

What To Do When Trapped – In Vehicle or Outside

If you find yourself about to be trapped by approaching flames in your vehicle or out in the open, use these strategies to protect yourself.



Step 1: REMAIN CALM

An approaching wildfire will be extremely loud, create extreme heat and smoke, and will likely evoke fear and panic. However, the active flame will pass.

Step 2: PREPARE SAFE ZONES

Whether in a vehicle or on foot, select an area that will not burn or an area with the least amount of combustible material – the bigger area, the better.

- Examples include irrigated pastures, golf courses, parking lots, large ponds, depressions in the ground, or any other area that will not support combustion.
- If trapped in a vehicle, park vehicle off the road, if possible.

Step 3: PROTECT YOURSELF

Use every means possible to protect yourself and your lungs from the extreme heat emitted by the flames.

- Examples of natural features to look for include boulders, rock outcrops, large downed logs, trees, snags, etc.
- **If trapped in a vehicle:**
 - Stay inside the vehicle until the fire has passed. The car should remain on with windows rolled up and AC recirculation on.
 - Lie on vehicle floor and cover yourself with a natural fibered blanket or jacket.
 - Be aware that metal parts of the vehicle will be hot. Avoid direct contact if possible.
 - **Evacuate on foot as a last resort.**
- **Call 9-1-1 for help if you need medical assistance and cannot leave the area after the fire has passed.**