



EVACUATION GUIDELINES

Evacuations are more common than many people realize. In the State of California alone, hundreds of times each year, natural and man-made disasters force thousands of people to leave their homes. Fires and floods cause evacuations even more frequently.

Evacuation Guidelines

- Plan places where your family will meet, both within and outside of your immediate neighborhood.
- Keep at least a half tank of gas in your car if an evacuation seems likely. Gas stations may be closed during emergencies and unable to pump gas during power outages.
- Make transportation arrangements with friends or neighbors if you do not own a car.
- Listen to a battery-powered radio and follow local evacuation instructions.
- Gather your family and pets and evacuate if you are instructed to evacuate immediately.
- Leave early enough to avoid being trapped by severe weather.
- Follow recommended evacuation routes. Do not take shortcuts as they may be blocked.
- Be alert for washed-out roads and bridges. Do not drive into flooded areas.
- Stay away from downed power lines.



If Time Permits

- Gather your disaster supplies kit.
- Wear sturdy shoes and clothing that provides some protection, such as long pants, long-sleeved shirts, and a cap.

- Secure your home. Close and lock doors and windows. Unplug electrical equipment, such as radios and televisions, and small appliances, such as toasters and microwaves. Leave freezers and refrigerators plugged in unless there is a risk of flooding.
- Let others know where you are going.
- Check with neighbors who may need a ride.

Returning Home After An Evacuation

Returning home can be both physically and mentally challenging. Above all, use caution.

- Keep a battery-powered radio with you so you can listen for emergency updates and news reports.
- Use a battery-powered flashlight to inspect a damaged home. **Note:** The flashlight should be turned on outside before entering—the battery may produce a spark that could ignite leaking gas, if present.
- Watch out for animals, especially poisonous snakes. Use a stick to poke through debris. Be wary of wildlife and other animals.
- Use the phone only to report life-threatening emergencies.
- Stay off the streets. If you must go out, watch for fallen objects; downed electrical wires; and weakened walls, bridges, roads, and sidewalks.

Before You Enter Your Home

Walk carefully around your home's perimeter and check for loose power lines, gas leaks, and structural damage. If you have any doubts about safety, have your residence inspected by a qualified building inspector or structural engineer before entering.

Do Not Enter If:

- You smell gas.
- Floodwaters remain around the building.
- Your home was damaged by fire and the authorities have not declared it safe.