

# SAFETY SENSE

## Wildfires: Preparation Can Limit Their Threat

(NAPSA)—Wildfires can spread with astonishing speed, quickly engulfing brush and trees and threatening lives and property.

Fortunately, there are steps you can take before a fire strikes to limit the damage and help protect your family.

### **The Value of a Plan**

Karen McCague, claims operations manager, Liberty Mutual Insurance, believes that safety starts with a plan—before a fire strikes.

“Each year, more than 3,500 Americans die and more than five times that are injured in fires. Ensuring that you have a fire safety plan in place and that every member of your household understands what to do in the event of an evacuation is paramount to your safety and survival.”

McCague recommends following a preparation outline she calls “The Three Ps” to ensure safety of people, property and possessions.

### **People**

She says families should create an evacuation plan and practice it throughout the year. The plan should include an out-of-area contact who can serve as a central point of coordination. This person should have copies of important documents, such as passports, birth certificates and property deeds, as well as an up-to-date phone list.

In addition, she thinks at least one family member should receive basic first-aid training.

### **Property**

There are steps you can take to protect your property as well. Removing flammable vegetation



**A fire safety plan should be built around the three Ps: people, property and possessions.**

around the home, pruning tree branches and regularly mowing the lawn may slow the spread or prevent fires from spreading as a result of flying embers. Make sure that you have a garden hose long enough to reach all accessible areas of the house and a ladder to reach the roof so that you can spray your house before evacuating to prevent flying embers from igniting.

After the fire is extinguished, be sure to check around your house, on the roof and near any other structures for “hot spots” up to 12 hours after returning home.

### **Possessions**

Finally, create an organized photo catalog of your possessions on your smartphone with the easy-to-use Liberty Mutual Home Gallery™ app. Developing a catalog of possessions before a disaster, instead of trying to create it from memory later, will save you time and stress, ensuring that you are back on your feet sooner.

For more information about preparing for a wildfire, visit [www.libertymutual.com/prepare](http://www.libertymutual.com/prepare).