



520-896-2980

ORACLE FIRE DISTRICT

Firewise News

News from Oracle Fire District to the community . . .

www.oraclefire.org



VOLUME IX

PO Box 977 • 1475 W. American Ave., Oracle, AZ 85623

SUMMER 2020

Dear Oracle Residents . . .



As if things couldn't get worse – with the COVID-19 pandemic, social distancing and mask wearing, and now, the Bighorn Fire! My hopes are that by the time you receive this newsletter in your box, the fire will be out and we will be, once again, grateful to have escaped one more major incident. However, we need to consider the aftermath of such a devastating fire: FLOODS. Following the Aspen Fire of 2003, Oracle and the High Jinks area specifically,

experienced flooding which killed one resident. This was one resident too many! We need to ensure that does not happen again.

For weeks now, we have been hearing about communities being in the **Ready, Set, or Go** stages of evacuations. This newsletter will touch upon these concepts; however, I would like to emphasize that we should ALWAYS be in the Ready stage, especially going into the summer (aka: fire season).

Our fire season is just getting started. The threat is not over. The safety of our community is of the utmost importance to me and to the staff and volunteers of Oracle Fire District (OFD); but we need your help. Please read through this newsletter carefully, sign up for the notifications, implement as much of the flood prevention and awareness, Firewise principles, and evacuation preparedness as possible, and keep this newsletter handy as it contains a lot of useful information that you may need in the future.

Sincerely, *Robert Jennings*
Oracle District Fire Chief

Get Alerts!

Sign Up!

Oracle Emergency Notification System (ENS)

THE ENS SYSTEM – An important tool for emergencies is the **OFD Emergency Notification System (ENS)**. This “Reverse 911” system is unique to Oracle. (The OFD Fire District does not include SaddleBrooke Ranch.) It is confidential and is not shared with or sold to any other entity. In the event of an emergency, Oracle Fire District is able to send a message to your home or cell phone alerting you to the danger and the need to possibly evacuate. There is no cost to the home owner or property owner to be included in the ENS system. To ensure you are included in the system and receive these alerts, please complete the OFD ENS form, available on the OFD website or in the front office of the fire station. Return it to the station or mail it to: PO Box 977, Oracle, AZ 85623.

PENS – In addition to the OFD ENS System, don't forget to sign up as well on **Pinal County's Emergency Notification System (PENS)** at: PinalCountyAZ.gov/emergencymanagement/



EMERGENCY INFORMATION

FLOODING POTENTIAL

According to the National Weather Service, a good rule of thumb is: “If you can look uphill from where you are and see a burnt out area, you are at risk for flooding.”

Burned soil acts like a water repellent and can move water very quickly; it doesn't take much rainfall to cause flash flooding. With the monsoons coming, be on alert for possible flash flooding. Not only will the flood pick up the rain but also burnt debris along with it. Consider evacuating when you hear weather forecasts for your area.

Visit the following websites for more information:

- weather.gov/tucson
- <https://inciweb.nwcg.gov>
- www.fs.usda.gov/alerts/coronado/alerts-notice
- pinalcountyyaz.gov/emergencymanagement/
- www.pinalcountyyaz.gov/sheriff
- www.OracleFire.org

• OFD BRUSH DUMP

Open 7 days, 7am–5pm. Fees are for one load: \$3.00; for two loads (truck and trailer): \$5.00; and \$10 for a dump truck. Fees help pay for all costs associated with the brush dump and funds remaining are spent on community betterment projects, such as purchasing AEDs for non-profit organizations. This is a Firewise program and intended for vegetation only (cactus only accepted if it is very dry). Construction materials and any other trash are not allowed.

• PINAL COUNTY TRASH VOUCHERS

Call 520-866-6000 to find out how to obtain free trash vouchers from Waste Management.

Ready . . .

Get Ready!



GET READY. This should be ongoing at your home for best results. At the beginning of Fire Season, seriously consider implementing the following and other recommendations to protect your home:

- Maintain a defensible space around your home by clearing 30 to 100 feet of vegetation to protect it from fire.
- Create a Family Disaster Plan including meeting locations and communication plans.
- Plan and practice different evacuation routes.
- Assemble an emergency supply kit.
- Prepare evacuation kits for all animals.
- For large animals, know where you will take them and how to get them there.
- Identify a safe location outside the fire hazard area where family members will meet.
- Appoint an out-of-area friend or relative as a point of contact.
- Maintain a list of emergency contact numbers in your emergency kit.

Set . . .

Be Alert!

SET - Be Alert. Maintain an awareness of significant danger. If possible, evacuate to a safe location to ensure the safety of you and your family. While preparing to evacuate, keep these points in mind:

- Monitor fire weather conditions.
- Early evacuation when you are SET is recommended.
- Alert family and neighbors
- Dress in appropriate clothing.
- Ensure that you have your emergency supply kit on hand.
- Remain close to your house, drink plenty of water. Ensure your family and pets are ready to leave if necessary.
- Move furniture to the center of the room, away from windows and doors.
- Turn off air conditioning.

OUTSIDE, IF TIME ALLOWS:

- Consider putting combustible items (i.e.: lawn furniture) in your pool.
- Don't leave sprinklers or water running.
- Back your car into driveway to facilitate quick departure and leave keys inside.
- Cover attic and ground vents with pre-cut plywood or seals if time permits.

INSIDE, BE PREPARED TO:

- Close all windows and doors; consider leaving them unlocked.
- Remove all shades and curtains from windows.

GO!

Act Early!

WHEN TO LEAVE:

Do NOT wait to be advised to leave if there is a possible threat to your home or evacuation route. Leave early enough to avoid being caught in fire, smoke, or road congestion. If you are advised to leave by local authorities, do not hesitate!

WHERE TO GO:

Leave to a predetermined location (it should be a low-risk area, such as a well-prepared neighbor or relative's house, a Red Cross shelter or evacuation center, motel, etc).

HOW TO GET THERE:

Be familiar with several travel routes in case one route is blocked by fire or emergency vehicles. Choose the safest route away from the fire.

WHAT TO TAKE:

Take your Emergency Supply Kit containing your family and pets' needs.

EMERGENCY EVACUATION LIST

Important Documents:

- Birth certificates or ID cards
- Drivers licenses, house titles,
- Vehicle titles, full gas tank
- Medical prescriptions
- List of savings & bank accounts
- Photos/list of valuables
- Credit cards, checks, cash
- Insurance policies

Personal Items:

- Eyeglasses and cleaner
- Prescription Medications
- Cell phone and charger
- Contact phone numbers
- Photos, flash drives
- Jewelry
- First aid kit

For Children:

- Toys, books
- Spare clothes
- Infant supplies

Pet Needs:

- Water, food & bowls
- Leashes, collars, & tags
- Crates, toys, chews, blankets
- A photo of you and your pet

Other:

- Water: at least 1-gallon per person/per day
- Food
- Whistle
- Towelettes
- Can opener
- Family communication plan, contact person
- Blankets, clothing, pocket knife,
- Rope, candles, plastic bags
- Paper towels, plates, cups
- Plastic silverware, matches
- Flashlight & batteries
- Face masks

This list is available on our website.

Watch out for embers!



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Thank You. Oracle Fire District, on behalf of the community of Oracle, would like to thank the Incident Command Teams, many other fire crews from various agencies, and Coronado National Forest for countless hours and efforts in protecting Oracle and surrounding communities. The daily briefings and information sheets were extremely beneficial in keeping us informed.