

Week 4

A Season of Resilience in Emergency Preparations

Weekly Focus

WHAT	WHY
Account for special circumstances & mitigate risks.	- Every household has unique characteristics. - Active mitigation can reduce your risk & those of your neighbors.

Make A Plan

Understand what special circumstances may be associated with your home and household during an emergency. Walk through how to handle each of these in a time critical or resource constrained situation. Examples could be medical conditions, medical equipment, limitations on vehicles or other transportation, property features, etc.

- ___ Step 1: Identify if your household has special circumstances.
- ___ Step 2: Write down how these can be accounted for during an evacuation event.
- ___ Step 3: Write down how these can be accounted for during a stay-at-home event.
- ___ Step 4: Write down who is responsible for what in each situation and how to communicate unexpected obstacles.

Understand how you can reduce the physical hazards that may be present in or around your home.

- ___ Step 5: Plan & schedule how to address any obstacles/safety hazards that impede any fire evacuation exits.
- ___ Step 6: Plan & schedule steps to increase your “[defensible space](#)” around your home from wildfires.
- ___ Step 7: Plan & schedule steps to “seal” your household from outside containments or smoke.
- ___ Step 8: Make sure your home address is clearly marked from the road for 1st responders.

Be Informed

Ensure each family member knows how to make your home safe during an emergency.

- ___ Step 9: Know where your shut offs are for: water, power, and gas.
- ___ Step 10: Know how to safely shut off each utility and if a tool is required.
- ___ Step 11: Know how to safely turn on each utility after an emergency or which require a professional to handle.

Know the specific risks for your local area.

- ___ Step 12: FEMA maintains the [National Risk Index](#) map. (<https://hazards.fema.gov/nri/map>)

Highest Risks for El Paso County are (in order): Lightning, Cold Wave, Hail, Tornado, Wildfire, Riverine Flooding.

- ___ Step 13: Know your wildfire risk as assessed by the state and city of Colorado Springs.
 - [Wildfire Risk Assessment Site & Map](#) Put in your home address for a report & rating.
 - [Colorado Forest Atlas Information Portal](#): Public Applications: [Wildfire Risk Viewer](#) & [Risk Reduction Planner](#)
- ___ Step 14: Know how to mitigate risks in and around your home.
 - [Colorado Spring Fire Department](#) free neighborhood chipping program w/ consultation from a fire marshal.
[Schedule a free, onsite consultation](#) from the Wildfire Mitigation office by calling 719-385-7493.
 - Some insurance companies offer a free home evaluation for wildfire mitigation.

Take basic first aid courses like CPR.

- ___ Step 15: Take a CPR, First Aid, Basic Life Support, etc. course from [Red Cross](#) & other accredited institutions.

Make A Kit

Assess what special items you need to include to handle the unique needs of your home or household, as identified in the “Make A Plan” section. Add these to your kit, in addition to the suggested items. (For example, would you need bolt cutters to get through a locked gate?)

Remember the following is for 1 person, multiply as needed for each member.

Evacuate

Tools:

- Non-sparking wrench/pliers to turn off utilities.
- Flashlights.
- Zip ties.
- Duct tape.
- Pocket knife / multi-tool.
- Work gloves.

Health:

- 1 week's supply of medication and vitamins.
- Basic first aid kit.
- Spare prescription glasses and/or contacts.
- Sunscreen and lip balm.
- Blankets, mylar and/or cloth.

Important Info

- Backup of all passwords.

Special Circumstance Items

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Stay-At-Home

Tools:

- Non-sparking wrench/pliers to turn off utilities.
- Flashlights/lanterns.
- Zip ties.
- Duct tape.
- Heavy plastic sheeting: to seal the doors, vents that open into your shelter for a short period of time.
- Tarps.
- Shovel.
- Pocket knife / multi-tool.
- Rope or paracord.
- Outside rated extension cord.
- Hose(s) that can wrap all the around your house.
- Work gloves.

Health:

- At least 2 week's supply of medication and vitamins.
- First aid kit.
- Allergy & pain over the counter medications (adult & child)
- Spare prescription glasses and/or contacts
- Blankets mylar and/or cloth.
- Sunscreen and lip balm.

Important Info

- Backup of all passwords.

Special Circumstance Items

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St Michaels's Residential Wildfire Mitigation Steps

Sources

- [Colorado Spring Fire Department: www.coswildfireready.org](http://www.coswildfireready.org)
 - [Ignition Resistant Construction Design Manual](#)
 - [Wildfire Mitigation Vegetation Management](#)
 - [Firewise Plant List](#)
- [FEMA: "Mitigation for Homeowner Fact Sheet"](#)
- [USAA: Protecting your home from wildfires](#)



Goal: Make your home more resistant to wildfire as climate changes & drought are increasing risks.

- "It is essential to learn how applying fire-resistant landscape design and fuels management can reduce the likelihood of a home igniting from an exposure fire." -CS Fire Dept.
- It is important to take a system or package approach, eliminating just 1 element is not sufficient.

Wildfire Defensible Space

- A natural or landscaped area around a structure that's been adapted to reduce fire hazards.
- Focus on the Home Ignition Zone (HIZ) as the first 30 feet from your home.

Key Threats

- Studies from previous show wind-blown embers and radiant heat can threaten your home long before the flames are feeding off your property and the biggest threat to protect against.
- "It is not uncommon to have fire brands/embers igniting spot fires as much as one-half mile or more ahead of the fire front. Some studies have reported spotting fire as much as ten miles ahead of the fire front."

Mitigation in priority order

- **Roof:** Highest source of initial ignition has been roofing exposure to embers.
 - Use Class A rating, which means the covering & underlayment provide the most effective resistance to fire.
 - Consider installing metal angle flashing at the edge of the roof to reduce fire risk.
 - Ensure attic vents are screened with 1/8 inch spacing to stop larger embers.
- **Landscaping:** 2nd highest source of exposure has been vegetation near structures.
 - Actively manage the safety zone surrounding all structures, 30 ft from walls/rooflines/decks.
 - Place flammables like woodpiles, propane tanks, gas grills, etc. at least 30 ft from structures.
 - Reduce the number of trees in heavily wooded areas.
 - Remove branches that overhang the roof or come within 15ft of chimney.
 - Prune branches to 10ft above ground or the bottom 1/3 of the canopy; never top trees.
 - Avoid plants w/ volatile oils & resins like pine and juniper.
 - Keep grass mowed to 4 inches or less.
- **Foundation/Structure:** Home to home exposure is common in the event of a wildland/urban fire.
 - Nonflammable/composite material is used on siding, decks, porches, and fences.
 - Enclose underside of projections such with nonflammable soffit and fascia material.
 - Enclose the base of walls (lower edge of siding at walls, posts, columns, etc.) with nonflammable flashing.
 - Consider metal flashing where wood decking/material meets the siding of the house.
 - Chimneys should have spark arresters; to catch embers from outside of home as well as from fireplace.
 - Ensure doors are made of non-combustible material & meet International Residential Code requirements.
 - Windows should be double-paned or tempered glass to withstand heat.
 - Window frames should have aluminum or other material to retain shape when exposed to high heats.
 - Clean gutters & areas around the house.