



December 2018 Newsletter

Resolve to be Ready in 2019

We hope your holidays have been filled with love, laughter, good health, and good food. As we consider setting New Year's Resolutions for 2019, North Tahoe Fire and Meeks Bay Fire are asking families to "Resolve to be Ready" for any emergency.

Traditionally families use New Year's Resolutions as an opportunity to develop healthy habits.

"That is exactly what we are asking you and your loved ones to do; we are asking each member of your family to develop and practice readiness habits that will help you survive a disaster," said Fire Chief Michael Schwartz. "Now is the time to think through the risks in your home and community, any special accessibility considerations your loved ones may have, and then prepare, plan and practice the preparedness actions needed to give you the best chance to survive the risks that face our community. Plan how to get the information you need if power is out, cell towers are down, or there is no internet access."

Schwartz shared a disturbing trend he's hearing locally after problems with the Camp Fire evacuations, hearing comments such as "We'll just take a canoe and head to the lake" when discussions turn to evacuation preparedness and planning.

"Disasters like we are seeing in California tend to happen during high wind events, day or night," Schwartz said. "The lake is not where you want to be when the wind is blowing 75 mph. You can't 'wait out' a disaster like Paradise, you need to be prepared to follow the instructions you are given, and leave as soon as you sense there is danger. Don't wait for a mandatory evacuation order."

"Be prepared to save yourself, with neighbors helping neighbors, and be prepared to survive at least 72 hours without any assistance as it takes time for FEMA to deploy resources after a disaster. Sitting in a canoe is not a strategy for survival. Please, take this seriously and make the resolution with your loved ones to be ready for disaster. Families need to be prepared for disasters such as power outage, avalanche, landslide, flood, home fire, wildfire, earthquake, and tsunami. Preparation takes repeated practice with the whole family, including pets."

Here are some tips to get you started:

- Make and practice an emergency plan with your family, establish a safe place to meet near your property and in an adjacent community, learn and practice evacuation routes from your home and work, and establish an out-of-town contact as your family liaison.
- Keep a mask N-95 or a bandanna and headlamp in every nightstand, and practice using them.
- Register your cellular devices with your County Emergency Agency, download the FEMA app and the CAL FIRE app to all of your devices, and know what radio stations will be used for emergency information. Have a battery powered radio in the event cellular service is down, preset to those stations.
- Have a backup power source and/or solar charging mechanism to charge your devices in the event of extended power outages.
- Have a current photo of all family members, including pets, important documents, and current photos of your property. Keep photos on your device and in the cloud if you get separated, and for insurance purposes, and verify your insurance coverage includes disasters prone to the area.
- Set up group text and/or messenger lists to communicate with friends and family during emergencies. Have lists set up via text and internet, as cell service may be interrupted at length during disasters.
- Set up an emergency "Go-Bag" or kit for each member of your family and pets. Remember to include cash in multiple denominations along with your other emergency supplies. That includes at least a 7-day supply of prescription medication, prescription lenses, water, pet food, etc. in your go-bag.

For additional ways you can "Resolve to be Ready," visit <http://www.ready.gov>.

Provided By: Erin Holland, Public Information Officer with North Tahoe Fire Protection District

Learn more about what you can do to prepare for fire at tahoe.livingwithfire.info



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