



FOREST FIRES GUIDE BY “LET’S TALK CLIMATE”

PREVENTION,
PREPAREDNESS AGAINST,
PROTECTION FROM,
RESILIENCE TO
FOREST FIRES

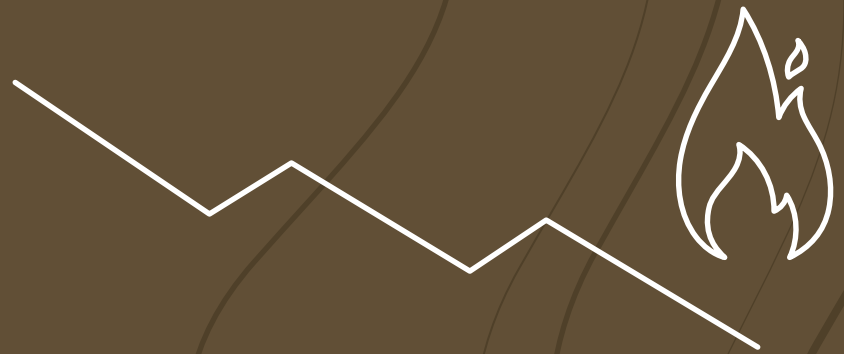




FOREST FIRES GUIDE BY “LET’S TALK CLIMATE”

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¹WHAT TO DO TO REDUCE RISKS?

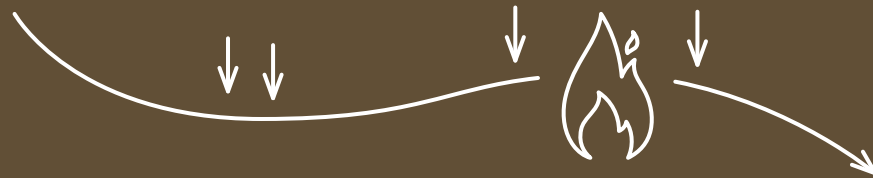




To increase resilience to fire:

Design and construct all buildings in a fire resistant way in the fire risk areas. Prefer fire resistant plant species for vegetation purposes. Create a plant-cleared area (strip)

surrounding the settlement areas in consultation with the Forest Administrations and Management Directorates in the area and provide regular maintenance.



To reduce fire risk:

Plough the edge of the forest especially in fields which leave straws.

Perform spacing, pruning and cleaning in your gardens. Do not burn straw or garden waste, prefer environmentally-friendly methods such as composting for disposal. Report any failures or hazardous conditions identified in energy transmission lines to competent authorities (112).

Warn recreational visitors, shepherds, hunters, bee-keepers, farmers etc. about the fire risk in high-risk seasons.

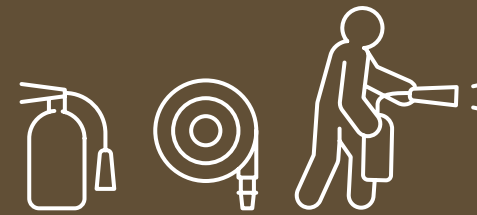
Report suspicious persons to the gendarmerie (112).

Monitor forest areas in periods of high risk of fire (e.g. strong wind, low humidity, high temperature).



Do not throw away glass and plastic bottles, garbage etc. in forest areas that may cause fire.

Collect if you see any glass and plastic bottles, garbage etc. that can lead to fire and dry branches that may feed fire in forest areas.



To strengthen firefighting infrastructure:

Obtain a water tanker and firefighting equipment and regularly control their operability.

Create water supply points and water supply lines.

Keep cutting engines and fuel at hand and maintain regularly.

Keep firefighting tools and equipment ready and easily accessible.

Describe everyone how to use the equipment (**Most people think the fire extinguisher is broken when they cannot use it during a fire as they do not know they need to pull the pin first**).



To strengthen firefighting capacity:

Attend training and drills on different fire types such as forest, building and agricultural fires.

Have first aid training.

Be a fire volunteer. **Fire volunteers are given protective clothing and equipment by the Forest Administration.**

Contact relevant units and authorities, have their phone numbers in your mobile phone and keep them in an easily accessible list.

Define who will undertake which role in the village/neighbourhood in a fire in advance, regularly evaluate and update.

Identify firefighting methods and alternative escape routes.

Always keep the roads open to be used for firefighting and escaping.



Do not stack additional structures and materials on these roads when not in use.

Provide everyone with a whistle to be used when communication is challenged.

Keep hand torches (with batteries) ready for night fires.

Keep the health kit and first aid materials ready, regularly control their expiry date and sterility and replace as necessary.

Prepare an emergency bag to meet your needs for 72 hours during and after the disaster. **Especially if you have a chronic health problem, keep at least five days of medication available in your bag. Regularly control the expiry dates and sterility of the materials in your bag and replace them as necessary.**

2 WHAT TO DO DURING A FIRE?

To have updated and accurate information about fires:

Be informed about the firefighting policies in your country, region and settlement.

Follow institutions which are in charge of firefighting and offer information about risks.

Before going to a high fire risk area for any reason:

Refresh your knowledge about firefighting and first aid.

Keep heat-resistant fire blankets, heat-resistant 1-2 m² canvasses and masks with you.



When a fire is identified:



When you spot a fire, smoke or flame, immediately report to 112 (177). **Describe the location as clearly as possible. Send its location by your mobile phone if possible.**

Call the gendarmerie (112).

Ask for an ambulance (112) if necessary.

Call the relevant authority (112) to cut off power if necessary.

Safely remove combustible and explosive substances from the area.

Gather the people of the neighbourhood/village, send pre-identified officers to their points of deployment.

Remove groups at risk (e.g. **elder persons, children, people with cardiovascular and respiratory disorders, pregnant persons**) from the fire area with an attendant to stay with them.



If you have protective equipment and will respond to fire:

Wear personal protective equipment and clothing, if available.

Use N-95 (FFP3), FFP2 or P-100 type masks accurately and fully fitting on your face. **Surgical or paper masks, wet or dry clothes do not provide enough protection.**

Deliver firefighting tools to officers.

Work in groups and safely.

Make sure everybody is at a distance to hear and see each other while working on the fire area.

To support incoming firefighting teams:

Appoint a person to guide vehicles coming for help and keep roads

open.

Inform officers about the

environment, fire status and roads. Describe the shortest safe route to the area of fire.

Do not stand next to and behind construction equipment such as bulldozers.

Show water sources to sprinklers and fire brigades.

Comply with the instructions of authorities responding to fire, do not prevent them from fulfilling their responsibilities or pose a risk by engaging in an argument.

If you do not have protective equipment and it is not possible to respond to fire:



If you do not have protective clothing and mask, escape to an open area where there is no fire.

If you do not have a mask, cover your mouth and nose with a damp cloth if possible, or a dry cloth if not possible, take short breaths and escape to the safe and smoke-free area.

If you are in a desperate condition, lay down at a place that will not burn and escape when flames are over.

Escape routes depending on the fire location:

If you are in a flat land: Immediately determine the wind direction. If the wind blows in your direction, turn your back to the wind and run to the closest open area.

If you have to go near the fire and the surface of the burning area is not very big, control the right and left sides of the fire and leave the area from the side where there are fewer flames.

Never move towards the centre of the fire.

If you are in a valley: The wind creates an air flow in valleys and the fire climbs up from the base of the valley with the impact of the wind. Therefore, run in the opposite direction with the wind and go to the lower parts of the valley to reach an open area. Never use slopes of the valley where fire continues as escape routes.

If you are in a rugged terrain: As crests and the back of crests are areas where the wind loses its effect or winds blow in the opposite direction, they are the most suitable protection areas in the short term. Therefore, go to the back of the closest crest immediately, then run fast to the closest open area in the opposite direction of fire.

If you are on a river bank: Flames tend to progress more rapidly in parallel to the aspect in narrow river beds and dry river beds. Therefore, avoid creating an escape route in parallel to river beds.

If you are in a canyon: If the wind blows from your back and the fire is in front of you, as the canyon will function as a chimney, flames will move to the narrow part of the canyon. For this reason, run fast in the opposite direction of the flames and go down to the widest area of the canyon as possible. While escaping, pay attention to breaking rocks and falling trees due to excessive heat, walk especially protecting your

head. If it is not possible to walk in the canyon, take shelter in closed or partially closed cave chambers nearby. Avoid getting into unknown routes while in shelter in cave chambers.

If you are in a holiday destination: Exactly comply with the instructions of authorities and evacuate the area through the closest and safest route.

If you are on the seashore and roads are blocked: Create your route depending on the wind. If the wind blows from the sea to the land, stay on the shore and wait for rescue. If the wind blows from the land to the sea, roads are blocked and there is no other route escape, get in the sea up to a certain level. If there is flame-over on the water surface, get in the water with your entire body, hold your breath as much as you can and wait under the water.

If you are in the middle of fire: In situations where there is no probable escape at all, get in a pit nearby, if any; if there is no pit, move to the widest flame-free area, dig a pit as deep as you can and get in. Use the damp soil you dig out to cover yourself because of its protective function. Cover your face with a damp cloth, cover your face entirely if possible to protect from spreading gas.



For first aid for animals:

Wrap the animal in a piece of clothing, blanket etc. without touching with hands, if possible, and remove from the fire area.

Keep the animal in a warm environment as it will have a high heat loss. Do not put it in a cold environment even if it is hot outside.

Wash the burnt area of the animal with warm water at 12-18°C.

Do not wash the animal entirely and do not rub anything including burn cream.

Wrap burnt areas preferable in a damp sterile cloth.

Cover the animal with clothing, blanket etc.

Put the animal in a box, cage etc. to restrict its movement.

Take it to the closest veterinary (or a field hospital, if available) in a silent environment without light stress.

Do not take the animal to a far place from where it was found (e.g. another city) for veterinary intervention.

When you are informed about fire:

Keep calm. **As individuals have lower capacity of decision making in panic, you can take a deep breath or count back from ten to calm down before doing anything.**

Confirm the accuracy and source of information.

Follow announcements of public institutions (e.g. AFAD (Disaster and Emergency Management Presidency of Türkiye), municipalities, governorships) in charge of the area to obtain information about the impact of the disaster on your location and the requirements of evacuation.

Organize important papers and personal belongings to immediately take if evacuation is necessary.

Identify the place where you can evacuate to and make the evacuation plan considering your children and pets.

As false information can spread quickly at times of disaster, do not share any information without confirming in order not to contribute to misinformation.

To protect your health from fire-induced air pollution:



Use N-95 (FFP3), FFP2 or P-100 type masks accurately fully placing on your face. **Surgical or paper masks, wet or dry clothes do not provide enough protection.**



Try to stay indoors unless you are required to evacuate.

Keep doors and windows closed unless necessary.

Designate a room in your house which is empty and has as few doors and windows as possible such as the bedroom as the “clean room”. Keep all doors and windows of the room closed in a way to not make it hard to get out.

If there is active air conditioning (e.g. HVAC, ventilator) systems in the house and the “clean room”, operate them in recirculation mode to prevent outside air in.



If you have an air cleaner, filter out air indoors or in the “clean room”.

Do not engage in actions that can contribute to indoor air pollution such as cooking (e.g. **consume food that does not need cooking**).



Especially if you have a chronic health problem, keep at least five days of medication with you.

If you are in a car, keep the windows closed and operate the ventilation/air conditioning system in recirculation mode.

If you have any cardiovascular and respiratory disorder, keep contact with your doctor and comply with his/her instructions.

If you need to leave/evacuate your location:

Comply with the instructions of competent authorities.

Only use designated or instructed safe evacuation routes.



If you will take part in firefighting:

Confirm that a help coordination centre has been established in the area.

If you do not have protective equipment and you are not technically knowledgeable about firefighting, do not enter the fire area. **Otherwise, you can risk the work and safety of response teams.**

Comply with the instructions of authorities responding to fire, do not prevent them from fulfilling their responsibilities or pose a risk by engaging in an argument.

Before sending/offering help:

Follow the announcements of public institutions and non-governmental organizations for current lists of requirements to offer necessary material/equipment support to those affected by fire or in firefighting.

Get in touch with authorized contact persons in collection points to learn about the current situation.

Make sure the help you send meets the needs. **Do not send anything other than what is needed or excessive help. Do not send products which require a cold chain and can deteriorate without confirming there is necessary supply and storage infrastructure.**

If you want to offer help in the form of transport and accommodation, look for platforms of coordination in this area and contact authorities.

To protect your mental health:

Take breaks from following the news throughout the day.

Care for your nutrition, liquid intake and sleep order.

Do not hesitate sharing your concerns and seeking professional psychological support if necessary.

3 WHAT TO DO AFTER A FIRE?



If there are damaged areas and buildings, report to competent authorities.

Obtain support from competent authorities when new structures and environmental planning are necessary.

Report additional and new roads that can be necessary in future forest fires to the forestry administrations.

Obtain information from the forestry administration for the suitability of trees to be planted in the area around the village/neighbourhood.

Make sure you write down the story of fire to convey knowledge and experience to future generations.

Report shortcomings and areas of improvement in firefighting to competent authorities to be completed.

Take part in aid campaigns for disaster survivors.

Do not support reforestation campaigns without confirming that reforestation activity is the right ecological and silvicultural intervention for the forest fire area.

Volunteer in non-governmental organizations.

Participate at the monitoring activities for restoration of fire areas and volunteer in these efforts.

To protect your health:

Avoid actions that may mix ashes and residues back with air during activities such as cleaning at places affected by fire and in indoor spaces with poor air quality, make sure there is enough ventilation and take other protective measures.

Do not hesitate receiving psychological support if you have been affected by the disaster, or help those affected receive support.



