IN THE SPOTLIGHT

July 2008

WILD FIRE SAFETY TIPS

In a major wildfire, it may be impossible for your fire department to provide you with enough resources to protect your home. If time permits, take the following steps to help protect your home.

If time allows

- Place combustible items 50 feet away from your home. This includes lawn furniture, umbrellas and tarp coverings
- Close or cover outside attic, eaves and basement bents. This will reduce the possibility of sparks blowing into hidden areas within the house.
- Close window shutters.
- Connect a garden hose to an outside faucet so it can reach any place on the house.
- Place a ladder against the roof of the house opposite the side of the approaching fire.
- Shut off gas at the meter or the propane tank.
- Park your car in the garage facing out. Close the windows but do not lock the doors.
- Close the garage door but leave the garage unlocked
- Disconnect the automatic garage opener.
- Close all windows and doors, but do not lock them.
- Close all doors inside the house to block circulation of air and movement of fire.
- Turn on all exterior lights. This will make the house visible in heavy smoke or at night.
- Take down lightweight curtains and close heavy weight drapes.
- Move overstuffed furniture away from windows and glass doors. These may ignite through radiant heat.

Prior to a fire occurring near your home

- Provide easy access for emergency vehicles.
- Clearly post your address, using numbers that contrast with their background, so firefighters and Emergency Medical Personnel can locate you in an emergency.
- Ensure address is visible from both directions.
- Keep brush and tree cut back so that the address stands out.

If a fire occurs near your home

- Listen to your television or your radio for updated reports and evacuation information.
- Ensure your family's safety. If you are able, locate and evacuate your pets but do not jeopardize your life.
- If you have livestock, let them loose by opening gates or cutting fences.
- Contact you local fire department for assistance in determining safe areas.
- If time allows, take a disaster kit containing drinking water, clothes, blankets, first aid kit, flashlight, and any prescription medications.
- Know all emergency routes and have a pre-planned travel route.
- Do not panic, drive slowly and safely.
- Turn on your headlights to increase your visibility to other traffic in smoky conditions.