Preparedness - Help Yourself

The current Coronavirus situation shares commonality with many different types of emergencies. The expected and normal are no longer applicable. Every day schedules require alternate patterns and practices. When emergencies happen, being prepared can reduce feelings of panic and vulnerability. This is not an after-the-fact task, but one that takes advanced planning and thought.

News broadcasts and governmental officials are using the term “shelter-in-place” - a strategy also employed during wildfire (when it’s safer to stay in your home than to evacuate). Shelter-in-place can be stressful and cause anxiety, but those feelings can be lessened by preparedness. Red Cross, FEMA, El Dorado County, first responders and fire safe councils all promote and distribute info about having an emergency kit and necessities ready and on hand. Being self-sufficient, even for a short duration, gives time to adjust to the new normal.

Although we are in this new reality for an unknown amount of time, there is hope. Food, electricity, and water are available. There are ways to stay in touch that were unheard of 5 years ago. Families are re-discovering the outdoors. However, as with any emergency, there are many that are dealing with serious problems including financial difficulties, lost jobs, or affected health. If you are able, now is the time to check on your neighbors, offer assistance, appreciate those on the front lines.

Headwaters Economics Report - November, 2018

“Today, one-third of all U.S. homes are in the wildland-urban interface, the area where flammable vegetation and homes meet or intermingle. And with more than 35,000 structures lost to wildfire in the last decade, more communities should consider adopting building codes that require new home construction to meet wildfire-resistant standards.”

This Building a Wildfire Resistant Home - Codes and Costs study “finds negligible cost differences between a typical home and a home constructed using wildfire-resistant materials and design features. Decades of research and post-fire assessments have provided clear evidence that building materials and design, coupled with landscaping on the property, are the most important factors influencing home survivability during a wildfire.”

“...three documents (Int’l Code Council’s International Wildland Urban Interface Code, National Fire Protection Association’s Standard 1144 Reducing Structure Ignition Hazards from Wildland Fire, and California Building Code Chapter 7A Materials and Construction Methods for Exterior Wildfire Exposure) address construction requirements of the home by component parts (e.g., roof, walls, etc.) and often provide multiple options for complying with the provision. Many of the requirements in these documents are based on standard laboratory testing methods that evaluate the ability of a material or assembly to resist ignition or fire spread. California is one of only a few states to have adopted a wildfire-related building code at the state level for areas of high hazard, but many cities and counties have adopted portions of the IWUIC or other wildfire-related codes. In some communities, the inaccurately assumed cost of constructing a home to comply with a wildfire-resistant building code is a barrier to implementing such codes.” Read report summary here
Clearing & Maintaining Your Landscaping

It’s spring—being ushered in with the sounds of weed whackers and chain saws! El Dorado County and California laws require that residents maintain the 100 feet of vegetation around their home & structures. In addition, EDH Fire Dept. has a vacant lot ordinance.

USE THE CAL FIRE APP TO GET STARTED. Creating defensible space is essential to improve your home’s chance of surviving a wildfire. It’s the buffer you create between a building on your property and the grass, trees, shrubs, or any wildland area that surround it. This mobile app can walk you through the steps and can also alert you to nearby fires. https://plan.readyforwildfire.org/

ESPECIALLY IMPORTANT: The Ignition Resistant Zone—extends five feet from your home.

- Remove dead or dry plants, leaves, grass, weeds and pine needles (vegetation) from your roof and rain gutters.
- Remove branches that hang over your roof and keep dead branches 10 feet away from your chimney.
- Remove or prune flammable plants and shrubs near windows.
- Remove vegetation, firewood, lumber, and other combustible items stored under decks or overhangs.
- Replace doormats with heavy rubber or metal grates.
- Review Home Hardening steps for additional preparation tips.

EL DORADO DISPOSAL will help dispose of your trimmings and yard waste. During the week of April 20th, they are offering unlimited yard waste pick up. Please call customer service at (530) 626-4141 or email customerservice4030@wcnx.org to learn about bundling requirements and also to make arrangements prior to your service day.

FSC CRYPTOGRAM - Got More Time? Thanks to Puzzlemaker at DiscoveryEducation.com

Coronavirus: Statistics / Assistance

Use reliable sources to obtain information. El Dorado County has set up a site providing relevant facts, resources and directives — county, state and federal — for & about the COVID-19 virus. You can sign up for alert to get updates. What is the local impact? Under “Local Resources” you can find data on how many COVID-19 cases have been documented in El Dorado County — just click on the “El Dorado County Health and Human Services COVID-19 update” bullet.

https://visit-eldorado.com/covid-19-industry-resources-for-el-dorado-county/

If you are an employee or employer in El Dorado County, this site has all the information in one place, including financial programs. Stay At Home news releases and clarification of new rules for short term lodging are posted. Marshall Hospital updates are included. Please share this link with those who could benefit. Let’s all stay informed (and HEALTHY!)

The Lakehills Fire Safe Council posts on NextDoor (to the LakeForest group) and has a Facebook page. Please find us at www.facebook.com/LakehillsFireSafe. Monthly meetings are open to all.
Meet the neighbors! Some are new and some are long term residents. Thanks to Marcia Cooper for sharing her fabulous photos.

There have been several bald eagle sightings in Lakelands in both February and March.

……LOOK UP when you’re out and about!

Send your wildlife photos to us! Share your thoughts about our special communities—what do you appreciate most? Where do you like to view nature and what have you experienced?

Email Lakehills Fire Safe Council at lakehillsfiresafecouncil@gmail.com