

## ■ Good Hands® Advice

Tips to help you be prepared and informed



# Protect Your Home from Wildfires

**Wildfires are a natural hazard in forested and grassland regions. Each year there are approximately 8,000 wildfires in Canada, destroying approximately 25,000 square kilometres of land. 55 per cent of all forest fires are caused by people, while lightning causes the remaining 45 per cent.\* Wildfires can threaten public health and safety, destroy property and cause economic hardship. Since they can leave us with little warning before they spread, it is important to take the proper precautions and remind ourselves what to do if a fire is headed our way.**

### Be Prepared

- A debris-free lawn around your home may be your best protection against wildfire as it acts as a natural firebreak between the house and surrounding area. Keep the perimeter of your home free of dead leaves, brush or other debris and keep trees and bushes trimmed to ensure branches are not touching your home. Store firewood and other sources of fuel at least 10 metres away from the walls of your home.
- Keep grass mowed and watered since it is flammable. This includes trees, shrubs, deadfall and woodpiles.
- Keep a fire extinguisher and install smoke detectors on every floor of your home. Be sure your fire extinguisher is labelled by a nationally recognized testing laboratory such as the Underwriters Laboratories of Canada (ULC). Test smoke detectors monthly and change the batteries twice a year. Pick memorable dates to do this, such as daylight savings time.
- Homes located in or near a forested area are at the greatest risk of wildfire. When building or upgrading your home, consider using fire-resistant material such as metal, asphalt and ULC-treated shakes for roofs. Use stucco, metal, brick and concrete for the foundation. The most fire-resistant glass is tempered glass.
- Put together an emergency preparedness plan and kit in case you have to evacuate. The kit should include a three-day supply of food, water and other essentials.
- Practise your emergency preparedness plan with your family to ensure that they know what to do in the event of a fire. Rehearse the Stop, Drop and Roll drill so that family members know what to do if their clothes catch on fire.

### In the Event of a Fire

- Smoke is the cause of the majority of fire-related deaths. Be sure to stay low and cover your mouth and nose. Breathe through a damp cloth to avoid smoke inhalation.
- Protect exposed skin with clothing or non-flammable material. If you are spending time outdoors, like camping, consider wearing natural fibres such as wool or cotton. Synthetic fabrics, even if worn as underwear, are more flammable.
- If you are indoors, keep doors and windows closed and all lights on to aid visibility.
- Be ready to evacuate at any time. When you need to leave, quickly gather all family members and pets and head to the meeting place listed in your emergency preparedness plan. Follow the directions of local authorities and all evacuation orders.

\* From the Government of Canada's Get Prepared Website  
<http://www.getprepared.gc.ca/cnt/hzd/wldfrs-eng.aspx>

For more helpful tips and advice, visit  
**[allstate.ca/learningcentre](http://allstate.ca/learningcentre)**, contact  
your local Allstate Insurance Agency  
or call 1-800-allstate.

**Good Hands® claims service available 24/7**