
Forest Fire Dos & Donts

Dos

Preventing Forest Fire

- Immediately contact and report an unattended forest fire to local fire department/authority.
- During any fire activity keep a shovel, water, and fire extinguisher nearby to keep fires in check in dry seasons.

Be Prepared

- Know your forest fire risk.
- Make a forest fire emergency plan.
- Familiarize yourself with local emergency plans.
- Be informed and make others aware about mobile, email, radio, TV alerts/warnings systems accessible in your locality for forest fire.
- Be aware of weather updates, emergency instructions or evacuation orders.
- Educate family members and neighbours on plans, dos and donts in case of forest fire.
- Practice evacuating your home.
- Teach all household members the technique of 'stop, drop and roll' in case cloth catches fire.
- Plan more than one escape routes before the fire season sets in.
- Create a safety zone around your home by removing vegetation/articles that easily catch fire.
- Consult with your local fire department about making your home fire-resistant.
- Regularly clean the roof and gutters.
- Cover doors, windows, other ventilation with metal wire mesh no larger than 1/8 inch to prevent sparks from entering the home in case of fire.

Evacuation Tips

- If advised to evacuate, do so immediately.
- Pre-plan evacuation route and keep evacuation checklist and emergency kit (including a flashlight, mobile phone with power-bank/charger, batteries, cash, water bottle and first aid supplies) ready before the fire season sets in.
- Prefer protective clothing and footwear to protect yourself from sparks and ashes from fire.
- If you have time before leaving your home, and your safety is not in jeopardy, spray water on the land, the walls and the roof and remove combustibles (fuels, LPG, kerosene, spray cans, oil, etc) from around your house.
- Close all windows, doors and other openings.

During Fire (If Indoor):

- Be away from outside walls.
- Close doors without locking it.
- Close windows, vents and other large openings.
- Turn on a light in each room to maintain visibility in smoke.
- Have a flashlight, mobile phone, extra batteries and a battery-powered radio close at hand.
- Keep all family members and pets together.
- Breathe closest to the ground, preferably through moist cloth, to avoid inhaling smoke.

During Fire (If Outdoor):

- If you are near road, lie face down along the road cut or in a ditch and try to cover yourself with soil or anything that can shield you from the heat/fire.
- Breathe into a damp cloth when in the presence of thick smoke, and be sure to keep the cloth in front of your mouth and nose in order to avoid inhaling smoke.
- Look for a water body like pond or river nearby to crouch in. If no water nearby then lie low in a depressed area or area with clear or little vegetation and cover body with wet clothing, blanket or soil until the fire passes.
- Breathe closest to the ground, preferably through a moist cloth, to avoid inhaling smoke into your lungs.

Returning Home

- Return home only when authorities say it is safe.
- Use caution when entering burned areas for hidden heat/smouldering/fire.
- Maintain a 'fire watch' for several hours by checking and re-checking for smoke, sparks or hidden fire throughout the house, including roof, inside and around it.
- Photograph damage to your property.
- Evacuate immediately if you smell smoke.

Donts

Preventing Forest Fire

- NEVER leave a fire unattended without completely extinguishing, checking and re-checking the ashes near vegetation.
- Do NOT leave/throw cigarettes, matches, and other smoking materials from moving vehicles near forest area without completely extinguishing it.
- Do NOT leave behind flammables during outdoor camping in forests.
- Avoid any open burning in windy conditions in forest area.

During Fire

If Outdoors

- Do NOT try to outrun the blaze, instead look for a water body like pond or river nearby to crouch in. If no water nearby then lie low in a depressed area or area with clear or little vegetation and cover body with wet clothing, blanket or soil until the fire passes.

Returning Home

- Do NOT use any food that has been exposed to heat, smoke or soot.
- Do NOT use water that you think may be contaminated for ANY purpose.