

EMERGENCY SHELTERING DURING COVID-19

Wildfires or other emergencies could happen any time. Evacuations and sheltering will look different under COVID-19, making advance preparation and flexibility more important than ever. Although California's statewide COVID-19 stay-at-home order remains in effect, you should follow an evacuation order regardless of whether you have COVID-19 or believe you may have been exposed. For this reason, this year we are requiring everyone to wear a face covering when you arrive at any evacuation location.

Prepare Now

Lake County is prone to wildfires and evacuations. If you live here, you need to have a plan ready, and have it ready now. A good wildfire plan includes:

1. Home protection
2. A "go-bag"
3. An evacuation plan

Home Protection:

Be sure that your home is fire safe. Clear away brush and tall grass from around your home. Clean out your rain gutters and make sure there is no flammable material near your house. These steps will reduce the chances of your home catching fire.

Build a Go-Bag:

Prepare your "go bag" today! You'll need enough supplies to sustain you for at least three to five days. This is a critical step in preparing your family for emergencies. Based on your unique needs consider the following:

- food and water
- personal hygiene items - deodorant, a toothbrush, clean clothing, tissues
- infant formula, bottles, diapers, wipes
- important documents
- cash, credit or debit cards
- medication
- face coverings for every member of your family
- hand sanitizer
- pet food

Have an Evacuation Plan:

This year, State mandated safety requirements are going to limit the number of people the County can shelter. Our capacity for sheltering is roughly a third of what it has been in the past. If you can seek shelter with family or friends, have homeowners insurance that will cover the cost of a motel or access to another location, we urge you to exercise those options. Congregate sheltering should be the last resort for those who truly have no other option. If you are unable to leave the area, the following procedures are in place.

Temporary Evacuation Points

If an evacuation warning or order is issued, you may first be directed to a temporary evacuation point: a safe receiving site (a parking lot or County park) where initial assistance, COVID-19 screening and direction will be provided. At a temporary evacuation point, you must wear a face covering and keep 6 feet of distance from any non-household members. If possible, stay in your vehicle to reduce contact with others.

Expect to be screened for COVID-19 symptoms and exposure by qualified personnel when you arrive at a temporary evacuation point. Where you are directed to shelter will depend on whether you are COVID-19 positive or symptomatic or in a high-risk or vulnerable category for exposure to COVID-19. It will be important for those individuals without cars and who are reliant on public transportation, to follow the guidelines for social distancing, hand washing and sanitizing and wearing a face covering at all times while at the TEP.

Sheltering

If congregate shelters are necessary, shelter operators will staff them with trained COVID-19 response personnel and implement all possible sanitation and distancing measures. No one identified as COVID-19 positive or symptomatic will be sheltered with other community members in a congregate shelter. This year, only trained service animals will be allowed to stay in the shelters. Shade and crates will be provided at shelters sites for dogs and cats, but owners are responsible for all care and comfort of their animal.

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