

JULY SAFETY QUIZ

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

Washoe County has about a dozen natural and man-made hazards that can lead to region wide emergencies. These hazards include: Wildfires, Floods, Earthquakes, Hazardous Waste, Drought, Severe Storms and more. This month touches on a couple that can increase during the summer months.

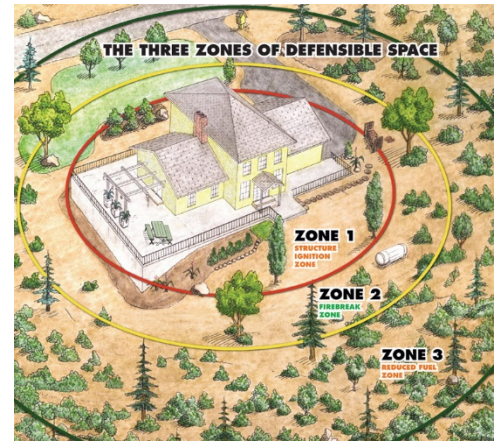
Wildfires – Reno has already had several fires this summer. Here are some ideas to help keep you safe:

Causes – Wildfires are often caused by lightning and man-made (camping, off-road driving).

Defensible Space – This is the clearing of flammable material from around your home to protect it. Close to the house, you want to remove ALL material on the outside that may easily catch fire. Further from the buildings you will want to reduce weeds and vegetation that can be a risk. This will create a space moving out from the house that will limit flammable material that will pose a risk to the house.

Red Flag Warnings – National Weather Service and local Fire Departments look at the weather regularly to decide if the heat, wind and low humidity (water in the air) may set conditions for fires. These warnings will be issued to help the public to know that risk to easily start a fire is high, and conditions may make fighting a wildfire more difficult.

Evacuation – A time may come that you will have to leave your home or work due to an emergency. If that time comes you will want to have a pre-designated place to go – talk to friends or family to arrange a safe place to go. Keep important documents (Birth Certificates, Social Security Cards, etc.) in a folder/envelope that will allow you to easily take them with you. Be sure to lock doors and windows prior to leaving (time permitting).



Home Fires – Fires at home can unexpectedly happen; burnt food/grease fire in kitchen, knocked over candles and wildfires outside the home. These suggestions will help to protect you at home.

1. Keep a fire extinguisher in the kitchen; learn how to use the extinguisher – Videos available online.
2. Keep flammable material away from heat sources. Many home fires occur due to curtains getting close to flames, candles being knocked over, or oil and grease build-up being too close to an open flame.
3. Install smoke detectors at home and check the batteries monthly. These will warn you of a fire in the house.
4. Have a plan: Create an emergency plan that is shared with members of the household. Include how to react to emergencies like fire or earthquakes, discuss a meeting location outside the home, and teach children in the house how to call 9-1-1 and what to say (even make a script for them to read if needed)

Floods – Reno has had its fair share of floods, and they are possible in the summer; i.e. flash floods. Thunderstorms, like the ones that passed by us recently, can come with large amounts of water that can quickly fill small creeks and drains. Flood waters can cause outages, prevent travel and cause damage to buildings and property inside. Here are considerations with floods:

1. Do not walk, swim or drive through flood waters. Moving flood waters just 6 inches deep can knock a person over, and deeper water can carry a person or vehicle away.
2. Time permitting, move electronics (TV, Computers, etc) on top of counters. If you are evacuating, shut off the main power breaker to the house before water gets to it.
3. Determine if your home is in an identified flood zone. Purchase home flood insurance – it won't prevent damage from a flood but will help with recovery post-flood.
4. When returning to a flooded home, wait for water to recede. Wear heavy boots and gloves for protection during clean up.
5. Do not turn power back on until the power company can inspect – this will prevent electrical fires and potential electrocution.