Emergency Preparedness: Evacuation

SECTION 1

1. Sign up with NOCO Alerts
Emergency Alerts in Larimer County
Website: https://nocoalert.org/

Once you register on this website, you can list your cell phones and your email addresses so that you will be alerted in the event of an emergency.

2. Create an Evacuation Priority List
Because you do not know how much time you will have, it is important to think about this ahead of time and create a list.

- Ideally this list will be on brightly covered paper, in a sleeve protector, and posted where everyone can find it and/or an easily accessible online document.
- The list should be time contingent.

3. Pets
Make certain that your transportation crates for your pets are easily accessible. If you are put on pre-evacuation notice, keep your pets in a smaller room so that you can easily get them and leave quickly.

□ Crate and Leash
□ Pet Medication
□ Pet Food

□ Pet Sign
This is a sign that you put in the front window near your front door that lists how many cats, dogs, and birds you have in your residence. These can be picked up at the Animal Medical Center and other Veterinarians around town.

4. Gather Important Documents
Gather all of your important documents so that they are all together in one place. If you need to evacuate quickly, you will not waste time trying to find and gather the documents you need.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency has created a list of important documents that it recommends you have in the event of an evacuation. The following list of documents is taken from the Emergency Financial First Aid Kit FEMA P-1075 / September 2019:
The below can be considered for inclusion. If you have online access to the documents below, it is a judgement call as to whether to also have a hard copy.

### Additional Financial Information

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<tr>
<td>21. Car Payment(s)</td>
<td>30. Flood Insurance</td>
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<td>22. Student Loan(s)</td>
<td>31. Copies of photos of property and contents (see Home Inventory below) and Professional Appraisals of Personal Property</td>
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<td>23. Alimony Payments (receive or pay)</td>
<td>32. Auto Insurance</td>
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<td>24. Child Support Payments (receive or pay)</td>
<td>33. Life Insurance</td>
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<td>25. Retirement Accounts (401K, TSP, IRA)</td>
<td>34. Funeral Insurance</td>
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<td>26. Investment Accounts (Stocks, Bonds, Mutual Funds)</td>
<td>35. Pet Insurance</td>
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<td>27. Recent Pay Stubs for All Sources of Income</td>
<td>36. Elder Care Facilities</td>
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<td>28. Government Benefits (Social Security, TANF, Veterans Benefits)</td>
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* If you rent and do not have a copy of your lease with you, having proof of utility payments is very important for showing proof of residence.
37. Bank/Credit Union Statements
38. Credit/Debit Card Statements
39. Property Tax Statement
40. Automatic Payments (e.g., gym memberships)
41. Reward Accounts (Frequent Flyer, Hotels)
42. Personal Property Tax (e.g., car tax)

Medical
43. Health Insurance ID Card(s)
44. Record of Immunizations/Allergies
45. List of Necessary Medications- see below
46. Disabilities Documentation
47. Living Will

Additional Financial / Legal Documentation
48. ____________________________________________
49. ____________________________________________
50. ____________________________________________

5. Additional Items to Take

☐ Safe Deposit Box Key

☐ Purse, Wallet, Drivers License, Cash, Credit Cards, Checkbooks

☐ Passwords
Your written passwords list if you have one. Make certain that this is kept VERY safe during your evacuation. Consider moving to a password manager like LastPass, Dashlane, 1Password, etc.

☐ Medications- take a 7-day supply with you if possible
Be as specific as possible so that if you have to refill a prescription you can do so more easily. List what they are and where they are located in your home.

1. ____________________________________________
2. ____________________________________________
3. ____________________________________________
4. ____________________________________________
5. ____________________________________________
6. ____________________________________________
7. ____________________________________________
- **Computer Hard Drives / Laptops / Other Digital Devices? (E-readers, iPads, etc)**
  Note specific digital devices and their location.

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- **Cell Phones, Chargers, Batteries for Digital Devices**
  What and their locations.

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- **Photographs**

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- **Special Heirlooms / Irreplaceable Items / Sentimental Items**

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- **Specialty Items**
  These are items specific to the very young (diapers, bottles, carriers) or those who may need assistance (oxygen, wheelchairs, walkers).

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6. Additional Items / Considerations

Excerpts taken from EVFPD, Information Guide- Preparing for Evacuation – Assembling a Go Kit- [https://www.estesvalleyfire.org/evacuation-resources](https://www.estesvalleyfire.org/evacuation-resources) and the American Red Cross- [https://www.redcross.org/get-help/how-to-prepare-for-emergencies/survival-kit-supplies.html](https://www.redcross.org/get-help/how-to-prepare-for-emergencies/survival-kit-supplies.html)

- Extra eye glasses, contact lenses, hearing aids, etc.
- Clothing and Toiletries
  - Clothing for each family member for three days to one week and toiletries.
- Specific Clothing- boots, gloves, hats jackets (For each member of the family)
- Sleeping bag, blankets, and pillows (For each member of the family)
- Flashlight
- Radio- hand crank or battery powered and extra batteries
- First Aid Kit
- 3-Day supply of food and water (one gallon per person per day- 3-day supply)
- Multi-purpose tool
- Sanitation and personal hygiene items
  - (Including toilet paper, baby wipes, alcohol wipes, extra Covid-19 masks, etc.)
- Extra cash
- Emergency blanket
- Extra set of car keys and house keys
- Manual can opener

Park your car for a quick departure and with a full tank of gas

It is understood that you may not have time to gather all of the above items. Remember that your life and the lives of your family are the most important.

7. Contact Person & Gathering Place

Establish an out-of-town contact person
This is someone everyone in your household can contact to say they are okay. It is also the person extended family members can contact to check if you are okay.

Establish an alternative gathering place for family members
In the event that you are unable to return to your home- which could happen if an evacuation happens when you are out of the house- where will you meet?
8. Protecting your home


If you have time, you can take the following steps to protect your home.

INSIDE YOUR HOME

☐ Close all windows and doors, including doors inside the house to block circulation of air and minimize movement of fire.
☐ Remove all shades and curtains from windows and ensure blinds remain open, unless you have metal blinds – close metal blinds.
☐ Move furniture to the center of the room and away from windows and doors.
☐ Turn off pilot lights and air conditioning units.
☐ Leave your lights on so firefighters can see your house under smoky conditions.

OUTSIDE YOUR HOME

☐ Relocate any combustible items so they are a safe distance from the house, including firewood, door mats, patio furniture, child toys, etc. If time allows, place these items inside a garage or your home.
☐ Turn off propane tanks or natural gas at the meter.
☐ Cover all exterior foundation, soffit and attic vents to prevent entry from wildfire embers.
☐ Leave garden hoses connected for firefighters, and well pumps on.
☐ Leave exterior lights on.
☐ Park your cars in your garage, or back your car into the driveway to facilitate a quick departure. Ensure doors and windows are shut.
☐ Place a ladder against the roof of the house opposite the approaching fire.

SECTION 2:

This section covers things you can do now to protect the value of what you own, your computer, and fire mitigation around your house.

Protect the Value of Items in Your Home

Do a Home Inventory

Statistics from the National Insurance Industry show that homeowners who do not have a thorough home inventory collect 60 percent of their property's total value when submitting a claim.
Basic Option: Take Pictures
- Room as a whole
- Specific items in the room / sections of the room / drawers & closets
- Store offsite: online/cloud storage, safe deposit box, different location
- Update yearly / after major purchases

Next Level Option: Use an App, Spreadsheet, or Hire a Company
The best way to find an app or spreadsheet that will assist you in doing a home inventory is to do an online search using “home inventory apps” or “home inventory spreadsheets” to see options. For home inventory companies, search “home inventory companies, Colorado.” Offerings change so rapidly that any lists of what is available risk becoming outdated too quickly to list here.

Insurance Coverage
After you have a home inventory, check with your homeowner’s insurance company to be certain you have adequate insurance. Sometimes people find out they are under-insured once they conduct a home inventory.

Keep it safe
Once you have a home inventory, keep it safe. If it is through an app, it will likely already be stored online. If you have a physical copy, store it in your safe deposit box or create two copies and keep them at different locations- perhaps one with you and one with a relative who lives elsewhere. If it is on your computer’s hard drive, make certain you have a copy that is stored elsewhere.

Protect Your Computer
Back it Up
You have two choices to back up your computer- external media or an online back up company.

Choice 1: External Method
When most people consider an external method they think of a USB flash drive, however flash drives can become corrupted. They are prone to static and if it stores static, your data can be corrupted. The best method for an external back up is an external hard drive.

Use Two External Hard Drives
1) Purchase two external hard drives.
2) Back up your computer to the first one.
3) Move this first hard drive to a safe location (preferably a safe deposit box).
4) Then, back up your computer to the second hard drive. This second hard drive stays in your home.
5) Once a month (or more often), completely back up your computer, again to this second hard drive.
6) Take this hard drive to the safe deposit box and switch it out with the one you put there the previous month.
Establishing this pattern will ensure that the majority of your data will be protected. At any given time you should only lose one month’s worth of data if your home should be lost and you are unable to get your computer out.

Choice 2: Online Backup Companies
There are several highly rated companies that will back up your computer and store your data for you. A good overview of these companies can be found here: https://www.tomsguide.com/best-picks/best-cloud-backup or here: https://www.techradar.com/best/best-cloud-backup.

The advantage of choosing this method is that the majority of companies automatically back up your data on a regular basis so that you can simply “set it and forget it.” If your computer is destroyed, your data will be protected and available to download to a different computer.

Create Defensible Space
*The following is an excerpt taken from EVFPD, Resident Resources- Risk Reduction, FireWise Wildfire Prevention Checklist,*: https://www.estesvalleyfire.org/resident-resources-risk-reduction

**EXTERIOR WILDFIRE SAFETY**
**General Considerations**
- Addresses must be visible from the road day or night.
- Remove combustible and materials from crawl spaces, porches and underneath elevated decks/porches. Do not use areas under decks/porches for storage of combustibles.
- Remove dead vegetation and debris from decks, porches between deck board joints.
- Remove debris that accumulates at roof-to-wall intersections and in gutters. Have a spark arrestor placed atop chimneys.
- Remove combustible mulches and replace with concrete, stone or gravel. Remove trees and shrubs within 5 feet of your home.
- Keep lawns and native grasses watered and mowed to a height of 4 inches.

**Horizontal Pruning of Trees**
- Ensure branches are a minimum of 5 feet from any outside wall, a minimum of 10 feet from any chimney and don’t overhang roofs.

**Vertical Pruning of Trees**
- Mature/Tall Trees: Must prune branches between 6 and 10 feet.
- Short Trees: Must prune lower branches from the ground up but do not exceed 1/3 of the tree’s overall height.
- Keep shrubs must be kept a minimum of 10 feet away from the lower edge of tree branches; remove grasses and other vegetation growing underneath tree limbs.
Additional Resource
Larimer County Guide to Emergency Preparedness:

PDF Download of Handout
This handout is available as a PDF download on the Estes Valley Library Website:
www.estesvalleylibrary.org
- “Resources” Tab
  - Life Toolkits
    - Emergency Preparedness