



YES, I EVACUATED!



about exactly that. I hope you find it useful.

Yes, I too had to evacuate. The image to the left is what I saw from my front porch as I was loading the car on Wednesday afternoon.

So now, as I am sitting in a hotel after being evacuated, I got an email asking me if Fire Safe Sonoma had any advice for folks when we return. With that in mind, I thought I would offer some information about exactly that. Below is some good advice I borrowed from CAL FIRE and FEMA to share with you all

Although wildfire damage can be immeasurable, the danger is not over after the flames are put out. When returning, Fire Safe Sonoma recommends that you keep these tips in mind:

- Send text messages or use social media to reach out to family and friends. Phone systems are often busy following a disaster. Make calls only in emergencies.
- Have a battery-powered radio to listen for emergency updates, weather forecasts, reports of flash flooding, and news reports.
- Do not return until advised to do so by proper authorities.
- Do not drink or use water from the faucet until emergency officials say it is okay; water supply systems can be damaged and become polluted during wildfires. If your well has been damaged by fire, contact a local licensed and bonded well constructor or pump installer to determine the extent of the damage and what must be done to either repair or decommission the well.
- Use caution around burned trees, power-poles and similar tall structures - the bases may be unstable and a mild wind can topple them over.
- Do not go near downed power lines.
- Before entering your home, first check for the smell of gas. Turn off power until you are sure no gas (natural or propane) is present.
- If your gas has been shut off, have a knowledgeable professional relight pilot-lights for you. In most cases your gas provider will do this for you.
- If there is no power, check to make sure the main breaker is on. If the breakers are on and power is still not present, contact the utility company.
- Discard any food that has been exposed to heat, smoke, flood waters, or soot.
- Avoid hot ash, charred trees, smoldering debris, and live embers. The ground may contain heat pockets that can burn you or spark another fire. Consider the danger to pets and livestock.
- Routinely check around your home for hot-spots in combustible mulch, rain-gutters, dense bushes etc. where a smoldering ember can evolve into a fire.
- Wear a NIOSH certified-respirator and wet debris down to minimize breathing dust particles.
- Document property damage with photographs. Conduct an inventory and contact your insurance company for assistance.
- Wildfires dramatically change landscape and ground conditions, which can lead to increased risk of flooding due to heavy rains, flash flooding and mudflows. Flood risk remains significantly higher until vegetation is restored—up to 5 years after a wildfire. Consider purchasing flood insurance to protect the life you've built and to assure financial protection from future flooding.

Please be careful when returning. It can be hard and stressful for all of us who are returning. With that said I am reserving the most important tip of all: Be good to each other.

Sincerely,

Roberta MacIntyre
President/CEO, [Fire Safe Sonoma](#)