



Documents: Wildfire Insurance Tips

Did you know that some insurers in CA provide discounts for homeowners who live in a recognized Firewise USA Community? Oakmont is such a community. In the North Bay fires of 2017, nearly 9000 homes were destroyed and according to FireSafe Marin, 74% did not have enough insurance coverage. Your home is your largest asset: protect it! Learn about these insurance tips as part of your wildfire preparedness plan from <https://firesafemarin.org/insurance>.

Conduct an Annual Check Up

- Call your agent annually to discuss your policy limits and coverage
- Make sure your policy reflects the correct square footage and features in your home
- Get an estimate of the cost of rebuilding after a wildfire from a local contractor
- Purchase building code upgrade coverage
- Save money with a higher deductible, not lower coverage
- Don't underestimate to save money
- Don't rely on the purchase price or appraised value of your home

Know What Your Policy Covers

- Ask for a full replacement cost policy that pays to replace all of your items at current market price
- Ensure that valuables (jewelry, antiques, artwork, collections) are covered

Update Your Policy to Cover Home Improvements

- If you make improvements, call your agent to update your coverage

Maintain Insurance

- If your home is paid off, make sure to maintain homeowner insurance

Get Renter's Insurance

- Renters are just as likely to lose everything in a fire and are often uninsured
- Many insurers bundle renter's insurance coverage with an auto insurance policy at affordable prices

Get 2 Years of Living Expense Coverage

- It takes about two years to rebuild after a fire

If Your Insurance is Cancelled, Act Quickly

- Don't panic if your insurance company cancels your policy
- Start shopping for a new policy ASAP
- By law, they must give you 45 days-notice

Try to Reverse Insurance Cancellation

- Contact a company that does home inspections for wildfire prevention such as Ember Defense <https://emberdefensellc.com/> or contact Oakmont's Firewise Committee
 - ⇒ when you make home hardening improvements, document them, and write a letter to the insurance company stating your property meets fire codes and standards
- Contact your insurance company and ask if there are improvements you can make that would help qualify for renewal
- If your insurer did not give you 45 days-notice or their reasons for dropping you seem unfair, contact the CA Dept of Insurance (CDI) at www.insurance.ca.gov

Shopping for a New Policy

- Ask trusted sources for recommendations for an independent insurance agent
- Visit United Policy Holder's website and click on the Insurance Finder link: www.uphelp.org
- Try the CA Dept of Insurance's shopping tools
- A last resort is the CA Fair Plan, www.cfpnet.com
 - ⇒ they provide only basic fire protection
 - ⇒ discounts for those living in a Firewise USA Community
 - ⇒ if you end up with this policy, continue to shop around in 6 months

