

WILDFIRE

Wildfire responders in Western Washington are preparing for a particularly bad wildfire season. With less precipitation than normal so far in 2019 and snowpack in the North Cascades depleting rapidly, conditions are already abnormally dry and much of the western side of the state has been declared in or at risk of drought. Wildfire safety and preparedness steps will be critical for communities, west of the Cascades.



IMPACTS

Fire departments are fighting fires along the Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI), defined as areas where homes are built near or among lands prone to wildland fire. Depending on the area of the country, fire departments might refer to wildland fires as brush fires, forest fires, rangeland fires, or something else; however, they are all part of the WUI and all pose the same threat to local assets. The increase in the WUI threat has been steep because of continued development and exposure. The WUI is not a place, per se, but a set of conditions that can exist in nearly every community. It can be a major subdivision or it can be four homes on an open range.

A wildfire is an unplanned fire that burns in a natural area, and can spread into urban settings.

Often caused by humans or lightning



Can cause flooding or create problems with transportation.



Can damage your property. Set up defense zones to protect your home.



Ready!

- Have a family plan!
- Have fire extinguishers
- Appoint an out-of-area point of contact
- Maintain an emergency kit
- Have a portable radio or scanner to get fire & weather emergency info

Set!

- Monitor fire weather
- Evacuate as soon as given the order
- Alert family and neighbors
- Take emergency kit with you
- Remain ready to leave, drink plenty of water, & ensure your family & pets are accounted for

GO!!!

- By leaving early you give your family the best chance of surviving a wild fire.
- Leave early enough to avoid being caught in fire, smoke or traffic
- Have multiple routes to leave
- Take your emergency kits with you

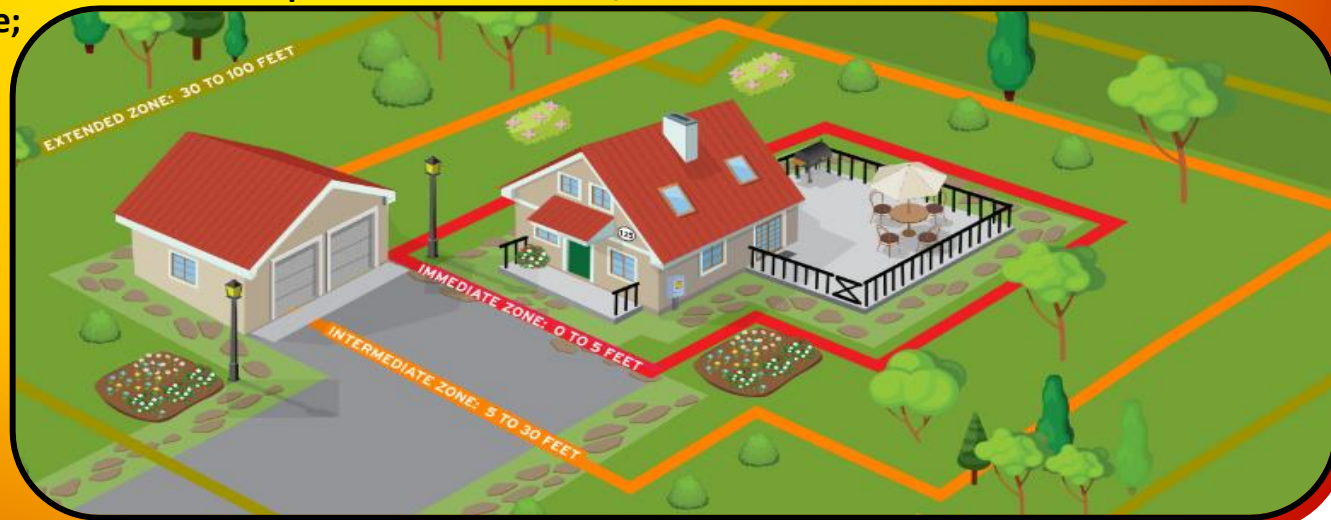
Limiting the amount of flammable vegetation, along with periodic exterior maintenance in the three home ignition zones - increases the chances your home will survive a wildfire when exposed to embers and/or a surface fire. The zones include the

Immediate Zone: 0 to 5 feet around the house;

Intermediate Zone: 5 to 30 feet;

and the **Extended Zone:** 30 to 100 feet.

To reduce ember ignitions and fire spread, trim branches that overhang the home, porch and deck and prune branches of large trees up to (depending on their height) 6 to 10 feet from the ground. Remove plants containing resins, oils and waxes and ensure mulches in the Immediate Zone (0 to 5 feet around the house) are non-combustible options like crushed stone and gravel. Maintain vegetation annually.

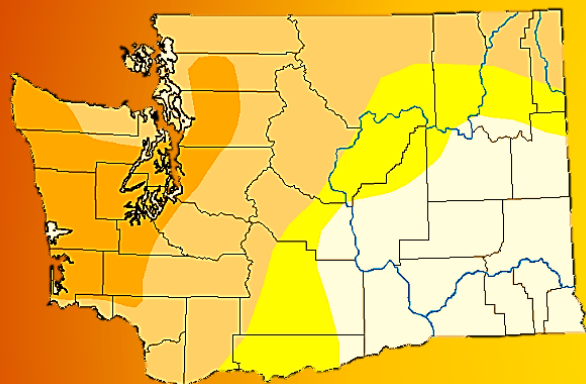




DROUGHT



A drought is an extended period of unusually dry weather when there is not enough rain. The lack of precipitation can cause a variety of problems for local communities, including damage to crops and a shortage of drinking water. Nearly every part of our country experiences periods of reduced rainfall. If we plan for drought, then we can enjoy the benefits of normal or rainy years and not get caught unprepared in dry years.



Intensity:

	None
	D0 (Abnormally Dry)
	D1 (Moderate Drought)
	D2 (Severe Drought)
	D3 (Extreme Drought)
	D4 (Exceptional Drought)
	No Data

The next 3 months are forecasted to be warmer than usual as wells as dryer than usual.



DRYER SOILS → MORE FINE PARTICLES → NO RAIN TO CLEAR IT AWAY!



Droughts increase the risk of wildfires, as warmer temperatures and drier conditions lengthen wildfire season. Drought also increases the chances of a fire starting, & help a burning fire spread. Care must be taken to lessen the risks of fires starting.



The air quality can quickly worsen during a drought due to the increase in dust, dirt or smoke particles, and without rain to clear the air.