

# COPE NEWSLETTER

CITIZENS ORGANIZED TO PREPARE FOR EMERGENCIES

## SUMMER UP!

It is time to plan for your COPE semi-annual neighborhood get-together. Never had one? Don't know what to do at this function? Here are a few ideas that other neighborhoods have used.

- Pool Party with pot luck BBQ. Each family brings their own meat to cook plus a vegetable and dessert to share.
- A Block Party in the middle of the street, end of a cul de sac, at a local park. Pot-Luck Picnic or BBQ.
- Plan a "decorate your bike, baby carriage, or wagon" party. Have a parade around the neighborhood, give a prize for best what-ever. Conclude with a dessert social.

- Pie Party or Coffee and Muffins followed by a tour of neighborhood homes to map water and gas shut-off valves with instructions of when and how to shut off these utilities.
- An outdoor movie for all the families in the neighborhood.

What makes this a COPE function is that you spend about 10 minutes to bring the group up to date on how many homes are participating, answer questions, announce the next challenge—getting a supply kit together, have water supply for 5-7 days, attend a emergency first aid class, etc. Invite a COPE Representative to do a brief presentation or show-and-tell how to pack a "To-Go" bag. The purpose, of course, is to just have fun on a beautiful summer day.

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### In this issue:

Summer Up!	1
Red Cross Partnership	1
Wild Fire Season	2
Away-From-Home Form	3
Shutting off Gas & Water	3

### RADIO CORNER

Watch this publication next month for updates taking place in the COPE Radio Communicator's Group with an organizational meeting and training classes to be held.

The next SCRA radio licensing class will be held in August—Friday, August 22<sup>nd</sup>—24<sup>th</sup> with FCC exams starting at 3pm on the 24<sup>th</sup>. Contact Iola for details.

## COPE AND THE AMERICAN RED CROSS

Cope and The American Red Cross have renewed their partnership to bring programs and training to COPE neighborhoods. The Red Cross will do 45 minute presentations on 'Building a Disaster Kit'; 'Making a Disaster Plan', and 'Being Informed'. They have

CPR and First Aid Training. The Red Cross can also set up Disaster Preparedness Booths at Health and Safety Fairs to answer questions and discuss concerns, hand out and go over preparedness materials, and provide information about health and safety classes. To

include the Red Cross in your event or to organize an event with them, contact your local Safe Corps members, Valerian Lopez at 707-577-7615 – [valerian.lopez@redcross.org](mailto:valerian.lopez@redcross.org), or Sarah Finnigan at 707-577-7602 or [sarah.finnigan@redcross.org](mailto:sarah.finnigan@redcross.org) for more information.

# 2014 Wildfire Season Updates

This article was taken from the FEMA.gov's Community's, Region IX website. With all our fire zones within Santa Rosa, this information is critical.

Greeting Pacific Region Members!

I wanted to create this thread as a place where members could come to share their preparedness and mitigation tips around the wildfires that are taking place throughout the region and to provide a space to share resources, updates and news alerts.

Angela Nak, Individual & Community Preparedness Officer for this region provided a few great locations to check for updates and assistance when needed.

**Firstly, make sure that you're following [@FEMARegion9 on Twitter](#) for real time updates and information on the wildfires.**

## **Get Links to Current Incident Information**

For up-to-date information regarding the current fire conditions in San Diego County, there are a number of resources available.

[San Diego County Emergency Information Current Updates, including shelter locations & evacuation notices/lifts](#)

[Cal OES GIS fire map](#)

[CalFire's Current fire map](#)

[The US Forrest Service Active Fire Mapping Program](#)

## **Follow Additional Social Media Sources**

You can get the most current information from these social media accounts! Click below to visit:

[Governor's Press Office Twitter](#)

[Cal OES Twitter](#)

[Cal OES Facebook](#)

[CalFIRE Twitter](#)

## [Cal Guard Twitter](#)

**Members! How have you prepared for the wildfires? Let us know below!**

We live in northern California and are as ready for fire season as possible. We live in the wildland intermix zone which has scattered homes on forest acreage, not subdivision lots. We have our defensible space work nearly completed for the season. I've checked and repacked our evacuation gear and updated the priority list. Most of our nearest neighbors are equally prepared.

Unlike southern California, most of our northern counties do not have actual fire evacuation plans for rural areas. The focus of our county has been on planning defensible space and firebreaks, not on ways and means of evacuating local populations in actual fire situations. Consequently I'm now working on evacuation maps for our neighborhood and I'll be talking to each of the neighbors about my findings.

Our volunteer fire companies do a great job on house fires but they rely on CalFire, USFS and interagency agreements for combatting wildfires. It's effective, but often slow in the early hours of a fire. Often stations are sparsely staffed due to firefighters being detailed to other parts of the state for earlier fires. Consequently our neighborhood is most at risk in the first couple of hours of a major fire when agencies are scrambling to gather resources.

I've looked at various mountain-type community evacuation plans from several western states to use as a template for our area. Most plans assume that agencies will be giving directions, making timely evacuation announcements, etc. While that does occur in our county, locals are pretty much on their own for the first couple of hours of an active fire. We do depend on the 'telephone tree' in that if one neighbors hears about something going on, they call around. Not everyone has a landline phone. Not

Continued on page 4

## TURNING OFF WATER AND GAS

Are you uncertain about when to turn off water and gas? Maybe this will help.

Following a disaster, such as an earthquake, it is recommended that you turn off the *water* to your residence immediately. In doing so you will trap clean water in your home for use as an emergency water supply, plus it will *keep out* pollutants that could seep into your pipes making the water inside your home unsafe to consume. Once your supply of bottled water has been used (that one gallon per person per day for 5-7 days) you will have emergency water in the tank of your toilet (NOT the bowl), 30–40 gallons in your water heater, and some water in the pipes that you can drain out into a clean sink or tub. Turning water off should be done at the point where the water enters your home and NOT at the curb.

Turning off the gas, however, is another story. It is NOT recommended that you turn the gas off immediately *unless* you *hear* gas, *smell* gas, or have a fire. You should have a gas wrench attached to the gas pipe where it can be easily found in the dark and you should know how to turn the gas off. You should try to move the valve *only slightly*, just to make sure the valve is not stuck. If you turn the valve a quarter of a turn, you have shut off the flow of gas, will have to call PG&E to come out and turn it back on, check for leaks and relight all pilot lights in your home. If the valve is stuck and cannot be moved, call PG&E to come out and replace the valve.

Learning how to turn off the water and gas into your home can be done as a group going to each home, finding the shut-offs and marking your neighborhood maps. In an emergency, your neighbors will have your back if you are not home.

The COPE Away-From-Home form is very helpful to fill out and leave with your Neighborhood Leader or the house across the street from you so they can help watch your property when you are away for any length of time. This is as much a Neighborhood Watch situation as it is a COPE practice, as it is also helpful for the neighbors to know that you are not in the house if a disaster should strike while you are away. Knowing, for instance, that animals are home alone with someone caring for them throughout the day, is very important information to leave with your neighbors. The form below is helpful for that purpose.

## COPE Away-From-Home Notice

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

GONE FROM: \_\_\_\_\_ TO: \_\_\_\_\_

CONTACT AT: \_\_\_\_\_

HOME PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

CELLULAR PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

E-MAIL ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

	<u>YES</u>	<u>NO</u>
LIGHT ON IN HOUSE	_____	_____
PAPERS STOPPED	_____	_____
MAIL HELD	_____	_____
HOUSE SITTER	_____	_____
PET FEEDER WILL VISIT	_____	_____
OTHER POSSIBLE VISITORS	_____	_____

VISITORS NAMES: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

OTHER INFO: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

(You can also call or email this information to your COPE Team Leader before leaving)

## CITIZENS ORGANIZED TO PREPARE FOR EMERGENCIES

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Disaster  
Preparedness  
Coordinator:  
Position Vacant



### 24-Hour Wildfire Updates Continued from page 2

everyone has a cell phone, TV reception is mixed, and the county has not designated a specific radio station for evacuation information. Often it's up to the neighbors with scanners, phones and TVs to make sure everyone nearby is aware of a fire.

I've also reviewed the post fire analysis on what saved homes during various large fires, and searched for information for homeowners on determining when to evacuate and when it's too late to leave. It's been interesting, in that I learned that 30% of Americans live within a mile or two (the ember zone) of high hazard fire zones; That defensible space saves about 80% of homes when a fire front moves through; That fires move an average of a mile/hour but can move as fast as 14 miles/hour and spot a mile a head; That fire fronts move through different fuels at different rates: through grass in 10 minutes, through brush in 20 minutes and through timber in an hour. That makes a difference in evacuation timing.

I have found some pretty good evacuation plan models at:

<http://www.areyoufiresafe.com/get-fire-smart/emergency-preparedness/> and  
<http://www.areyoufiresafe.com/files/6713/7530/0818/2013-Emergency-Preparedness-Guide-Evacuation-Plan.pdf>

For our local evacuation, I'm adding our own road map with 3 circles: a red circle that denotes a one mile radius from our house, a yellow circle that denotes 2 miles and a green circle at 3 miles. Once plotted it made it clear how a fire approaching each circle might impact our evacuation routes.

I monitor the Cal-Fire Incidents, USFS InciWeb, and the ENPLAN Wildfire Viewer for tracking active fires. In our location, we have to be our own 'first responders', have a good plan, and hope our firefighters are able to mobilize fast enough to keep fires small. Part of our plan depends on good defensible space. CalFire has good information on how to accomplish the mission.

Ready, Set, Go!

### RESEARCH RESOURCES

[72hours.gov](http://72hours.gov)  
[ready.gov](http://ready.gov)  
[ready.gov/kids](http://ready.gov/kids)  
[NEXTDOOR.COM](http://NEXTDOOR.COM)  
[pge.com/myhome/edusafety/](http://pge.com/myhome/edusafety/)  
[gaselectricsafety/](http://gaselectricsafety/)  
[srcity.org/cope](http://srcity.org/cope)  
[nixle.com](http://nixle.com)  
[emergency.cdc.gov/disasters/earthquakes/](http://emergency.cdc.gov/disasters/earthquakes/)  
Plan B store in Windsor

[Map Your Neighborhood/index.html](http://MapYourNeighborhood/index.html)  
<http://www.fema.gov/>  
<https://twitter.com/femaregion9>  
<http://www.ready.gov/make-a-plan>  
<http://www.ready.gov/kit-storage-locations>  
Heat preparedness website: <http://www.community.fema.gov/connect.ti/readynpm/view?objectId=160619>  
<http://www.cafirefoundation.org/go/cff/about-ca-fire-foundation/firefighters-on-your-side/have-an-escape-plan/watch-the-video/>