

LARIMER COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Emergency Preparedness Guide



For the citizens of Larimer County, Colorado

Larimer County Sheriff's Office

2501 Midpoint Drive, Fort Collins, Colorado 80525

24-hour Non Emergency

970-416-1985

Administration

970-498-5100

Recorded Emergency Information

970-498-5500

Larimer County Offices Information

970-498-7000

Fort Collins Police Services
970-221-6540

Loveland Fire
970-962-2471

Medical Center of the Rockies ER
970-624-1600

Loveland Police Department
970-667-2151

Berthoud Fire
970-532-2264

McKee Medical Center ER
970-635-4071

Berthoud Police Department
970-532-2611

Estes Park Volunteer Fire Dept.
970-577-0900

Road Closure Information
877-315-7623

Estes Park Police Department
970-586-4000

Livermore Volunteer Fire Dept.
970-416-1985

Division of Wildlife
970-472-4300
After Hours 303-239-4501
(Colorado State Patrol)

Timnath Police Department
970-224-3211

Wellington Fire Dept.
970-416-2600

Poudre School District Closures
970-490-3333
www.psdschools.org

Colo. State University Police
970-491-6425

Rist Canyon Fire Dept.
970-416-1985

Thompson Valley School Closures
970-613-5000
www.thompsonschoools.org

Colorado State Patrol
303-239-4501

U.S. Forest Service Information
970-498-1030

FBI
970-663-1028

Animal Control
970-226-3647

Estes Park School District Closures
970-586-2361
www.psd3.k12.co.us

Poudre Fire Authority
970-416-2600

Poudre Valley Hospital ER
970-495-7261

Please note: This guide is a compilation of emergency preparedness information from various sources. While we endorse the general concept of being prepared for emergencies, both individually and as a community, we are not directing anyone to implement all of the listed measures. Situations differ, and everyone should make their own decisions as to the extent of their preparedness.

A message from Larimer County Sheriff Justin Smith:

The men and women of the various divisions of the Larimer County Sheriff's Office remain committed to protecting life, liberty and property throughout the county. The following guide has been prepared to assist you in preparing for and responding to the variety of potential natural disasters that we face in Colorado as well as to other potential human caused threats that we should all be prepared for.

It is vitally important to the safety of our county that citizens prepare themselves to the potential of these events occurring, to reduce the threats to their personal safety and their property.



Mission Statement

We protect and preserve life, liberty and property in Larimer County through the delivery of superior public safety services.

Emergency Units

Emergency Services is responsible for coordinating and managing responses to wildland fires, search and rescue events and water rescue incidents in Larimer County.

This involves coordinating the activities of the Fire Protection Districts and volunteer fire departments in Larimer County, the Larimer County Search and Rescue Team and the Larimer County Dive Rescue Team. Both the Larimer County Dive Rescue Team and the Larimer County Search and Rescue Team are volunteer organizations.

For more information contact Larimer County Emergency Services at 970-498-5300.

The goal of both Emergency Services and Emergency Management is to prepare and assist Larimer County in handling emergencies and disasters.

The Office of Emergency Management plans and directs emergency procedures designed to protect citizens from natural and human-caused disasters. The Emergency Management Office works with municipalities within Larimer County on preparedness for emergencies including: emergency response training, exercises and maintaining an Emergency Operations Center where response agencies coordinate actions and allocate resources in an emergency.

This unit develops plans concerning four major areas: response, mitigations, preparedness and recovery. The goal of the Office of Emergency management is to limit Larimer County's exposure to emergencies and disasters while managing all aspects of these emergencies if they do occur.

For more information on the Office of Emergency Management, contact 970-498-5310.

Emergency Communication Center

The Larimer County Sheriff's Office Emergency Communication Center is an Enhanced 9-1-1 (E911) telecommunication center for unincorporated Larimer County. The Center is responsible for dispatching:

- Law Enforcement
- Medical Quick Response Teams
- Search and Rescue Team
- Dive Rescue Team
- Volunteer Fire Departments
- Emergency Services
- State & County Parks Departments

The Larimer County Sheriff's Office Communication Center fields emergency and non-emergency calls in unincorporated Larimer County.

All assigned emergency communications operators are qualified to provide lifesaving medical instructions to patients over the telephone until medical personnel arrive on scene.

Investigations

The mission of the Investigations Division is to complete thorough and unimpeachable criminal investigations; provide compassionate support to the victims of crime; hold the guilty accountable; exonerate the innocent; and help victims heal.

The Investigations Division assists patrol deputies with preliminary case investigations, initiates case investigations into serious felony cases as needed and conducts case follow-up investigations. The division is broken down into four separate units each commanded by a Sergeant.

The Crimes Against Persons Unit is responsible for investigating the following cases: child abuse, child sexual assault, sexual assaults involving adults, missing persons, officer involved shootings, assaults resulting in serious bodily injury, homicide investigations, and cold case homicide investigations.

The Property Crimes Unit is responsible for investigating the following cases: burglary, felony theft, felony criminal trespass and criminal mischief, robbery, forgery and fraud, identify theft and various computer crimes.

The Crime Lab Unit is responsible for providing forensic investigations into crime scenes, processing evidence, computer forensic analysis, and other forensic process to include but not limited to ballistics. Selected members of this unit are also assigned to the Northern Colorado Regional Lab.

The Criminal Impact Unit is responsible for tracking all registered sex offenders in unincorporated Larimer County, fugitive apprehensions, gang investigations, and street level narcotic investigations.

The Investigations Division also provides Victim Advocate Services and polygraph services for not only the Sheriff's Office, but other law enforcement agencies throughout Larimer County and the State of Colorado.

Registered Sex Offenders

Sex offenders are required to register with the law enforcement agency in the jurisdiction in which they reside. The Larimer County Sheriff's Office is guided by federal and state laws regarding registration, public notification, verification of convicted sex offenders, maintaining registration files, verifying compliance with registration laws, investigating violation of such laws and locating non-compliant and absconded offenders.

The Colorado sex offender registry includes only those persons who have been required by law to register and who are in compliance with the sex offender registration laws. Persons should not rely solely on the sex offender registry as a safeguard against perpetrators of sexual assault in their communities. The crime for which a person is convicted may not accurately reflect the level of risk.

A partial list of registered sex offenders can be viewed at larimersheriff.org. Not all sex offenders registered with the Sheriff's Office are on this site. The complete list of sex offenders registered with the Larimer County Sheriff's Office that do not meet the criteria to be posted on the website can be viewed at

the Larimer County Sheriff's Office.

It is the policy of the Larimer County Sheriff's Office to use all reasonable means to investigate all non-compliant sex offenders. If you have specific information on a sex offender who believe is living at a location and is not registered or is not in compliance please call 970-498-5142.

Fort Collins Police Services 2221 Timberline Road	970-221-6540
Loveland Police Department 810 E. 10th Street	970-667-2151
Berthoud Police Department 328 Massachusetts Avenue	970-532-2611
Estes Park Police Department 170 MacGregor Avenue	970-586-4000
Larimer County Sheriff's Office 2501 Midpoint Drive	970-498-5100

Patrol Division



Code of Ethics for the Position of Deputy Sheriff:

As a deputy sheriff, I recognize that I am given a special trust and confidence by the Sheriff and the public that I serve. This trust and confidence is my bond to ensure that I shall behave and act according to the highest professional principles.

Larimer County Sheriff's Office Patrol Deputies conduct preventive patrols, respond to calls for service, investigate criminal complaints, arrest offenders, direct and control traffic, regulate certain businesses and activities as required by law, maintain public order, provide emergency services, establish rapport with citizens, work within the Sheriff's Office and with other agencies and the public to minimize criminal activity or calls for service and report information to appropriate organizational components.

The Canine (K-9) Unit is comprised of four canine/handler teams and agitators. All are proficient in narcotics detection, tracking, suspect apprehension, searches, vehicle extractions, evidence and article searches, crowd control and, most importantly, public and officer protection.

Weapons and Tactics (S.W.A.T.) Team is a formally organized special operations component used for certain kinds of emergencies or unexpected incidents that would be difficult for conventional operational components to handle. The S.W.A.T. team cooperates and coordinates with other operational sections.

The Mounted Posse was organized in 1956, but the history of United States posses dates back to the 1700's. Posse members provide security for the Larimer County Fair and Rodeo, the 4-H Carnival and Colorado State University football games. Other security details include crime scenes, plan crashes, manhunts, floods and drowning situations.

The Posse is also on call to provide assistance to Larimer County Emergency Services for search, rescue and fire operations.

The Mounted Posse is proud of their organization in the Larimer County Kids' Rodeo each summer. All posse

members are responsible for their own horse, tack and trailer.

Reserve Patrol Deputies engage in law enforcement patrol functions. They supply security and emergency assistance to Larimer County by serving as car partners to deputies on patrol, directing traffic, providing security at crime scenes and other county events, performing rescue operations at accidents, emergencies and disasters and assisting with search and rescue operations.

Larimer County Sheriff's Office Reserves are divided into two separate yet complementary groups, Patrol and Mounted Posse. All members are certified as law enforcement officers and provide valuable assistance to the Larimer County Sheriff and his staff. These volunteers are available to the Sheriff 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Both the Mounted Posse and Patrol Reserves are in a constant state of training and offer a high level of assistance, support and aid to citizens of Larimer County.

Both support units have, in the past, supplied security during Papal and Presidential visits, been on call during forest fires for roadblocks and evacuations and provided service at other county events requiring immediate action.

For more information about the Reserve units please contact 970-498-5107.



Jail

The Mission of the Larimer County Jail is to:

- Enhance community safety by providing custody and care of inmates in a secure and safe correctional environment;
- Support a corrections concept that holds offenders accountable for their crimes against society;
- Create an environment that encourages offenders to return to society as a more responsible member of the community, less likely to re-offend.

The Jail is located at 2405 Midpoint Drive in Fort Collins and is operated by the Larimer County Sheriff's Office. The Jail holds prisoners for all law enforcement agencies in Larimer County.

The facility houses male and female adults charged with criminal offenses. It also holds juveniles age 17 and under who are being charged with criminal offenses as adults. Deputies work inside the inmate living areas, supervising the actions of inmates, minimizing negative behavior, reducing tensions and ensuring that the civil rights of inmates are not being violated.

Jail Deputies are responsible for managing the overall inmate population of the jail. Not only are they tasked with securely holding pretrial and sentenced detainees, but they are committed to providing a safe environment for staff, volunteers, visitors and the inmates themselves. The deputies contribute to the overall safety of the community by encouraging the inmates in their care to positively change their behavior prior to release back into the community.

Transportation Deputies meet the Sheriff's statutory requirement to move inmates between the jail, the courts, other jails, the state hospital and the state's prisons. Additionally, they conduct out-of-state extraditions, returning wanted persons who have fled Colorado and have been captured in other states.

S.E.R.T., the Special Emergency Response Team is comprised of specially selected, trained and equipped personnel capable of resolving emergency situations at the Jail when certain high-risk circumstances make the skills and equipment of the team the most effective op-

tion. S.E.R.T. is designed to be utilized when conventional jail practices and techniques are unable to maintain or regain control.

The S.E.R.T. may also be called upon to help resolve law enforcement and public safety issues outside of the jail, such as riots, special law enforcement operations or natural disasters.

Jail Visitation Days are Tuesday, Wednesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays. To learn more about inmate visitation and to schedule a visit on-line go to www.larimersheriff.org or call 970-498-5204.

All inmate mail must go through the U.S. Postal Service using the following address: Larimer County Jail, inmate's name, 2405 Midpoint Drive, Fort Collins, CO 80525



Other L.C.S.O. Services

Crime Prevention falls under the Sheriff's Auxiliary Unit. The Larimer County Sheriff's Office is committed to controlling and reducing criminal activity by constantly re-evaluating the present and future needs of all communities in the county and by developing, implementing and maintaining community crime prevention programs designed to meet those needs. The Sheriff's Auxiliary Unit Volunteer Coordinator maintains close contact with, and utilizes information from all divisions to further the crime prevention effort.

For information on crime prevention programs, please contact 970-498-5159.

S.H.A.R.P. (Sexual Harassment, Assault, Rape Prevention) Training is a basic defensive escape tactics course designed to assist women in managing and controlling situations and coping with issues. The course is offered to women only, both the general public as well as through private institutions. Classroom lectures consist of information on prevention psychology, car, home and travel safety tips, profiling a victim, principals of avoidance and survival awareness. Physical training consists of passive releases and escapes as well as defensive counterstrikes and distraction techniques.

S.H.A.R.P. classes are offered periodically throughout the year. For information regarding S.H.A.R.P. training, please contact the training unit at 970-498-5186.

The Civil Process Unit, located at the Sheriff's Office Administration Building, is responsible for serving civil papers for Larimer County citizens. To obtain information and fee schedules, please visit our website at www.larimersheriff.org or contact the Civil Process Unit at 970-498-5155.

Differential Police Response is a service offering citizens the option of making incident reports over the telephone rather than having an officer respond in person. This practice has proven to be a valuable cost-saving asset for Larimer County residents by allowing more efficient use the resources of the Larimer County Sheriff's Office. For more information please call 970-498-5100.

Larimer County Sheriff's Office Records information may be obtained by visiting our website www.larimersheriff.org or by calling 970-498-5110.

Concealed Handgun Permit information can be found on our website www.larimersheriff.org or by calling 970-498-5157.



All About 9-1-1

When Calling 9-1-1

Try to remain calm.

Be specific as to what is happening so the proper resources can be directed to your location.

Follow all instructions given by the call taker as they might have important information that may help control the situation.

Do not hang up the phone until instructed to do so as the situation can change and additional resources could be needed.

If you call 9-1-1 by accident, stay on the line. The call taker will need to make sure everything is okay. If you hang up, police may respond to your location.

Get the Help You Need When You Need It!

All 9-1-1 Centers in Larimer County provide Emergency Medical Dispatch whenever a call for an ambulance is placed. EMD is made up of protocols designed by emergency medical physicians to assist the caller until the ambulance arrives. The 9-1-1 call taker will ask specific questions depending on the situation. Instructions given to the caller can vary from simple medical information and instructions to more complex procedures such as deliver-

When you dial 9-1-1 in Larimer County, your call will be received by any one of 5 dispatch centers. All cell phone calls go the Larimer County Sheriff's Office.

The operators at these centers will help you by determining the nature of your emergency and what type of response will be needed based on your location and circumstances.

Medical Emergencies

In addition to sending emergency responders, the operator may give you medical instructions or direct you in specific actions to assist you with your emergency until help arrives. Remember that when an ambulance arrives to assess the situation, it's free - but if you are transported, fees may be involved for you or your insurance company.

A 9-1-1 call for assistance in areas far removed from a hospital may require an air ambulance to provide transportation to a medical facility as soon as possible. With medical emergencies, fires, law enforcement calls or whatever the situation, 9-1-1 operators are on duty, very well trained and ready to help you in every way possible.

Call Boxes

Throughout Larimer County, there are numerous call boxes placed so citizens can reach an emergency phone. Picking up the receiver transmits a call immediately to a 9-1-1 center. This initiative was undertaken in the early 90's - before the proliferation of cell phones. Now, some have been or will be removed because of lack of use (a few phones have never logged a single call) but it is anticipated that several, particularly in mountain areas where call service is problematic, will remain for the safety of public.

9-1-1 is...

- The number to call to report a crime in progress.
- The number to call if an emergency threatening life or property exists.
- The number to call if you need medical help.
- The number to call if you see an accident.
- The number to call if you see smoke or flames.

9-1-1 is NOT...

- The number to call for phone numbers.
- The number to call for animal problems.
- The number to call for directions.
- The number to call for road conditions.
- The number to call for power outages.

Larimer 9-1-1 Center

Available Resources

Responders and equipment are available from Larimer County Emergency Services, several local fire departments and medical facilities to handle almost any emergency. To find out what is available in your specific area, feel free to contact your local fire department or Larimer County Emergency Services for information. This can be helpful to you for several reasons.

- You will know who is coming to your house in case of emergencies and about how long the response time will be.
- You will know who to call if it is not an emergency, e.g., increased patrols, questions about fire response area and insurance or any other question you may have.
- You can check that 9-1-1 automatically lists your location correctly to prevent any delays when help is needed for a true emergency.

What Happens if 9-1-1 Fails?

The Larimer County Sheriff's Office Dispatch Center, as well as those from the other agencies listed above, have experienced teams of dispatchers and support personnel who have specific plans should 9-1-1 go down. Depending on the equipment or the nature of the failure, 9-1-1 calls will be forwarded to the most appropriate dispatch center with one of our surrounding agencies until Larimer County is up and running again. The same ability to forward calls exists within all the other centers as well. We also have the ability to activate our "Comm Van" or mo-

bile communications vehicle, as does Loveland and Fort Collins, to provide back-up.

If there is a 9-1-1 failure, it is unlikely that it would be noticed by the general public. In short, all of the county's dispatch centers will be there for you in the event of an emergency.

Larimer County 9-1-1 Centers

- LARIMER COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE
- FORT COLLINS POLICE SERVICES
- LOVELAND POLICE DEPARTMENT
- ESTES PARK POLICE DEPARTMENT
- CSU POLICE DEPARTMENT

When Calling 9-1-1 From A Cell Phone

Know your location. Cell phones cannot give your exact location. Have your address ready or use landmarks, mile markers and road signs to describe where you are.

Cell phone do not always direct you to the proper agency. If this happens, remain patient and wait for the call taker to transfer you.

When using a cell phone for 9-1-1 calls, please be prepared to give your cell phone number. We may need to contact you if the connection is lost.

Many cell phones have an emergency feature. Please be aware of this and use it only in emergencies.

Sometimes a cell phone can dial 9-1-1 while in your pocket or purse. Please be aware of this and use the keyguard feature, if available.



Emergency Alerts & Warnings

Many county residents have received Reverse 9-1-1™ phone calls since Larimer County acquired this type of warning capability. The system we use is called Everbridge. In an emergency, it allows dispatch centers in the county to contact you on your hard wired home phone with recorded warnings and important information and can be very area specific.

No warning system is perfect and Everbridge is no exception. First of all, the data base for making these recorded calls depends on there being some specific geographical destination for the call....like your home. Cell phones are mobile and, as such, are not in the data base. If this is your only phone service, you will need to register your cell phone at www.leta911.org. Secondly, if you have a new home, call your local dispatch center and ask to make a 9-1-1 test call to confirm the address and phone number appear correctly.

Lastly, Everbridge will not work if you have blocking mechanisms in place to prevent unwanted calls. If you have such blocks or prompts which require a caller to press a key in order to complete the call, consider removing them temporarily in times of potential danger, such as a bad fire season. Here are some tips for this.

Removing Blocks

- Press *78 and follow the prompts or contact your phone service provider.
- For the deactivation of privacy services on a different phone than the one you are calling on, dial 1-888-303-8052 and follow the prompts.
- To reactivate, press *78 again. If you have selective call acceptance, you can deactivate by pressing *84 and reactivate by pressing *64.
- If you have problems, you can call the CenturyLink Customer Care Center at 800-244-1111. This information may, at some time in the future, change without our notice. If you have difficulty, contact CenturyLink.

If you receive an Everbridge call, do not call 9-1-1 for clarification or to ask questions unless you have an actual emergency.

Our dispatchers will be so busy that only emergency calls will be handled anyway. Instead, access the web address or the county emergency telephone information line listed below.

Another source of information for county residents is “United Way 2-1-1.” To access it, simply dial 2-1-1. During disasters, 2-1-1 offers information from the Office of Emergency management. At other times, 2-1-1 provides information on volunteering your expertise to the community and offers assistance in finding the right county or city offices, services and activities to fit your needs. Their website is www.uwaylc.org.

Emergency Alert System

Formerly called the Emergency Broadcast System, “EAS” transmits national, state and local emergency warning information over television and radio stations. It is designed to automatically break into regular programming to provide guidance to your specific viewing area. EAS uses a digital system that allows broadcast stations, cable systems, participating satellite companies, and other services to send and receive emergency messages. It can also turn on specially equipped consumer products like car radios, pagers and other devices to receive an EAS alert and warning.

Larimer County
Emergency Information Line:
970-498-5500

Emergency Information
On the Internet:
larimer.org/emergency

Severe Weather Readiness

Awareness and Education are the two keys to protecting yourself and your family in hazardous weather. There are innumerable instances in the history of search and rescue in our county where victims placed themselves in harm's way by refusing to pay attention to something as simple as a weather forecast on television or to the potential danger from dark clouds on the horizon. And remember that 4-wheel drive vehicles are not invincible and may offer a false sense of security. They can and do get struck in snow and are as easily swept away in floods as any other vehicle. Pay attention to weather watches and warnings and know the difference between them.



Weather Watch is issued when conditions exist which are favorable for the development of dangerous weather conditions.

Weather Warning is issued when a weather event is regarded as imminent or currently in progress. This requires immediate attention and may be life threatening.

In Larimer County, our principal hazards are:

- Flash Flooding
- Forest Fires
- Winter Storms

If you hear of a watch or warning, tune in to television or radio to monitor the developing situation.

Remember that conditions down on the flatlands may be calm and pleasant with radically different conditions in the high country.

Purchase and use a NOAA WEATHER RADIO, which has an alert tone for warnings in our area. It can warn you in the middle of the night when you may be unaware that severe weather, especially flooding, may require you to take immediate steps to protect your life.

For information on a severe weather emergency in Larimer County, check the Denver television channels, local radio, NOAA weather radio or our Emergency Information hotline at 970-498-5500.

The National Weather Service also has an excellent web page on this subject. Check it out at :

www.crh.noaa.gov/den/svafety.htm



Thunder & Lightning

Each year, about 400 children and adults in the U.S. are struck by lightning while working outside, at sports events, on the beach, mountain climbing, mowing the lawn or during other outdoor activities. Dozens of people are killed and several hundred more are left to cope with permanent disabilities.

Facts

All thunderstorms produce lightning and are dangerous. Lightning kills more people each year than tornados.

Lightning often strikes as far as 10 miles away from any rainfall. Many deaths from lightning occur ahead of the storm because people wait to the last minute before seeking shelter.

You are in danger from lightning if you can hear thunder. If you can hear thunder, lightning is close enough that it could strike your location at any moment.

Lightning injuries can lead to permanent disabilities or death. On average, 10% of strike victims die; 70% of survivors suffer serious long term effects.

Look for dark cloud bases and increasing wind. Every flash of lightning is dangerous, even the first. Head to safety before that first flash. If you hear thunder, head to safety!

Lightning can travel sideways for up to 10 miles. Even when the sky immediately above looks blue and clear, be cautious.

The Single Most Dangerous Place

Outdoors is the most dangerous place to be during a lightning storm. When lightning is seen or thunder is heard, or when dark clouds are observed, quickly move indoors or into a hard-topped vehicle and remain there until well after the lightning storm ends. Listen to forecasts and warnings through NOAA Weather Radio or your local TV and radio stations. If lightning is forecast, plan an alternate activity or know where you can take cover quickly.

Safety Rules

Postpone activities promptly. Don't wait for rain. Many people take shelter from the rain, but **most people struck by lightning are not in the rain!** Go quickly inside a completely enclosed building, not a carport, open garage or covered patio. If no enclosed building is convenient, get inside a hard-topped, all-metal vehicle.

Be the lowest point. Lightning hits the tallest object. In the mountains if you are above tree line, you are the highest object around. Quickly get below tree line and get into a grove of small trees. Don't be the second tallest object during a lightning storm! Crouch down if you are in an exposed area. **Do not lie flat on the ground!**

Keep an eye on the sky. Look for darkening skies, flashes of lightning, or increasing wind.

Listen for the sound of thunder. If you can hear thunder, go to a safe shelter immediately.

If you see or hear a thunderstorm coming or your hair stands on end,

immediately suspend your game or practice and instruct everyone to go inside a sturdy building or car. Sturdy buildings are the safest place to be. Avoid sheds, picnic shelters, baseball dugouts, and bleachers. If no sturdy building is nearby, a hard-top vehicle with windows closed will serve.

If you can't get to a shelter, stay away from tall trees. If there is no shelter, crouch in the open, and **keep twice as far away from a tree as it is tall.**

Avoid leaning against vehicles. Get off bicycles and motorcycles. Retreat to your car if possible, with windows rolled up. Don't touch anything metal inside.

Get out of the water. It's a great conductor of electricity. Stay off the beach and out of small boats or canoes. If caught in a boat, crouch down in the center of the boat away from metal hardware. Swimming, wading, snorkeling and scuba diving are not safe. Lightning can strike the water and travel some distance beneath and away from its point of contact.

Avoid metal. Drop metal backpacks, stay away from clothes lines, fences, exposed sheds and electrically conductive elevated objects. Don't hold on to metal items such as golf clubs, fishing rods, tennis rackets or tools.

Move away from a group of people Stay several yards away from other people. Don't share a bleacher bench or huddle in a group.

Winter Storms & Extreme Cold

Winter storms in the form of freezing rain or sleet, ice, heavy snow or blizzards can be a serious hazard not only to outdoor enthusiasts hiking or camping in the mountains, but also for those in and near Larimer County towns. The first line of protection is **TO BE AWARE OF THE WEATHER CONDITIONS IN THE AREA AND TO CHECK FORECASTS BEFORE DEPARTING FOR A VEHICLE OR HIKING TRIP.** Few of us who were in Larimer County for the St. Patrick's Day Blizzard of 2003 need a reminder of what 30-60 inches of snow can do.

Stay indoors during storms and extreme cold unless in peak physical condition. If you must venture outside, avoid over exertion; cold weather puts an extra strain on the heart and if you add unaccustomed exercise, such as shoveling snow or pushing your car, you may risk heart attack or stroke.

If power goes out in your home, use flashlights (with extra batteries), candles, battery powered radio and pre-cooked, ready-to-eat food which you should always keep on hand.

If your furnace doesn't work, **DO NOT USE ALTERNATIVE HEAT SOURCES SUCH AS KEROSENE HEATERS, LARGE CAMP STOVES OR GRILLS WITHOUT PROPER VENTILATION.** Carbon monoxide poisoning is a deadly killer. Close off unneeded rooms and stuff towels under doors to prevent drafts in the room you have chosen to primarily occupy. Dress in layers of lightweight, warm clothing. If you have elderly neighbors or know people at risk with disabilities, check on them regularly.

Travel Precautions

- Make sure your car is in good condition, properly serviced and equipped with good snow tires and chains.
- Maintain a full tank of gas and a full charge on your cell phone (with a charger or extra batteries).
- Have emergency supplies in the car such as a supply of sand, a shovel, flares, windshield scraper, tow line or rope, jumper cables and a flashlight with fresh batteries. You also should have a warm blanket, heavy gloves or mittens, a warm stocking cap to cover your head and, ideally, your face and a supply of drinking water and candy bars or other food.
- If you must travel alone, make sure you tell someone at your destination your route and stick to it.
- Travel by daylight, use major highways and keep your radio turned on for travel information. A portable NOAA weather radio is a great tool for this.
- Don't try to be a "hero" behind the wheel" or think 4-wheel drive is enough to get you through anything. It's not!



Outdoor Preparedness

- If caught outside in a winter storm, the first job is to find shelter and try to stay dry. If you have to build a lean-to or simple wind break, do it quickly.
- Cover all exposed parts of the body, especially your head. A huge amount of body heat can escape from an uncovered head like water leaking out of a crack in a barrel.
- Build a fire to attract attention and to provide heat. Place rocks around the rim to absorb and reflect heat.
- If stuck with your vehicle, STAY IN YOUR VEHICLE and run the motor for 10 minutes every hour for heat. Ensure that the tailpipe outlet is clear of obstructing snow while running the engine.
- Do not eat snow for hydration. It will lower your body temperature and keeping warm is more important than satisfying your thirst. Melt it first if possible.
- Make yourself visible to rescuers. Turn on the interior dome light at night when running the engine and tie a brightly colored cloth to the antenna.
- Exercise from time to time by vigorously moving arms, legs, fingers and toes to keep blood circulating and increase body warmth.

Tornados

Tornados of any consequence are rare in Larimer County, but they can occur and are unpredictable. In the late 80's, the Pingree Park area was the site of a tornado touch down where tornados aren't really supposed to occur. Thousands of trees were "jack-strawed" by the vortex. In the early 60's, a tornado hit Loveland and traveled east to west, dissipating as it reached the Big Thompson Canyon. They aren't supposed do that, either.

Readiness Tips

Designate an area in your home or business as a shelter. This should be a basement or small interior first floor room without windows.

Know the difference between a watch and a warning: A **WATCH** means conditions are right for tornado formation. Monitor local media or NOAA weather radio for changing conditions.

A tornado **WARNING** indicates that a tornado or funnel cloud has been sighted or Doppler Radar shows the "signature" for a tornadic vortex in your area. Take immediate safety precautions and get to a sheltered location.

During a Tornado, if at Home:

- Go at once to a windowless interior room, storm cellar or basement.
- If there is no basement, go to an inner hallway (particularly in high rise buildings) or smaller inner room

such as bathroom or closet.

- Stay away from all windows.
- Get under a sturdy piece of furniture such as work bench, heavy table or desk. If one is not available, use your arms to protect your head and neck.
- If in a mobile home, get out and seek shelter elsewhere. Finding shelter outside in a low lying area is preferable to being inside.

During a Tornado, in a Vehicle:

DO NOT get under an overpass or bridge. Leave your car and get into a nearby building, ditch or low lying area away from the car.

Outdoor Safety

Tens of thousands of people annually visit the back country in Larimer County and some of them get into situations which require the Emergency Services Unit of the Sheriff's Office to assist with a search or carry-out. Many of these missions would have been avoided had hikers used some common sense and a little preparation. Consider the following suggestions:

- **Tell someone where you're going**, your general route and when you intend to return. Stick to your time frame or your may find yourself the object of a search the next day. And don't separate from your hiking companions unless you have an emergency.
- **Carry matches, first aid kit**, a flashlight with fresh batteries and clothes warm enough to wear if you have to spend the night.
- **Have rain gear with you** on every hike. When your clothes are soaking wet, hypothermia is a danger even in the summer and rain parkas can provide extra warmth. The same goes for ponchos, which can also provide rudimentary shelter.

- **Carry a map and compass** and don't be lulled into a sense of security by merely carrying them as a magic talisman. You also need to know how to use them. If you're unsure, get a book on the subject of "orientteering." If you have a GPS unit, practice its proper use and bring it with you.
- **Don't depend on a cell phone** to send a plea for assistance if you get in trouble... another very good reason to **avoid going solo**.
- **"Short cuts" can easily end up costing you time and energy** to find your trail again and serve to create erosion on switch-backed mountain trails. Please avoid them.
- **Don't trust the water**. Even our clear mountain streams can and do contain Giardia, causing diarrhea, cramps and nausea. Use a filter pump (available from most outdoor shops) or boil your water for at least 5 minutes.
- **"Take only pictures - leave only footprints."** Take out what you brought in and do the land and all of us a favor by taking out other people's trash too. Every little bit helps.

Flash Flooding

Unlike rivers rising with the spring snow melt of May and June, flash floods are dangerous, sudden rises in water along streams, rivers, arroyos or even normally dry areas where water isn't supposed to run (as in "sheet flooding," experienced by many Fort Collins residents in the Spring Creek Flood of 1997). At the height of the summer monsoon season, July 31, 1976, a storm dropped 12 inches of rain in the Big Thompson Canyon in about 4 hours. The result was the river going up 19 feet above normal flow, 139 dead and hundreds of structures and cars destroyed.

Flash floods are normally from heavy rain, but can result from dam failure (Lawn Lake, 1982) or irrigation ditch breaches. Also, it takes much less rainfall to create flash flood conditions in the vicinity of an area burned in a forest fire. Flash flooding can take from several minutes to several hours to fully develop and can move with surprising speed, offering little or no warning of approach. Even without rivers going over their banks, heavy rain can cause mud and rock slides creating hazardous situations for drivers in mountain canyons when rocks or debris are washed onto the road surface. Some rain induced rock slides occur days after heavy rain has lubricated internal surfaces of rock formations and such slides have closed both the Poudre and Big Thompson canyons for days at a time.

Safety Tips

KEEP ALERT to the signs of heavy rain, both in your location and far upstream. If you suspect a problem is imminent, know where the high ground is and get there as quickly as possible. Get out of the areas subject to flooding - dips, low spots, canyons and arroyos.

DO NOT depend on official warnings reaching you before a problem arises. The flood warning in the case of the Big Thompson came after the fatalities starting mounting. We may not know there is a problem until you tell us.

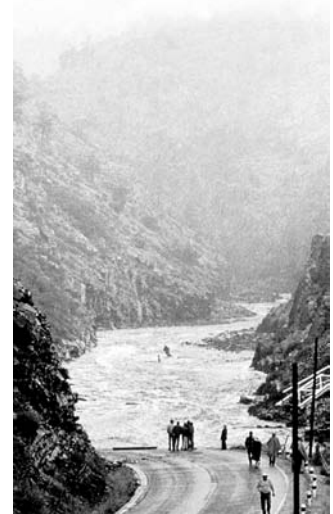
BE AWARE of what experts are saying. Check the Weather Channel, our local media or NOAA weather radio for the current and expected weather conditions.

BE CAUTIOUS around high water, especially at night. It is more difficult to recognize danger then and darkness can disorient you from the safest route when trying to flee to safety.

"DON'T DROWN - TURN AROUND." Do not drive through flooded areas! It takes only 2 feet of running water to move a vehicle and unless you can see the road, you have no idea whether it's still there. Running water may have eroded the surface and a very large hole may await you. If your vehicle stalls, it and you are at the mercy of rising water. If so...

ABANDON YOUR CAR and seek higher ground immediately. Many survived the flooding in the Big Thompson Canyon by getting out of their cars before water rose sufficiently to sweep them away. Nobody who stayed with their cars survived. Nobody.

Photo: Copyright by Vestige Press, Fort Collins, Colorado



Hwy 34 after the Big Thompson Flood, August 1, 1976

After The Flood

Now What Do We Do?

Equipment you will Need

- FLASHLIGHT
- FIRST AID KIT
- DRINKING WATER
- BATTERY OPERATED RADIO
- WATERPROOF BOOTS AND GLOVES
- CAMERA TO RECORD DAMAGE
- TOOLS (crow bar, pliers, hammer, etc.)
- TRASH BAGS - MANY
- CLEANING SUPPLIES: shovels, floor squeegees, buckets, hose & nozzle, mops, rags, brooms, rubber gloves, cleaners, disinfectants, lubricating oil
- PATIENCE, PERSISTENCE, FAITH

Before Cleanup Begins, you Need to Consider the Following:

APPLIANCES: Carefully unplug any electric appliances that got wet. Don't use them or your gas appliances again until they are dried out, cleaned and checked by a professional. This includes the stove, refrigerator, freezer, water heater, furnace, air conditioner and dishwasher.

GAS: Turn off the gas and leave it off until you are sure that there are no leaks and that gas appliances are working properly.

SEWER: The public sewer system should be functioning soon after the flood recedes, but mud and debris may cause clogs. (Septic systems may be inoperative and need to be checked by professionals.) If the basement is not flooded, check toilets by flushing them. Notify the appropriate utility company if they are clogged.

WATER SUPPLY: Assume that tap water is contaminated until you are specifically informed that it is safe to drink. Until then, boil all tap water for 10 minutes before using it - or, mix 1 teaspoon of liquid chlorine bleach in 5 gallons of water and let it stand 30 minutes.

ELECTRICITY: Even if the utility has turned off power in

your neighborhood, shut your own supply off at your fuse or circuit box so you can control when it goes back on. But do not try this if there's standing water around the box.

DRAINING YOUR BASEMENT: If you pump water out too fast, the pressure of the saturated ground can buckle the basement floor and cause the walls to collapse. Wait until there is no water left in your yard and make sure the electricity is turned off. Then pump the water down 2-3 feet. Wait 24 hours then pump another 2-3 feet. Repeat this process until the basement is empty. If the water level in the basement rises overnight, it is too soon to drain.

Coming Back Home - Cleanup and Repair

When evacuation orders have been lifted and it's safe to return to your home, be careful. Many hazards await you in a flooded home. First, walk all the way around the building to check for structural damage before going in. Do not smoke or use an open flame. Turn off the outside gas valves and shut off electricity. As you enter, make sure the roof, stairs, floor and ceiling are not in danger of collapse. Open all doors and windows and let the building air out for several minutes before you stay inside. Inspect the interior with a flashlight. If your basement is flooded, do not flush the toilets. Assess the damage and take photos or use a video camera to document for insurance purposes.

After The Flood *continued*

Now make a plan for clean up and repair

- When you first go back in to start cleaning, rescue the most valuable items first - money, jewelry, insurance papers and photographs.
- Next, protect your home from more damage by covering holes in the walls, windows or roof with plastic, tarps or boards/plywood.
- Make temporary repairs. Brace sagging floors or ceilings and fix broken stairs and other safety hazards.
- Call your insurance agent to determine how to file a claim and what records of damage and expenses you'll need. Even if your damage is not covered, your agency can recommend places to get advice and assistance. Such information will also be available from a local FEMA office (if the flood is part of a Presidential Declaration of Disaster) and from the Larimer County Office of Emergency Management.
- Finally, make a list of things that need to be cleaned, repaired and replaced - and do them one at a time. Doing this in a methodical way will help you regain some sense of psychological control of the bleak situation you are in.

Follow these General Guidelines:

- Discard all food, drinks and cosmetics that have gotten wet. Only canned food is safe but wash and disinfect the cans prior to use.
- Discard or clean/disinfect all wet household items. Mud is easier to remove when wet - hose it off.
- Keep contaminated refuse separate from items you're keeping; check with your trash hauler or city officials regarding special pick-up sites, dates and times.
- Shovel as much mud out of your house as you can before it dries. Wash down your house, inside & out with a hose. Don't forget HVAC ducts and all electrical outlets. A soap spraying attachment will help do a better

job on walls, floors and furniture but don't use a high pressure nozzle on soggy walls or small objects.

- Keep all doors and windows open as much as possible for ventilation and use generators, gasoline powered machinery, camp stoves and barbeque grills outside only.
- Contact the Building Department prior to any major repairs - a permit may be required. Many mitigation techniques are available to prevent similar damage during the next flood and the Building Department will be a valuable source of that information.

Health & Safety

- Be extremely cautious around wet or broken power and gas lines. Remember that wet floors, stairs and ceilings are probably unsteady as well as slippery.
- Avoid touching flood water or mud; both are probably contaminated with infectious organisms, chemicals and/or sewage. Wash your hands often with antibacterial soap, especially before eating, drinking or smoking.
- Watch out for rats, snakes and other displaced animals, including house pets. The latter may be confused, scared and liable not to behave as docile pets.
- Make a list of things to do and set a reasonable schedule. This will help you cope with what seems an overwhelming experience. Take it one step at a time.
- Reassure your children; listen to them talk about their feelings and include them in the cleanup by giving them chores they can handle.
- Drink plenty of liquids while working, rest as often as you feel the need, and don't be afraid to ask for help. Hang in there! You WILL get your life back in order.

Wildland Fire

For most of our history, Larimer County's largest wildfires usually encompassed two to three thousand acres. In the year 2000, the situation changed with the Bobcat Fire at 10,665 acres. Then in 2002 the Big Elk Fire burned more than 4,000 and threatened the Town of Estes Park. In 2004, the Picnic Rock Fire burned nearly 9,000 acres and that event took place, not at the height of the fire season (mid summer), but during the last few days of March and into April. In the past few decades there has been a proliferation of homes in what is now called the Wildland/Urban Interface - cluster developments or individual homes located in the mountainous and forested areas of our county. When these developments and mountain homes are threatened, our firefighters must divert attention and resources to saving them and away from the effort to flank and stop the fire. In the pages following, under the title "Defensible Space," we will look at emergency preparedness for fire with a discussion of this problem and what landowners in the areas potentially threatened by fire can do to make their homes safer.

Evacuations

The Larimer County Sheriff's Office will use an emergency phone notification system in order to notify most residents of danger or an evacuation. Please consult the 9-1-1 section of this manual for important information you need to know before you get that call. We will allow as much time as possible, giving as many as three calls to your home to keep you informed. However, circumstances may be such that your first call will be to tell you to get out

now.

LEVEL 1 ADVISEMENT ("Get Ready"): This type of notification, if sent at all, is an advisement only that there is a problem with a fire or other hazard requiring you to pay attention to the situation and to consider your own plans for evacuation, if needed, including the evacuation of pets and animals.

LEVEL 2 WARNING ("Get Set"): This warning, if sent at all, will be to inform you that evacuation orders for your area are imminent and to prepare immediately to evacuate.

LEVEL 3 EVACUATION ORDER ("GO!"): Evacuate right now and not 5 minutes from now! Your life and that of your family isn't worth getting a few more possessions packed. Information on recommended route and a destination, such as a designated shelter for those who need it, will also be included.

Tips for Evacuees - Before, During and After a Wildfire

The Office of Emergency Management's "Emergency Information Webpage," www.larimer.org/emergency, offers a wealth of information which all home owners are encouraged to review before each fire season. Click on the titles on the web page to read a full account, but some highlights are included here:

The time to start thinking about your evacuation plans is not when you receive our emergency notification, but now - or immediately upon seeing or hearing about a fire within several miles of your location.

When you leave your home, hang a towel on your front door, either from the knob or shut between the

door and the jamb, to let fire fighters know it's unoccupied.

If there is time, open pens or corral gates to let animals fend for themselves if you have not transported them out and cannot because of approaching fire.

If there is time, take a home inventory, video-cam or photo records of possessions and financial documents with you along with your driver's license, credit cards, cash and checkbook.

If there is time, bring medications upon which you depend. If you evacuate without them, you will be able to refill the prescriptions later or get emergency help in doing so after the evacuation.

As soon as you are evacuated, call friends and family to let them know your situation and that you are okay.

Fire Restrictions

Fire restrictions or complete fire bans in the county have become increasingly common. Check the prior website to see if any open fires or grilling with charcoal is allowed before camping or picnicking.

Fire Restrictions: Typically, this will mean that fires are allowed but only in stationary, permanently constructed masonry or metal fire grates built for that purpose. Use of fireworks will also be banned. Fire in moveable charcoal grills will probably not be allowed but camp stoves and grills using liquid or gas fuel will be.

Fire Ban: This means no open fires or fireworks of any kind. Liquid or gas fueled camp stoves and barbecue grills will still be allowed.

Defensible Space

What You Can Do Against Wildland Fire

Your first defense against wildfire is to create and maintain a good defensible space around your home. This does NOT mean that your landscape has to be barren. A defensible space is an area, either manmade or natural, where the vegetation is modified to slow the rate and intensity of an advancing wildfire. It also creates an area where fire suppression operations can occur and helps protect the forest should a structure fire occur.

Creating an effective defensible space involves developing a series of management zones in which different treatment techniques are used. **See Figure 1** for a general view of the relationship among these various management zones. As a mountain homeowner, your number one safety practice is to develop a defensible space around each building on your property and maintain it regularly.

Zone 1 - This is the area of maximum modification and treatment. It consists of an area of 15 feet around the structure in which all flammable vegetation is removed. This 15 feet is measured from the outside edge of the home's eaves and any attached structures such as sheds and decks.

Zone 2 - This is an area of fuel reduction - a transitional area between 1 and 3. The size of Zone 2 depends on the slope of the ground where the structure is built. The defensible space should extend from a minimum of 75 to 125 ft. or more from the structure. Within this zone, the continuity and arrangement of the vegetation (fuel) should be modified. Remove stressed, diseased or dying trees and shrubs. **See Figure 2** for thinning and pruning those trees and shrubs remaining and be sure to extend thinning along either side of your driveway to your main access road.

Zone 3 - This is an area of traditional forest management and is of no particular size. It extends from the edge of your defensible space to your property boundaries.

What you can do in Each Zone:

Zone 1

- Plant nothing within 3-5 feet of the structure, particularly

if the building is sided with wood or other flammable material. Inexpensive decorative rock can create attractive, easily maintained, nonflammable ground cover.

- If the structure has nonflammable siding, widely spaced foundation plantings of low growing shrubs are acceptable, but do not plant directly beneath windows or next to foundation vents.

- Make sure there are no areas of continuous grass adjacent to plantings in this area and frequently prune plants in this zone to ensure vigorous but low growth; remove dead branches, stems and leaves. Enclose or screen decks with metal screening and extend the gravel coverage under the decks.

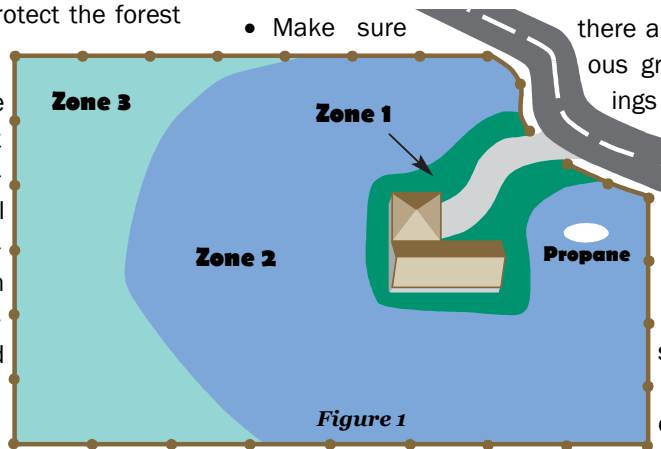
Do not use areas under decks for storage of anything that will burn.

- Do not store firewood in this area, particularly in sheds built onto the structure (more on this in the next zone discussion) and make sure roofs and gutters are kept clean of all leaves, pine needles and other debris.
- Ideally, all trees should be removed from this zone but if you do keep some, consider it "part of the structure" and extend the distance of the entire defensible space accordingly. Isolate these trees from each other and prune to a least 10 feet above ground. Remove branches within 10 feet of the chimney.

- Remove all "ladder fuels" from beneath the trees. Ladder fuels are small shrubs, trees, limbs and other materials that allow a fire to climb into the tree crown of branches and foliage.



Figure 2: Crown spacing - The closest distance between the branches of adjoining trees.



Defensible Space *continued*

Zone 2

THIN trees and large shrubs in this zone so there is a distance of at least 10 feet between the crowns (see Figure 2). Crown separation is measured from the furthest branch on one tree to the nearest branch on the next. Allow more space the steeper the slope and make sure ladder fuels are removed and the trees pruned 10 feet up as in Zone 1.

BLEND the treatments of Zones 1 and 3 by gradually decreasing the thinning of your trees as you near the outer zone - thin the inner portion of Zone 2 more heavily than the outer portion; you can leave isolated shrubs provided they're not under tree crowns.

MOW grasses (or cut down with a weed trimmer) through the growing season to keep them no higher than 6-8 inches. This is particularly important in fall when grasses dry up and after the spring thaw, when snow is gone but before the plants green up.

STACK firewood uphill or at the same elevation as the structure but at least 30 feet away. Keep flammable vegetation at least 10 feet away. Propane tanks are treated the same, but ideally should be at the same elevation as the structure - placed below, a burning tank will burn uphill toward your home; placed uphill, leaking propane could impact your home when it flows downhill.

DISPOSE of slash and other dead vegetation by chipping, piling and burning. Note: Larimer County has strict regulations about when and how to conduct controlled burning. Contact the County Environmental Health Department beforehand at 970-498-6775.

ZONE 3

Specific thinning requirements in this zone will be dictated by your objectives for your property. But by taking out trees which are diseased or infested by insects and those of poor form or low vigor, you will be sanitizing and improving the health of the forest on your land.

If you choose to do methodical thinning in Zone 3, contact the Larimer County Wildfire Safety Program coordinator for specific guidelines and advice, at 970-498-5303.

Emergency Water Supplies

Water supply is a vital component of a fire department's

effectiveness in protecting a threatened home or extinguishing a burning one. Even a home protected with all the defensible space precautions may not survive a wildfire without an emergency water supply.

Personal Supply

If you live in a home isolated from others, you may not have access to an adequate community water system (even if one exists in your development) and you may want to develop your own well or water source. A minimum water storage capacity of 2,500 gallons is recommended for use in an emergency situation. Cooperation with your neighbors can result in the development of a common emergency water supply available to (and paid for by) several residents. Feel free to contact the county Wildfire Safety Program coordinator on specifics at 970-498-5303.

Access to your Water

Once you have established an emergency supply, make sure firefighters can get to it. If your water comes from a well, make sure it is powered by a gasoline powered generator so firefighters can use it during a power failure.

For any emergency water supply, the outlet valve must be easily seen and accessible by fire vehicles. Post a sign visible from the nearest road clearly indicating its location. Obtain specific outlet, valve design and threat requirements by contacting your local fire department or volunteer agency.

Building and Remodeling Checklist

Here is a brief checklist of things to consider, in addition to defensible space planning, to make your home safer when building or remodeling or when purchasing an existing home in the wildland/urban interface.

When Building - Choose a site away from heavy vegetation and on the most level portion of the property.

Avoid - ridge tops, canyons and areas between high points on a ridge. These areas are natural "chimneys" and will increase the intensity of wildfire. Also, set your structure a minimum of 30 feet back from step hills or cliffs and increase this distance for a two story structure.

Building Materials - Try to use fire-resistant or non-combustible materials, particularly brick, rock or stucco. Using wood absolutely requires Zone 1 Defensible Space mitigation work for protection.

Defensible Space *continued*

Roof - Your roof has the largest surface area and is the most vulnerable part of your house. It can easily catch fire from wind-blown sparks. Use Class A or B roofing materials such as asphalt shingles, slate/clay tiles or metal.

Siding/Walls - Use fire-resistant or non-combustible construction material whenever possible. Use a minimum of Class III flame-spread rated siding material. Stone, brick or stucco are best. Walls should be constructed of such materials from the ground to the roof overhang. Eaves extending beyond exterior walls are also susceptible to flame exposure; limit them in length and enclose them with fire resistant material.

Foundations - Foundations come in contact with spreading wildfire before other areas of the structure. Enclose your foundation with concrete blocks, cement walls or other such fire-resistant materials.

Windows - These are often overlooked as fire hazards but can be a source of serious risk since the heat from a wildfire may be enough to ignite draperies and furniture inside your home. Install dual-paned windows and sliding glass doors to reduce the breakage potential from wind blown debris, thereby reducing the amount of heat transmitted into the interior of your home. Minimize the number of windows on the downhill side of the house or the side most likely to be exposed to wildfire.

Access to your Home

When a wildfire threatens, the first few minutes can be the most critical for saving your home. Firefighters must be able to immediately locate and safely travel to your home in order to effectively protect it. It's up to you to help them.

Consider the Following:

Street signs and house addresses should be clearly printed in letters at least 4 inches tall on a contrasting color background and should be visible from all directions for at least 150 feet.

- Your home's address should be in a logical, numerical order along your road, on a sign made out of fire-resistant material. If your house is set back from the road, post your address at the beginning of your driveway.
- In situations where more than one home is accessed off a single driveway, all addresses should be posted at the

street and each intersection along it.

- Single lane roads or driveways should have turnouts with enough space to allow two emergency vehicles to pass.
- Curves and intersections should be wide enough to allow large fire equipment to pass and turn.
- Make sure there are two ways out of your development. If fire takes out the main road you need an alternative to evacuate quickly in your vehicle.

Larimer County Wildfire Safety Coordinator:

970-498-5303

www.larimer.org/wildfire

Colorado State Forest Service:

970-491-8660

www.csfs.colostate.edu

"FIREWISE"

www.firewise.org

Larimer County Extension Office:

www.larimer.org/extension

Burn Permits:

Larimer County Department of Health and Environment

970-498-6775

Is Your Home Safe

Accessibility for Emergency Personnel

Make Sure That...

- Responding emergency vehicles can easily identify your address from the road, day or night.
- There are no overhanging branches or obstructions which would prevent a fire truck from getting to your home.
- As discussed in “Defensible Space,” your driveway and turn-around space is wide enough to allow fire trucks to come safely into your mountain home during a wildfire.
- There are no parked cars or other equipment in the way.
- Emergency Services has a key if you have a gated community or driveway.

Electrical Hazards

Each year, hundreds of Americans die in house fires and thousands are injured. Some fires are caused by electrical system failures and appliance defects, but many more are due to the misuse and poor maintenance of electrical appliances, incorrectly installed wiring and overloaded circuits. We would like residents to know that there are simple steps they can take to prevent loss of life and property resulting from such hazards, such as:

- Replace frayed or cracked extension and appliance cords, prongs, and plugs.

- Repair or replace appliances that overhead, short out, smoke or spark.
- Cover exposed outlets and wiring (check your building codes).
- Ensure there is only one plug per outlet. If extension cords are used, make sure they are UL (Underwriters Laboratories) approved for safety.

Hazardous Waste Materials in your Home

When you hear “hazardous waste,” what usually comes to mind are chemicals discarded by business and industry. But there are also similar wastes in your own home. Many common household products contain the same chemicals found in industrial wastes. These products require proper use, storage and disposal to protect your health and the environment. Household hazardous wastes can pose a safety and/or an environmental hazard when stored or disposed of improperly.

Safety Rules and Storage

- Keep all products in their original container, with the information on the label clearly legible.
- Store household toxins in a safe place. The best storage area is in a locked metal cabinet, or in cabinets with childproof latches. One of the worst storage places is under an unsecured kitchen or bathroom sink.
- Household toxins should be stored in a cool, dry place away

from open flames (such as pilot lights of water heaters or stoves).

- Store corrosive, flammable and poisonous products on separate shelves.
- Make sure lids and caps are securely in place.
- Always return the product to its proper place after use.

Hazardous Waste Disposal

The only rule here is to do it properly: Bring it to the Larimer County Hazardous Wastes Collection Facility at the Landfill, 5887 S. Taft Hill Road in Fort Collins. It's also the place to go when you need items like paint, household cleaners, automotive products, camp stove fuel and much more. The Drop n' Swap Store at the facility offers a wide range of partially used products which others have brought in and it's FREE (“buy non...get one free”). Also, there will be no disposal fee for the wastes you bring in from your home. Your partially used products may end up being used by someone else.

The Larimer County Solid Waste Department can be reached at 970-498-5760. You can also search through their web page for many links and more information at www.larimer.org/solidwaste.

Landfill Hours: 8:00 - 4:30, Monday thru Saturday.

Hazardous Waste Collection Facility Hours: Tuesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday from 9:00 - 4:00.

Fire Safety

Some Fire Facts:

- Cooking fires are the number one cause of home fires and home fire injuries. Unattended cooking was by far the leading contributing factor in these fires.
- Heating equipment fires are the second leading cause of home fires and accounted for 18% of all reported home fires in 2009. Failure to clean heating equipment, principally creosote from solid fueled heating equipment, primarily chimneys, was the leading contributing factor of these fires.
- Smoking-material fires are the number one cause of fatal home fires. The majority of fatal home fires take place at night when people are sleeping. Nearly one-half of fatalities related to smoking-material fires are age 65 or older. U.S. fire departments responded to an estimated 90,800 smoking-material fires in 2010

Here Are Some Safety Tips

HAVE AN ESCAPE PLAN AND PRACTICE IT. Sit down with your family and talk about what you should do in case of a fire. Make sure you have a set meeting place outside the home.

KNOW TWO WAYS OUT. Discuss and diagram two ways out from every room, especially the bedrooms.

PLACE YOUR SMOKE DETECTORS SMARTLY. Have a working smoke detector outside each bedroom. If you can afford more, place them in your bedrooms as well. If you cannot afford a detector, go to any fire station and you will get one free.

CHECK BATTERIES IN YOUR SMOKE DETECTORS OFTEN. A good way to remember is when you change your clocks in the Fall and Spring, change your smoke detector batteries.

CLEAN YOUR SMOKE DETECTOR OFTEN. Take off the cover and blow or vacuum it out on a regular basis.

KEEP EXTINGUISHERS HANDY. Make sure you have a fire extinguisher available for emergencies and check it often. For information on how to check it and what kind to buy, or for any fire related questions, call:

**Poudre Fire Authority
970-221-6570**

**Loveland Fire & Rescue
970-962-2471**

**Estes Fire Department
970-577-0900**

**Wellington Fire Department
970-568-3232**

ALWAYS MAINTAIN A SAFE FIRE-PLACE AND CHIMNEY. Clean the fireplace regularly and have the chimney cleaned and inspected annually by a qualified technician.

CHECK YOUR WIRING. Have a professional electrician check your

house for faulty wiring, especially if you own an older home.

CHECK YOUR DRYER HOSE. Lint can cause a fire. Clean the hose and dryer at least annually, especially behind the dryer.

WATCH OUT FOR PORTABLE HEATERS. Keep blankets, clothing, curtains and anything that could get hot and catch fire away from heaters.

PRACTICE SAFE COOKING. Keep items away from the stove that could catch fire, such as towels, clothing and curtains. Wear tight-fitting sleeves when cooking. Loose sleeves, flowing robes, frilly aprons or even long hair might touch the burner and catch fire.

KEEP MATCHES AND LIGHTERS AWAY FROM CHILDREN. Check to see where your matches and lighters are located. Keep them where children cannot reach them. They tend to be curious about fire and may play with them.

Fire Safety *Continued*

When Fire Occurs:

- **NEVER OPEN DOORS** which are hot to the touch. Feel the knob and the top of the door. If hot, use a secondary escape route.
- **DO NOT WASTE TIME** trying to save property! Your life isn't worth it. Leave immediately and call 9-1-1 from a cell phone or neighbor's house.
- **TAKE THE SAFEST PRE-PLANNED ESCAPE ROUTE.** If you must leave through smoke, crawl low under the smoke and try to keep your mouth covered. Smoke contains toxic gases which can disorient and overcome you very rapidly.
- **ONCE OUT, STAY OUT!** Never enter a burning building. It just might be the last thing you ever do.

Fire Safety at your Office:

- Read your building's evacuation plan. If there isn't one, ask why not.
- Count the doors or desks between your work area and the nearest exits. You may need to navigate with little or no light.
- Know at least two ways out of your work area and participate in regular fire drills.
- Know where the fire alarms are located and make sure you and your co-workers know how to use them.
- Never ignore a fire alarm. Fire can move so rapidly that every moment may count toward saving your life.
- Have an assigned outside meeting place where employees can meet and be accounted for.
- If you have a physical disability, make sure your employer includes your special needs in office evacuation plans.

If There is a Fire:

- Sound the alarm and leave immediately, closing all doors behind you.
- Always use the stairs - never the elevators unless directed by the fire department.
- If you encounter smoke, try another escape route.
- If you must escape through smoke, crawl low on your hands and knees keeping your head no more than two feet above the floor where the air is cleanest.
- As with home fires, never re-enter a burning building.

Fire Hazard from Filling Portable Gas Cans in Pickup Trucks and Cars

In incidents reported to the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), fires spontaneously ignited when people attempted to fill portable gasoline containers in the backs of pickup trucks equipped with plastic bed liners or in cars with carpeted surfaces. Serious injuries have resulted. These fires result from the buildup of static electricity. The insulating effect of the bed liner or carpet prevents the static charge generated by gasoline flowing into the container or other sources from grounding. The discharge of this buildup to the grounded gasoline dispenser nozzle may cause a spark and ignite the gasoline. Both ungrounded metal (most hazardous) and plastic gas containers have been involved in these incidents. **Fire Hazard:** Filling gas can in pickup truck with plastic bed liner or car with carpeting. **Safe Practice:** Always place gas can on ground before refueling. Touch can with gas dispenser nozzle before removing can lid. Keep gas dispenser nozzle in contact with can inlet when filling.

(Courtesy of NIOSH)

Protect Yourself Against Criminals

In your Home

- You cannot make a residence absolutely burglar proof, but you can make entry extremely difficult.
- Lock your doors during the day, even if you are home or only leave for a few minutes.
- Never open the door automatically after a knock. Use a peephole or ask for identification.
- If a stranger asks to use the phone, do not permit entry. Offer to call for emergency assistance.
- If a window or door has been forced or broken while you were gone, DO NOT ENTER or call out! Use a neighbor's phone to immediately call 9-1-1 and wait until help arrives.
- Always close and lock garage doors before you drive away.
- When you return home, do not leave your house key in your door, even for a minute, after you open it. Never put your keys and purse down just inside the open door, while carrying packages inside.
- Make sure every external door has a sturdy, well-installed deadbolt lock with a minimum of 1 1/2" bolt.
- Doors should be of good quality with the exterior doors being made of metal or solid 1 3/4" hardwood.
- Secure sliding glass doors with commercially available locks or with a wood dowel in the track to jam the door closed.
- Make sure windows are of good quality and have strong locks. Don't forget about basement windows.
- Keys shouldn't be hidden in mailboxes, planters or under doormats. Give an extra key to a neighbor you trust.
- When moving to a new house or apartment, have the locks changed.
- Install a peephole. Door chains are NOT security devices. Chains won't keep an intruder out.

- Trim shrubbery that hides doors or windows. Cut tree limbs that could help an intruder climb into windows. Never leave ladders or other tools outside.
- Turn on outside lights after dark near porches, entrances and yards, front and back. Consider using timers that turn on outside and inside lights or install motion detector lights.
- Clearly display your house number so police and emergency vehicles can find your home quickly.
- Update your home inventory list with serial numbers. Use a still or video camera. Store the list and photos at another location in case of fire.
- If you hear a noise that sounds like someone breaking in or moving around, quietly call 9-1-1 and wait until they arrive. If you and your family can leave safely, do so. Otherwise, lock everyone in a room. Don't be a hero.
- Don't leave a "We're not at home" message on your answering machine or let newspapers accumulate on your driveway or porch.

On the Street

- Always be alert to your surroundings and the people around you.
- Walk confidently and at a steady pace.
- Make eye contact with people when walking.
- Whenever possible, travel with a friend.
- Stay in well-lit areas as much as possible. Avoid doorways, bushes and alleys where someone might be hiding.
- If you carry a purse, your personal safety might depend on NOT clinging to it.
- Do not respond to conversation from strangers on the street - continue walking.

Protect Yourself Against Criminals *continued*

In the Car

- Always lock the car doors after entering or leaving your vehicle.
- Check the inside of your car for would-be attackers before getting behind the wheel.
- Park in well lit areas.
- Have your car keys in hand, ready to open and enter the car.
- If you think you are being followed, drive to a well lit public place.
- If your car breaks down, open the hood and attach a white cloth to the car antenna. If someone stops to help, stay in your locked car and ask him/her to call the local law enforcement agency or garage.
- Don't stop to aid broken down motorists. Phone in a request for help.
- When being driven home, ask the driver to wait until you are inside.

- **If you have doubts about the legitimacy of a traffic stop by an unmarked law enforcement vehicle**, drive slowly, with emergency flashers on, to a well-lit, public place. If you have a cell phone, call 9-1-1, tell the dispatcher your location and ask him/her to find out if it is a legitimate stop. If not, help will be on the way.

In the Office

- If you are on the elevator with a stranger, stand near the control panel. If attacked, press the alarm and as many of the control buttons as possible.
- Be alert to pickpockets on crowded elevators.
- If you work along or outside of normal business hours, keep the office door locked.
- Be aware of escape routes for emergencies and post emergency numbers near telephones.
- Never leave your purse or billfold in plain view or in the pockets of a jacket by the door.
- Mark personal property with identification.
- Don't leave cash or other valuables at the office.

Neighborhood Watch is a community-based crime prevention program that is part of the Larimer County Sheriff's Office Auxiliary Unit. Neighborhood Watch Block Captains are individuals who take an active role in making their neighborhood safer. They receive specific crime information and Neighborhood Watch materials on a continuing basis from the Sheriff's Office Auxiliary Unit.

Likewise, the Auxiliary Unit receives information and inquiries from the Block Captains. The Block Captains also stay in contact with their neighbors to stay abreast of any incidents and/or suspicious activity that may occur in their neighborhood. Although it may not guarantee that you will be protected from victimization, this coordinated effort with the Larimer County Sheriff's Office

will help reduce crime in our communities.

If you are interested in more information regarding the Neighborhood Watch Program or wish to set up a watch in your area, please contact the Larimer County Sheriff's Office Auxiliary Unit at 970-498-5159. The website, USAonwatch.org, provides useful information to all individuals who seek a safer and stronger community.

Children's Safety In School and On The Way

Many students must travel through drug-dealer or gang turf. Violence becomes an acceptable way to settle conflicts. When this happens, children cannot learn and teachers cannot teach. Creating a safe place where children can learn and grow depends on a partnership among students, parents and teachers, as well as other community institutions.

Parents:

- Work with teachers and law enforcement personnel to identify possible criminal activity in your area.
- Get specific suggestions from law enforcement on handling problem areas.
- Work with other parents to start a "safe block program."
- Teach children the safe route to and from school and where to seek help along the way.
- Report suspicious activity to law enforcement.
- Sharpen parenting skills.
- Promote non-violent ways to manage conflict and settle arguments with words, not weapons.
- Teach children how to reduce their risk of being victims of crime.
- Know where your children are at all times, what they are doing and with whom.
- Get involved with school activities.
- Set a good example.

Home Alone

Parents:

- Write several lists of important phone numbers (where parents can be reached, etc.) and post it by all phones.
- Lock all doors and windows when leaving the house.
- Leave extra keys with stay-at-home neighbors. Make sure your child has access into the house.
- Locate a "safe house" in the neighborhood.

Teach your Children:

- When and how to use 9-1-1.
- If things don't look right when they get home (broken window, ripped screen, open door), they shouldn't go into the house. Find a neighbor and tell them.
- To check in with parents or a neighbor when they arrive home.

rive home.

- To keep doors locked. Always look before opening the door to anyone. Never open a door for someone you don't know.
- To tell people calling on the phone that their parents are busy and can't come to the phone. Never say they are not home.
- Where a "safe house" is and when to use it.

School Bus Safety

Parents, teach your children to...

- Arrive at bus stop five minutes before scheduled pick-up.
- Stand back from road and form line away from street.
- Hold handrail when entering bus.
- Pay attention to driver's instructions.
- Go directly to your seat.
- Secure seatbelt.
- Speak quietly so as not to distract driver.
- Stay seated.
- Keep aisles clear.
- Be respectful of others
- Step away from bus after getting off.
- Walk 10 feet ahead of bus and wait for driver's signal to cross street, if necessary.
- Immediately return to curb if the driver signals with the horn.
- Let the driver know if you have dropped something. Do not pick up dropped items or crawl under the bus. The driver may not be able to see you.

Parents, observe rules of the road when in the vicinity of a school bus. When signals are flashing "STOP," all traffic must STOP. These signals are for everyone. If you ignore the signals, you are subject to ticketing and fines. Even worse, you may hurt a child!

Bike Helmet Facts & Tips

- The majority of bike crashes occur in parks, on bike paths or driveways. The most common place for bike/motor vehicle incidents are on “quiet” residential streets.
- Apart from the automobile, bicycles are tied to more childhood injuries than any other consumer product.
- More children ages 5-14 are seen in emergency departments for injuries relating to biking than any other sport.
- Fatality rates rise rapidly from the age of 5 and are highest among children 10 to 13 years old. Boys are injured twice as often as girls.
- Approximately 45 percent of children always wear a helmet while bicycling.
- Never let your children ride without helmets. They absorb and distribute the impact of the crash. Talk to them about why you want them to protect their heads. Explain that the brain is fragile and damage to it is permanent.
- Let your children select a helmet they like (SNELL or ANSI approved).
- When you ride, wear your helmet. Your example will encourage your children to wear one.
- Begin the helmet habit early. It will become natural as your children grow. Encourage others to buy and wear helmets.

How to Fit your Helmet

- A common mistake is to wear the helmet tipped too far back. It should be level front to rear and side to side. This is necessary to protect the frontal lobes of the brain. To be sure the helmet is properly positioned, look in a mirror with your head slight turned.
- Once you’ve determined the correct placement, adjust the straps so the helmet will stay there. Two straps joined with a “tri-glide” form a V. The front and rear strap of each V should be snug when a tri-glide is positioned just below the earlobe.
- The buckle strap should also be snug, but not to the point that it causes discomfort or difficulty swallowing. You should feel the strap against your skin and be able to slide a finger under it.
- Size your helmet to your head using pads of proper thickness. Change and locate them as needed to make it snug without being uncomfortable. To test the fit, shake your helmeted head from side to side. If the pads are properly placed, the helmet will stay in place.
- It is recommended that you readjust the straps every time you wear a helmet. After all, if you care enough to buy a helmet, make sure you get the most protection possible!

You may also visit the National Safe Kids Campaign website at www.safekids.org

(Excerpts Courtesy of HEADstrong™)

Car Seat Belt/Booster Facts & Tips

- In Colorado, motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death for people one to 34 years old.
- A study by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration concluded that children are safer riding in back seats.
- Make sure the car seat is installed properly. Check with local law enforcement agencies for a car seat safety check location.
- Colorado state law requires children under 8 years of age to be properly protected in a child safety seat (rear-facing car seat, front-facing car seat, or booster seat), when travelling in a vehicle.
- Always place rear facing infant seats in the back seat of the vehicle.
- Always follow the height and weight limits set by the car seat’s manufacture.
- Air bags are life-savings devices but special precautions must be taken when children are in air bag equipped vehicles. Children risk injury if they are too close to the dashboard when an air bag inflates. Buckle children in the back seat instead of front seat.
- If a child must ride in the front seat, move the seat as far back as possible from the dashboard and make sure the child is buckled properly.
- NEVER place a rear-facing infant safety seat in the front seat of the vehicle with a front passenger/side air bag. An inflating air bag could pose serious risks.