

**THIS INFORMATION IS BEING GIVEN TO YOU IN CASE YOU CANNOT EVACUATE YOUR HOME DURING A FIRE. NEITHER THE HAWAII FIRE DEPARTMENT NOR THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF KOHALA BY THE SEA, NOR THE FIREWISE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS STAYING IN YOUR HOME DURING A FIRE!!**

**IF YOU CANNOT EVACUATE, THIS INFORMATION MAY BE OF SOME HELP.**

We live in an area that is prone to dangerous fires, so we need to decide how to make our homes as fire-wise as possible before a fire hits. BE AWARE THAT THE HAWAII FIRE DEPARTMENT DOES NOT RECOMMEND STAYING IN YOUR HOME!! However, statistics show that 68% of homeowners have less than 30 minutes to evacuate. Your home must be fire wise and you should know what to do in case you are unable to evacuate in time.

You must determine how vulnerable your home is when you are deciding what to do to make it fire wise. You should create an evacuation plan and practice it until you and your family know it well and can leave the area early and quickly.

There are steps you should take with your home BEFORE a fire in order to safeguard it as much as possible.

1. Your landscaping should be fire resistant.
2. All tree limbs should be trimmed to 10 feet away from your house.
3. All flammable vegetation should be cleared to allow a 30 foot defensible, well-irrigated greenbelt around your home.
4. Fire resistant shrubs should be planted at least 10 feet apart to prevent fire from jumping from tree to tree ladder-fashion toward the house.
5. Furniture on your lanai should be fire resistant and/or stained with fire-resistant stain.
6. All gutters and roof areas should be kept cleared of leaves and debris.
7. Tree limbs should be pruned 8 to 10 feet above the ground and any dead limbs should be removed to prevent from spreading UP the tree.
8. Consider buying a pump to access the water in your pool to wet down your house or put out fires if you must stay.
9. Have foam spray fire retardant on hand to pre-treat your home and plantings. One product (FOAM-FAST) creates foamy water by attaching a cartridge to your

garden hose. This produces water with a surfactant which makes the water "wetter" for better and faster penetration (info at [Foam-Fast™ Wildfire Pre-Treatment Foam Applicators](#))

10. Clear flammable grasses from the area near your gas tank .
11. Post your house number and make it easily visible so firefighters can find it.

IF YOU ARE UNABLE TO EVACUATE THE AREA, THE INFORMATION BELOW HAS BEEN PUBLISHED BY VARIOUS FIRE DEPARTMENTS TO ASSIST YOU IN SURVIVING A FIRE. THIS IS NOT A GUARANTEE OF SURVIVABILITY, MERELY SUGGESTIONS THAT COULD HELP.

#### AS THE FIRE APPROACHES:

Dress for the fire, not a day at the beach. Dress in long pants, closed shoes and long-sleeved shirts all made of natural fabrics, which don't burn as easily as synthetics. This can reduce the risk of you having the heat of the fire burn your skin. Although it may sound uncomfortable for such a hot project, it is recommended as a safety precaution.

Have a broad-brimmed hat of natural fabric to shade your eyes, heat-resistant gloves in case you have to handle something hot, and a safety mask or goggles. Have a portable radio to monitor information regarding the fire.

Natural fiber towels, woolen blankets and water for keeping hydrated are also necessary for each person staying during the fire.

Wet down the house, outdoor furniture and nearby vegetation with a hose. A foam fire retardant (such as FOAM-FAST, described above) can be used. Plain water, mixed with a little liquid soap, which allows the water to penetrate more easily, may also be used in the absence of a foam retardant.

Block drainpipes and fill the gutters with water.

Check the perimeter of your house frequently and douse any sparks or small fires with water. Be aware that you should use as little water as possible (unless you are using your own water source – i.e. your pool) since the fire department could be using several hydrants at once, and if the pressure goes down too low it will be very hard to put out whatever fires have started.

#### THE FIRE FRONT ARRIVES:

Stay alert and continue to check the house and douse embers and sparks.

Find a room in the house for children and the elderly to shelter. The room should have a clear exit path.

Move everyone inside the house and close all doors and windows.

Remove curtains and move furniture away from windows (so they don't catch fire from the radiant heat).

Soak towels and place under external doors.

Keep hydrated.

#### AFTER THE FIRE HAS PASSED:

Patrol your property and extinguish fires as needed. Remain vigilant for several hours, as embers which you might have missed could still be a threat. Hose down the house to be sure there is nothing which has gone unnoticed.

The front usually passes within a few minutes, after which it may be safe to go outside.

Being Firewise and preparing your home for a potential fire is something you should do for your family, your neighbors and your community.

*This information has been distilled from many sources. For further, more detailed information there are many websites with safety information.*