

Wildfires are a natural hazard in much of Canada and pose a serious threat to life and property.

There are roughly 8,000 wildfires each year in Canada. While 45 per cent are caused by lightning, the remaining 55 per cent are human caused. These human-caused fires are the result of activities like improperly disposing of cigarettes, failing to extinguish a campfire, open burning and more. These causes are preventable. We all have a role to play in preventing wildfires, and we all must do our part.

Preventing wildfires

Preparing for the threat of wildfire is a shared responsibility. The below steps can help prevent wildfires:

- ▶ Call 9-1-1 if you notice an unattended or out-of-control fire. Fires can grow quickly, and early notification can save lives and property.
- ▶ Get a fire permit if you are planning an open burn. You need a fire permit for all open burning in Leduc County from March 1 and Oct. 31; learn more below or at leduc-county.com/fire-permit.
- ▶ Obey all fire advisories, restrictions and bans; these are posted to albertafirebans.ca.
- ▶ Use approved firepits and burn barrels; learn more at leduc-county.com/contained-burning.
- ▶ Never leave a fire unattended. Completely extinguish the fire – by dousing it with water and stirring the ashes until cold – before leaving the immediate area.
- ▶ Make sure you completely extinguish cigarettes before disposing of them, and do not discard cigarettes, matches or smoking materials from moving vehicles.
- ▶ Use caution when using and fueling lanterns, stoves and heaters. Make sure lighting and heating devices are cool before refueling and store fuel away from appliances.

Protecting your home before a wildfire

Homes can be easily ignited by embers from an area wildfire. Reduce the risk of a wildfire threatening your home by taking the following steps:

- ▶ Remove flammable materials – like dried branches, leaves, lawn furniture, propane tanks, firewood and debris – from within 1.5 metres (five feet) of your home.
- ▶ Remove and properly dispose of debris, leaves and other material from your roof and gutters.

- ▶ Remove dead vegetation and other items from under your deck or porch. Screen or box-in areas below decks to prevent debris and other materials from accumulating.
- ▶ Keep your lawn hydrated and maintained. Dry grass and shrubs are fuel for wildfire.
- ▶ Prune trees so the lowest branches are at least 1.75 metres (six feet) from the ground. Make sure branches are at least 15 metres (five feet) from your home, deck or fence.
- ▶ Keep a sprinkler in an easy-to-access location.

Protecting your home during a wildfire

If you see a fire approaching your home or community, call 9-1-1 immediately. Fires can grow quickly, and early notification can save lives and property.

Only if it is safe and there is time before the fire arrives, do the following:

▶ **Inside the house**

- ▶ Close all windows and doors in the house.
- ▶ Cover vents, windows and other openings with duct tape and/or precut pieces of plywood.
- ▶ Turn on the lights in the house, porch, garage and yard; this helps aid visibility if smoke fills the house.
- ▶ Move combustible materials such as light curtains and furniture away from the windows.
- ▶ Pack your emergency kit, essential items like medications and identification, and valuables into your vehicle.

▶ **Outside the house**

- ▶ Cover vents and other openings of the house (such as air intake openings) with duct tape and/or precut pieces of plywood.
- ▶ Turn off propane or natural gas. Move any propane barbeques into the open, away from structures.
- ▶ Move all combustibles away from the house, including firewood and lawn furniture.



FIRE PREVENTION TIP SHEET

WILDFIRE PREVENTION

- ▶ Park your car in your driveway facing towards the road. Keep your car windows closed.
- ▶ Put lawn sprinklers on the roof of the house and turn on the water.

If you are told to evacuate, do it. In case of evacuation, never leave your pet(s) behind. If you are able to evacuate your livestock safely, do it. If you do not have time, leave livestock unsheltered; locking them in barns or other enclosures could trap them inside and reduce chances of survival. Be sure to follow the instructions of local authorities.

*Information contained in this tip sheet was sourced from the **National Fire Protection Association**, the **Government of Alberta**, **Alberta Wildfire** and the **Government of Canada**.*

Contact Leduc County Fire Services

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leduc-county.com/fire-prevention