



School Safety and Emergency Management

← Monthly Minute: Wildfire Preparedness →

June 2023

Monthly Minute is a newsletter providing insight and tips on potential threats and hazards brought to you by your regional school emergency management professionals in partnership with the Oregon Department of Education.



School may be wrapping up, but there's more to closing out the year than turning off the lights before we leave. So let's get our safety checklists out and review what is likely the highest risk Oregon schools face during the summer: Wildfires. A wildfire can burn through a community lightning quick reaching our homes and our schools with minimal warning. Even though many of our buildings may be vacant this summer, it is important to understand the risk to our facilities and our communities before a warning comes.

These first few points are good to share with your whole school community. These tips can help you respond to wildfires that threaten your facilities and they can also save the lives of the

families in your community. First thing we should do is to sign up for alerts. **Go to [oralert.gov](https://www.oralert.gov)** to sign up to receive emergency alerts for your area. Second thing we should know is what the alert levels signify. Here is **[a link to a document that identifies what each of the levels mean](#)**. If you would like this document in other languages (available in Russian, Spanish and Vietnamese), visit the **[wildfire Oregon page](#)**. Everyone in your school community should know that a level 1 evacuation notice means you should prepare to evacuate; a level 2 notice means you should prepare to evacuate at a moment's notice; and a level 3 notice means everyone should evacuate now!

Also bookmark **[the wildfire Oregon page on current conditions](#)**. Your area may not be under an evacuation notice, but you can track fires in nearby areas that may affect air quality or even spread closer to your own community. Mitigate or even prevent wildfire intrusion by creating a defensible space around your facilities. Cut back brush from the sides of buildings. Make sure to clear any ignitable source off of roofs, out of gutters or other areas where dry tinder may gather.

In addition to the above measures, your regular emergency preparedness activities shouldn't take a break if you have students in your facilities

(continued on next page)

This Month... Conduct an Evacuate! Drill this month. Remember to implement your Incident Command System fundamentals during planned events.



Conduct an Evacuate! Drill in June.

Up Next... We will break for July but we'll be back in August to get you started for the year.



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Family Wildfire Preparedness

A safe summer should bring all students back to school in the fall. Prepare your students and families for the dangers of wildfires with the following resources that can be used in classrooms and shared with families:

- Without Warning Wildfire Comic Book.
- Keep Oregon Green (kids corner with activities).



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during the summer. Review your plan before any resumption of student activities. Identify evacuation routes and reunification sites before they are needed. The following rule applies for both evacuation routes and reunification sites: one is none and two is one. You could easily find yourself in a situation where the fire is blocking your primary evacuation route or has burned through your reunification site.

We could follow all the tips above by ourselves and consider our summer safety checklist complete. But don't close your task list if you haven't coordinated with local emergency

responders or communicated with others what has been and should be done. When a wildfire threatens a community we cannot rely on any single point of failure. We have to work together to ensure everyone comes out safely so we can recover together. Let your local law enforcement know what your summer schedule is like so they can knowledgeably respond to suspicious or dangerous activity on school grounds. Ask your local fire department to check your school grounds before locking up—they may notice a fire risk you overlooked. For additional assistance with this or any other school safety topic, **visit our contacts page** to find your regional School Safety and Emergency Management contact.

Contact Information

Scan the QR code below or [click this link](#) to connect with a regional school emergency management professional for help on this or any other school emergency topic.



Join us on the **2nd Wednesday of every month at 8:30am** to get assistance with this or other emergency preparedness topics: [ZOOM LINK!](#)

Resources

[Ready.gov informational page on wildfires.](#)

Sign up for local alerts: [oralert.gov](#)

Check current conditions at [wildfire.Oregon.gov/current-conditions.aspx](#)

Oregon Emergency Management [local contacts list.](#)