



# NEWS RELEASE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**DATE:** May 5, 2014  
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## **ARE YOU PREPARED FOR A WILDFIRE?** **May 4 - 10 is Wildfire Awareness Week**

San Bernardino – Are you prepared for a wildfire? Forecasts may call for cooler weather this week, but don't be fooled, this will be short lived; the sun will shine and our region will soon be sweltering. Due to the late rain in our region, light flashy fuels will be at their height in no time. This means grasses and weeds will flourish. With warmer weather, these flashy fuels will quickly dry out and cause an extreme fire danger, as evident by the recent Etiwanda Fire that burned over 2,100 acres in Rancho Cucamonga.

May 4-10 is National Wildfire Awareness Week. San Bernardino County Fire reminds residents to do their part in understanding fire danger by exercising extreme caution around dry, flammable vegetation. Wildfire safety isn't limited to those who live near wild lands, it's for anyone camping or spending time in these locations as well.

Contrary to common perception, a wildfire does not have to burn everything in its path. In fact, clearing property of debris and maintaining landscaping are important, yet simple, first steps for homeowners. Residents can do their part and take simple steps today to lessen the risk of damage if a wildfire occurs.

- ✓ Create a defensible area, firebreaks that divert flames around property, by clearing weeds and dry grass at least 100 feet around your home. Property on sloped areas should be cleared at least 100 feet as well, as wind-fed flames can race up hills and mountainsides quickly.
- ✓ Store flammable liquids in approved safety cans away from occupied buildings.
- ✓ Keep propane tanks clear of vegetation.
- ✓ Keep all combustibles, such as firewood, lawn furniture, picnic tables, etc., away from structures.
- ✓ Clean rain gutters regularly to avoid leaf and needle accumulation.
- ✓ Clear vegetation and other flammable materials from beneath decks or other wooden structures.
- ✓ Remove tree limbs and vegetation that overhang the roof.
- ✓ Remove all branches lower than 6 feet.
- ✓ Don't let debris and lawn cuttings linger. Dispose of these items quickly to reduce fuel for fire.
- ✓ Dispose of stove or fireplace ash and charcoal briquettes after soaking them in a metal pail of water for 24 hours.
- ✓ Keep garden hose connected to faucet.
- ✓ Review your home escape plan with your family & have a fire drill exercise.
- ✓ Ensure address is clearly visible from the street.

To learn more on how you can be prepared for a wildfire, visit [http://sbcfire.org/fire\\_prevention\\_advice.aspx](http://sbcfire.org/fire_prevention_advice.aspx). You can also contact your local fire department for further information and free property inspection. San Bernardino County Fire Department wishes you a safe summer.

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