

A MESSAGE FROM THE EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS COMMITTEE

Being proactive is key to fire prevention. The safety of our community is a shared responsibility, and together, we can take steps to reduce fire risk and protect our homes. Please take a moment to review these fire safety tips and encourage your neighbors to do the same. By staying prepared, we help ensure a safer, more resilient Nellie Gail for everyone.

Five Things to Do Today to Protect Yourself from a Wildfire

1. Review Your Insurance Coverage Ensure your homeowner's insurance includes replacement coverage that accounts for rebuilding to current building codes (CRC 2022). Without proper coverage, you may not receive enough to rebuild to modern safety standards. Review your policy annually to ensure it reflects the true cost of rebuilding, including material and labor cost increases. Ask your insurance provider about additional coverage options such as fire damage riders and extended replacement cost policies. In Southern California, where wildfires are prevalent, consider adding coverage for smoke damage and temporary housing in case of evacuation. Document your home's contents with photos and videos for easier claims processing.

2. Harden Your Home with a Fire-Resistant Roof Upgrade your roof to fire-resistant materials such as metal, clay, concrete, fiber cement, or fire-rated asphalt shingles. A Class A-rated roof offers the highest level of fire protection. Regularly clean your roof and gutters to remove leaves, pine needles, and other debris that can ignite from embers. Inspect for and seal any gaps where embers could enter, such as between roof tiles or at the roofline. Southern California's dry, windy conditions make embers particularly dangerous, so consider installing a rooftop sprinkler system or a fire-

resistant underlayment beneath shingles for added protection.



Roof Vulnerabilities:

- Combustible materials such as untreated wood shingles can easily ignite.
- Gaps or openings in roof assemblies can allow embers to enter.
- Debris accumulation on the roof or in gutters increases fire risk.

Roof Protection Measures:

- Keep the roof free of debris and vegetation.
- Fill gaps between roof covering and sheathing to prevent ember intrusion.
- Replace older roofs with Class A-rated fire-resistant materials.
- Use noncombustible siding at roof-to-wall intersections.

Roof Attachments:

- Keep areas around roof attachments (e.g., solar panels) clear of debris.
- Ensure adequate space under attachments to prevent debris buildup.

- Install metal flashing around skylights and use tempered glass with metal mesh screens.

3. Install Ember-Resistant Vents & Protect Eaves and Soffits

Embers can easily ignite attics and crawl spaces, making ember-resistant vents critical. Install vents with one-eighth to one-sixteenth-inch mesh to block embers while allowing proper ventilation. Use fire-resistant materials for eaves and soffits, such as fiber cement or metal, and ensure all gaps and openings are sealed to prevent ember intrusion. Consider retrofitting older homes with soffit vents that close under high heat to further protect against fire. In Southern California, where Santa Ana winds can carry embers long distances, additional ember-blocking measures like exterior shutters and attic sprinklers can further reduce fire risk.

4. Create a Safe “Zero Zone” Around Your Home

Maintain a 5-foot perimeter around your house that is free of combustible materials. This “Zero Zone” should be clear of dry vegetation, wood piles, outdoor furniture made of flammable materials, and mulch. Instead, use non-combustible landscaping such as gravel, stone, or fire-resistant plants like succulents and California-native species such as toyon and ceanothus. Keep this area well-watered and pruned to prevent vegetation from becoming a fire hazard. Install metal or stone borders to separate combustible materials from your home’s foundation. In Southern California’s drought-prone areas, replace wooden fences and decks with fire-resistant materials like metal, composite, or concrete to minimize ignition risk.

5. Implement Defensible Space Regulations

- Zone 0 (0-5 feet from the home): Keep entirely free of flammable materials, including mulch and dead

plants.

- Zone 1 (5-30 feet from the home): Reduce vegetation density, trim trees, and maintain irrigation systems.
- Zone 2 (30-100 feet from the home): Maintain widely spaced trees and remove ladder fuels that allow fire to climb up structures. For more wildfire preparedness tips, visit ReadyforWildfire.org and sign up for emergency alerts at AlertOC.

A prepared community is a safer community!

Let’s work together to protect Nellie Gail.

