



# May is Wildfire Awareness Month

The weather is getting warmer, and wildland vegetation is beginning to dry out, which is why May is a great time to plan for wildfire season. When it comes to wildfires, being prepared is the best way to protect your family, your home and your community. Here are some ways to prepare for wildfire season.

## Update your contact information for alerts

Make sure your contact information is up to date with NorthWestern Energy. Do you have an old landline number or old email address on file? Now is a great time to double check.

Log in to My Energy Account and update your information. While you're there, set your notification preferences. You can select to be notified via text or email about outages, billing and more. This is one of the primary ways you'd be notified of a power outage or a Public Safety Power Shutoff.

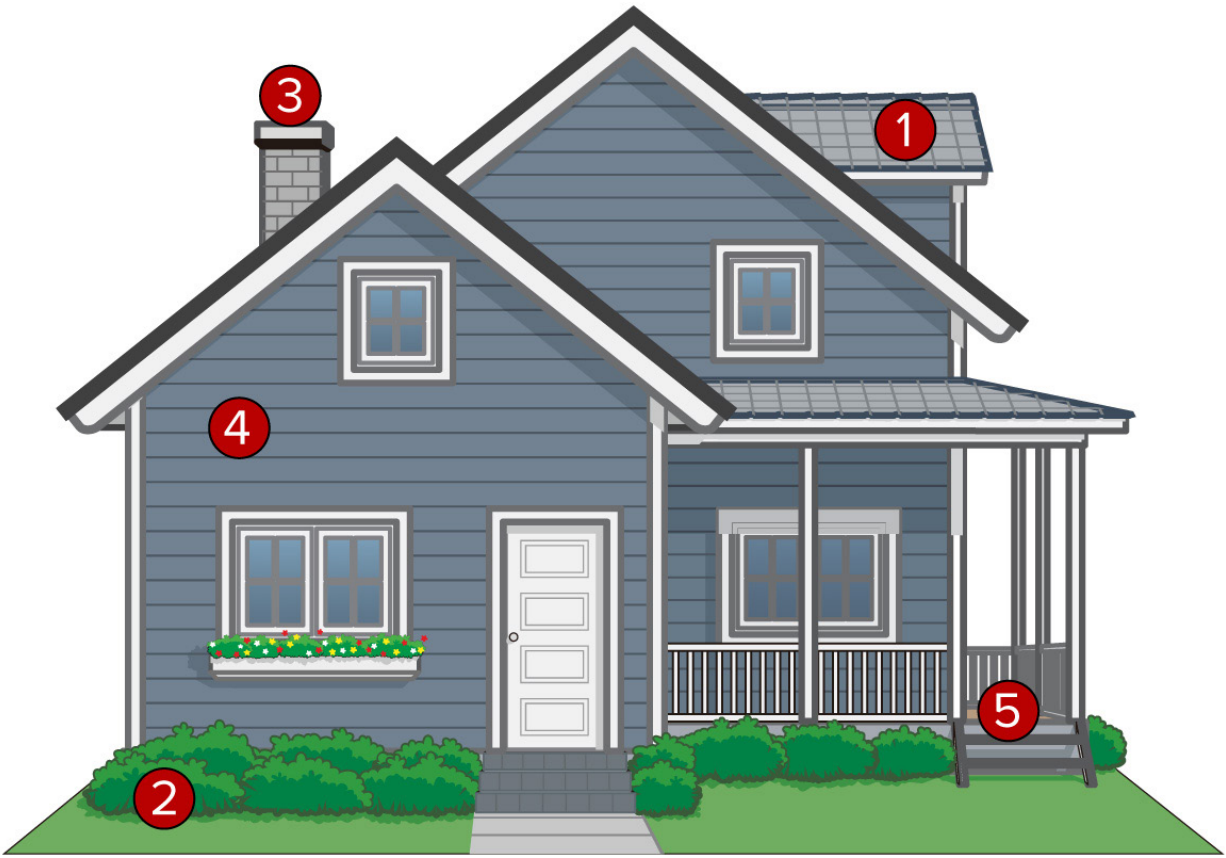
Learn more at [NorthWesternEnergy.com/notifications](https://NorthWesternEnergy.com/notifications).

## Know what to expect during a PSPS

As a measure of last resort, NorthWestern Energy may shutoff power during extreme situations to prevent sparking a wildfire. If extreme weather conditions threaten our ability to safely operate the electrical grid, we will turn off power to help protect public safety.

Public Safety Power Shutoffs can vary in length. We will not restore power until weather conditions improve to the point where we can safely operate the grid. After weather conditions improve, we patrol lines and make any necessary repairs. A PSPS can last several hours or even days.

Learn more about Public Safety Power Shutoffs at [NorthWesternEnergy.com/PSPS](https://NorthWesternEnergy.com/PSPS).



## Make your home more fire resilient

Research about community destruction from wildfire has shown that embers are the main source of home destruction from wildfires. Embers can ignite materials on and adjacent to your home to cause ignition.

### Here are five things to protect your home from wildfires:

- 1. Install a Class A roof.** Your roof has the most surface area, therefore, will catch the most embers. Class A roofs are designed to minimize fire impacts. Class A roof materials include metal, tile and asphalt composition shingles. Keep roof clear of pine needles, leaves, branches and other vegetative debris.
- 2. Remove all combustible materials within the first 5 feet around your home.** Embers will collect in this zone. Remove woody plants, grasses, lumber, woodpiles, mulch and other combustible materials. Install gravel, rock or sand in this area instead.
- 3. Cover all structure vents with 1/8-inch metal screen.** Install 1/8-inch metal screen over all structure vents. 1/8-inch metal screen reduces the heat content of embers to reduce the likelihood of igniting combustible materials behind the vent.
- 4. For wood or vinyl sided homes, consider replacing siding with fiber cement.** Replace at least the lower foot of wood/vinyl siding with fiber cement, stone, brick or other non-combustible material.
- 5. Replace wood decks with less flammable materials such as concrete, stone or Trex decking.**

# Wildfire evacuation checklist

Remember that even small wildfires can cause evacuations. Sign up for emergency alerts through your county's emergency management agency to be notified of evacuations.

### Go bag essentials:

- ☐ Important documents
- ☐ Medications
- ☐ Non-perishable food and water for 72 hours
- ☐ Inventory of home contents (consider making a video inventory now, prior to an emergency)
- ☐ Photographs of the exterior of the house and landscape
- ☐ Enough clothing for 3-5 days

### Prepare your vehicle:

- ☐ Keep a full gas tank
- ☐ Place essential items in the car
- ☐ If you do not drive, make other arrangements for transportation in advance
- ☐ Close garage door when you leave

### Inside the home:

- ☐ Close all interior doors if time allows
- ☐ Remove lightweight, non-fire-resistant curtains and other combustible materials from around windows
- ☐ Turn off all pilot lights
- ☐ Close fireplace damper
- ☐ Close or block off any doggie-doors
- ☐ Lock-up firearms or valuables

### Prepare pets and animals:

- ☐ Have veterinary records and medications in one easy-to-find place
- ☐ Transport food, water and bowls in easy-to-carry, sealed containers
- ☐ Have a livestock trailer and reliable vehicle for towing the trailer
- ☐ Practice loading your livestock into the trailer and towing it before an emergency