

Brush Fire / Wild Land Fire

The threat of wild land fires for people living near wild land areas or using recreational facilities in wilderness areas is real and can have devastating effects on a community. Dry conditions at various times of the year and in various parts of the United States greatly increase the potential for wild land fires.

Advance planning and knowing how to protect buildings in these areas can lessen the devastation of a wild land fire. There are several safety precautions that you can take to reduce the risk of fire losses. Protecting facilities from wildfire is your responsibility. To reduce the risk, you'll need to consider the fire resistance of the topography of the property and the nature of the vegetation close by.

Prescribed burns, which are becoming common place on campus, should not be confused with brush or wild land fires. The [Plant Operations](#) Grounds Services department, with the support of the University Planner's Office and Occupational Safety & Environmental Health conduct several controlled burns a year on campus. These ecological burns are an important land management tool.

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Source

Federal Emergency Management Agency

United State Fire Administration

Michigan State Police - Emergency Management & Homeland Security Division

More Information

<http://www.fema.gov/>

<http://www.ready.gov/>

<http://www.usfa.dhs.gov/>

http://www.michigan.gov/msp/0,1607,7-123-1593_3507---,00.html

Prevention / Mitigation / Preparedness – Brush Fire / Wild Land Fire

Work with the University of Michigan Office of Emergency Preparedness (734) 647-1143 and request planning guidance as needed.

During extended dry weather, regularly monitor local weather via radio, internet or television. Learn about the history of wildfire in your area. A long period without rain increases the risk of wildfire.

Educate staff, student and faculty on drought conditions and what they need to do to prevent potential wildfire events from occurring.

Learn and teach safe fire practices, such as the following:

- Always have a way to extinguish a fire quickly and completely.
- Never leave a fire--even a cigarette--burning unattended.
- Avoid open burning completely.
- Know your evacuation plan and be ready to act accordingly.
- Evacuation may be the only way to protect yourself in a wildfire. Know where to go and what to bring with you. You should plan several escape routes in case roads are blocked by a wildfire.

If you see a wildfire, call 9-1-1. Don't assume that someone else has already called. Describe the location of the fire, speak slowly and clearly, and answer any questions asked by the dispatcher.

Before the Fire Approaches:

- Evacuate. Anyone with medical or physical limitations and the young and the elderly should be evacuated immediately.
- Wear Protective Clothing.
- Remove Combustibles. Clear items that will burn from around the outside of the property.
- Close/Protect Openings. Close windows and doors. Remove flammable drapes and curtains. Close all shutters, blinds or heavy non-combustible window coverings to reduce radiant heat.

Response – Brush Fire / Wild Land Fire

Survival in a Vehicle

This is dangerous and should only be done in an emergency, but you can survive the firestorm if you stay in your car. It is much less dangerous than trying to run from a fire on foot.

Roll up windows and close air vents. Drive slowly with headlights on. Watch for other vehicles and pedestrians. Do not drive through heavy smoke.

If you have to stop, park away from the heaviest trees and brush. Turn headlights on and ignition off. Roll up windows and close air vents.

Get on the floor and cover up with a blanket or coat.

Stay in the vehicle until the main fire passes.

Stay in the car. Do not run! Engine may stall and not restart. Air currents may rock the car. Some smoke and sparks may enter the vehicle. Temperature inside will increase. Metal gas tanks and containers rarely explode.

If Caught in the Open

The best temporary shelter is in a sparse fuel area.

If a road is nearby, lie face down along the road cut or in the ditch on the uphill side. Cover yourself with anything that will shield you from the fire's heat.

If hiking in the back country, seek a depression with sparse fuel. Clear fuel away from the area while the fire is approaching and then lie face down in the depression and cover yourself. Stay down until after the fire passes.

Recovery – Brush Fire / Wild Land Fire

For several hours after the fire, maintain a "fire watch." Re-check for smoke and sparks throughout the affected facility and grounds area(s).

If the building or grounds has sustained damage, contact Plant Operations (734) 647-2059 for immediate assistance.