miles ahead of the fire's head.

A firebrand landing on a dead tree near your house, on dry leaves in your rain gutter, or on a woodpile can spread fire to your home's interior in a matter of minutes.

Here are some [tools and tips](#) on how to harden your home against fire intrusion. CAL FIRE's Ready for Wildfire [website](#) has excellent tips on structure hardening.

- One cheap and quick defense is to secure attic vents and air holes. The holes prevent attic mildew, so don't seal them entirely. But you can keep embers out by stapling one-eighth-inch wire screening over vents and holes.
- If your attic has round soffit air holes at the roofline, seal these with bird stops, metal disks with slats for ventilation. The slats let air in but can keep embers out. You can paint them to match your trim.
- If your deck is made of wood, replace it with ignition-resistant, non-combustible material. Patio covers should also be constructed of ignition-resistant materials. Remove flammable material and debris from decks and patios.
- Remove combustible items that are attached to your house, such as wooden fences, woodpiles, and wooden arbors or pergolas. If these catch fire they spread the fire to your house.
- If fire is approaching, move any combustible items away from your house. Plastic patio furniture can catch fire very easily, so clear it away from your home. Cloth shade umbrellas can also ignite. If you have a pool, throw the furniture in there. If you don't, toss the items as far from your structure as you can.
- Your roof is the most exposed part of your home and it should be constructed of a fire-resistant material, classified as Class A fire-rated materials. This includes composition, tile or metal. If you have a wood shake roof, replace it, and don't delay. If you have a concrete tile roof, pack the edges with concrete. Another defensive measure is to box roof eaves with fire-resistant material. These last measures are costly, but they're cheaper than replacing a home.

To learn about San Diego County's fire and building code requirements in the Wildland Urban Interface, click [here](#).

Did You Get Our Test Phone Call

The Deer Springs Fire Safe Council conducts a test of its Emergency Communication System once a year. The test is being conducted this month. If you don't receive a call, that means you are not on our subscription list to receive a message from our Emergency Communication System.

The Fire Safe Council Emergency Communication System calls subscribers when a wildfire or other emergency threatens the Deer Springs Fire District. This system is for informational purposes only and is provided by Fire Safe Council volunteers. It is a subscription-based messaging system, so you have to sign up to receive messages.

Please note that this is not the same system as the San Diego County Reverse 9-1-1 system and is not used to issue evacuation orders. That is the function of San Diego County. The Emergency Communications System is a volunteer-operated service meant to inform Deer Springs Fire District residents.

If you didn't get a call and want to subscribe to our Emergency Communication System, fill out the form located [here](#) and mail it to the address listed. (Sorry, we cannot accept on-line applications for this service.)

Fire Safety Tip: Have a Safe Fourth of July

CAL FIRE goes on alert each Fourth of July, as some celebrations go out of control and result in fires. Over a five-year period, more than 2,500 structure and wild fires were sparked by fireworks, burning thousands of acres, causing countless injuries and costing millions in property loss, [CAL FIRE reported](#) last year.

So have fun this Fourth of July, but stay safe.

Safety Class Merged with Evacuation Exercise

The [Deer Springs Fire Protection District](#) safety class has been canceled for the month of June. The scheduled class on How to Prepare for an Evacuation has been merged with the Hidden Meadows Scenario-Based Evacuation Exercise, at 10:00 a.m. on Saturday, July 15, at the Hidden Meadows Community Center Pavilion.

Please join us for this important exercise.

Helpful phone numbers

Immediate Emergency Assistance: 911

Emergency & Non-Emergency County Information Hotline (road closures, shelter locations, evacuation sites, fire related information, recovery assistance and more): 211

San Diego County Sheriff, San Marcos Station: 760-510-5200

San Diego Animal Services Emergency Dispatch: 619-236-2341

Deer Springs Fire Safe Council Informational Hot Line: 949-472-1401

Deer Springs Fire Stations

Station 1

8709 Circle R Drive
Escondido, CA 92026
760-749-8001

Station 2

1321 Deer Springs Road
San Marcos, CA 92069
760-741-5512

Station 3

10308 Meadow Glen Way East
Escondido, CA 92026
760-751-0820

We gratefully acknowledge ...

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<http://www.DeerSpringsFireSafeCouncil.com>

Or you can mail your donation to:

DEER SPRINGS FIRE SAFE COUNCIL

P.O. BOX 460097

ESCONDIDO, CA 92046-0097

DISCLAIMER: This information will provide a high level of protection to structures built in the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) area. However, there is no guarantee or assurance that compliance with these guidelines will prevent damage or destruction of structures by fires in all cases.

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We received your email address when you signed up for the Deer Springs Fire Safe Council Emergency Communication System, attended a neighborhood educational seminar on fire safety, or asked the council to add you to its list.

Our mailing address is:

Deer Springs Fire Safe Council

PO Box 460097

Escondido, CA 92046-0097
