

Leaving Early Helps Keep You Safe



Adapted from public presentations in 2019
from the Fire Safe Council of Nevada County



in coordination with
ReadyNevadaCounty.org,
an initiative of the County of Nevada
Office of Emergency Services (OES)

The Key to Saving Yourself and Your Family:

- Personal Responsibility – learning what you need to do, and doing it (ahead of time, which means NOW)
- Do not expect “the government” to save you. There aren’t enough of them.

PRACTICE YOUR *GO* PLAN

An important step
that's often overlooked

- Firefighters train every week, every month, all year.
- The least you can do is practice once a year, in the spring. **Pretend you're evacuating, pack the car, *see how long it takes.***
- Practicing helps you feel IN CONTROL, and LESS AFRAID.
 - It will be easier and more “automatic” if you've done it before
 - Practice is even more important when household includes children, elderly, disabled, and animals – ***anybody who will cause you to take longer to get out.***

The easy part - keep your gas tank at least half-full during fire season

You don't
want to
wait in line at
a gas station
before getting
on the road.



You **REALLY**
don't want to
run out of gas
while creeping
along in traffic
and have to
abandon your car.

If fire is anywhere near:

Be ready to leave, and

Don't wait to be told

- Be alert for Red Flag Warnings; put your Go Bag **in the car**.
- Fire anywhere within 30 miles? Listen to the radio. Check official websites and YubaNet.com. Keep your phone charged and with you. BEWARE of unverified social media scares.
- **When there's a breeze, all bets are off. Leave ASAP.**
 - Fire creates its own wind as it consumes oxygen.
 - Weather-caused winds drove the mass destruction and deaths in Santa Rosa and Paradise fires

Law Enforcement requests that you **NOT** take your large RV, 5th-wheeler or trailer

- Takes up road space, **not easily maneuverable**
- **Evacuation routes will NOT have turn-arounds**
- **Only** if it's the *only vehicle available to you*
- Want your RV to live in if your house burns down?
Consider storing “down the hill” during fire season

The Hardest Part

It's REALLY hard to make yourself leave when you don't know what will happen!

- How bad IS the fire?
- Is it coming this way?
- Are they putting it out?
- It's a lot of work to load the cars!
- We'd just have to unload them again if we didn't really have to leave!
- **Maybe if we wait, we'll find out it's not coming this way.**



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the difference
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What is the point we want
you to understand here?



Camp Fire, November 8-25, 2018

Photo Chico Enterprise-Record. Used with permission.

**Leaving early can be
the difference
between
life and death.**

What else do you need to
understand? #1

**Living in Nevada County
now means**

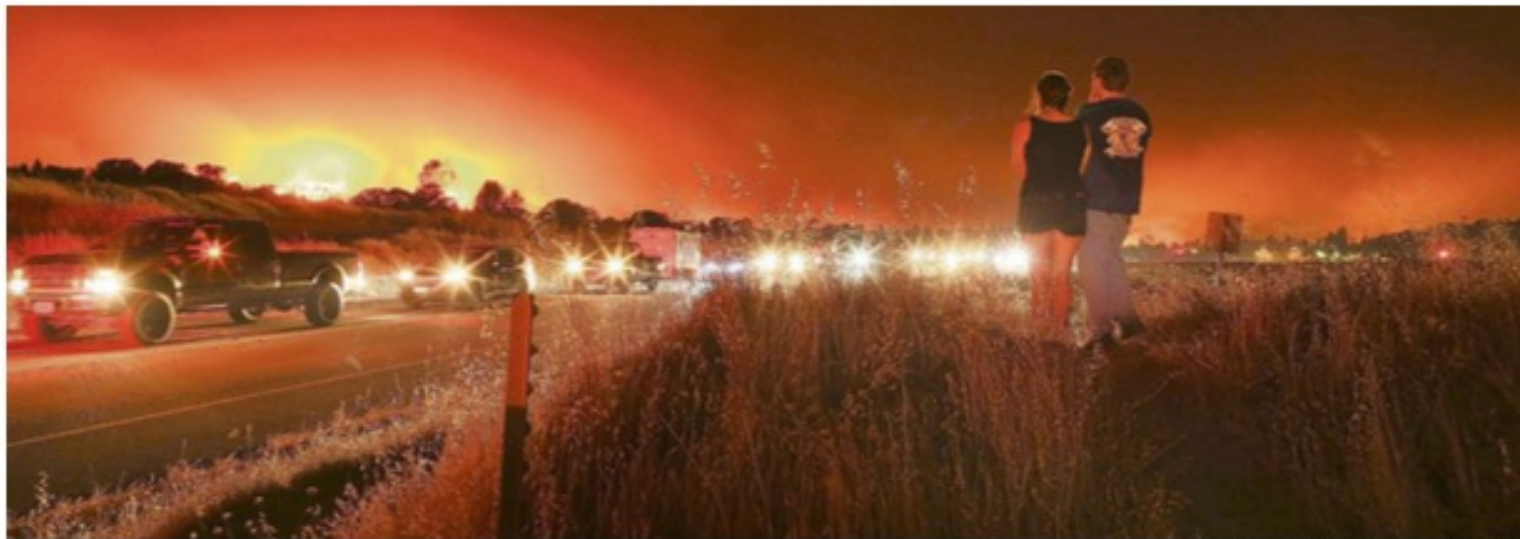
***you are choosing
to live with high risk.***

What else do you need to understand? #2

If you wait until you are told to evacuate, that means others have been told, too, and you'll all be on the road at the same time, trying to get out on (probably) the same on-ramps, same routes, etc.



Wildfire evacuations turning into deadly traffic jams



HUNG T. VU Special to the Redding Record Searchlight

Vehicles evacuate Redding as the Carr Fire nears in July. Many human factors besides roads also decrease the time people have to evacuate.

About 350,000 Californians
live with high wildfire risk
and the same number of exit
and evacuation routes per person
as Paradise – or even fewer

The western-facing edge of the Sierra Nevada mountain range is full of areas with a low number of evacuation routes for the populations there.

Places like Foresthill in Placer County, which has a worse population-to-lane ratio than Paradise, and Nevada City in Nevada County, and Sonora in Tuolumne County, are far worse than average.

But how can you **find out** if “something’s happening” that would help you decide to leave early?

- Be alert on all hot days. Keep a radio on, tuned to KVMR 89.5FM or (daytime only) KNCO 830AM. Look outside often, listen for planes, smell the air. **PAY ATTENTION** (“situational awareness”).
- Create a “Buddy System”(Find Your Five) – a group of 4-5 friends who will call each other with a heads-up, ideally who live in different areas around western Nevada County.
- To get information: call 211, check Yubanet.com, TheUnion.com, KNCO.com, ReadyNevadaCounty.org. (Do NOT call 911)

It's *much easier* to decide to leave early if you know where you're going!

- **DECIDE NOW** where you'll go to **hang out for a few hours until you find out** if:
 - 1) it's a genuine widespread emergency?
 - 2) the fire could still head toward your house? OR
 - 3) it's safe to go back.
- Friends within 50 miles? **Call them now to ask** if you can wait at their place until there's more fire info.

DECIDE NOW where you'll go: Other ideas

- GVFD fire chief's family is going to Roseville Mall.
- Places to kill a few hours: Movie theatres in Auburn, Rocklin, Roseville. At Sierra College Drive: Walmart, Target center, etc. Motel room hangout with friends?
- If the fire is south of you: the park or mall in Yuba City/Marysville; OR spend a day at Truckee/Tahoe

DECIDE NOW where you'll go: Other ideas

- GVFD fire chief's family is going to Roseville Mall
- Places to kill a few hours: Rocklin Park, ...
**Think about how this has changed with the pandemic.
As long as the virus is still out there, you need to plan
where to go and how to stay safe.** ... hangout with friends?
... is south of you: the park or mall in Yuba
City/Marysville; OR spend a day at Truckee/Tahoe

If we actually get a threatening fire and you are doing this right:

- You will avoid sitting in potential mass evac traffic.
- You will spend one or more times a year doing something spontaneous (evacuating) but ***planned for in advance***.
- If we're lucky, we'll all come back home safe and ***be glad to unpack our cars into our not-burnt homes***.

In a true, large emergency,
the Red Cross will set up
emergency shelters.

- This assumes a large evacuation.
- Better, *especially* when you have limited evacuation routes: **you LEAVE EARLY before formal evacuation is called, even if it ends up you didn't need to go.**
- Be Safe, Not Sorry. *Decide now* where you will hang out for a few hours while awaiting news.

If you don't want to be one of these



- Decide NOW *where* you'll go, for north/south/east/west. Write it into your plans; tell family.
- *Know how to be aware* when a fire breaks out that could reach you.
- Leave **BEFORE** you are told to go.

The End. Thank you for doing your part. Put questions in the chat box.