



Evacuation FAQ's

What is an evacuation?

An evacuation is the process of removing people from a threatened or dangerous area. Evacuations take place when lives are put in danger due to an actual or impending disaster or emergency. The City of Monrovia may need to evacuate to different extents depending on the particular disaster or emergency event. For example, evacuation may be required for just a few homes as in the case of a water main break, or an entire neighborhood might need to be evacuated due to a wildland-urban interface fire.

Who determines if I need to evacuate?

The Monrovia Fire Chief and Monrovia Police Chief make the determination regarding what areas need to be evacuated in a wildfire incident. The decision is based on up-to-the minute progress of the fire, projections of weather and wind patterns, suppression resources, and access issues.

Who conducts the evacuation?

The Monrovia Police Department (MPD) conducts the evacuation by informing and directing residents, enforcing street closures, etc. MPD coordinates with other City departments and agencies to achieve as smooth an evacuation as possible. For example, Public Works will place barriers and Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) volunteers will attend to the barriers. CHP and County personnel may be called in to assist – please remember that although these personnel may be from out of town, they are operating in full accord with the local Monrovia command's direction. Your cooperation and courtesy go a long way toward helping these personnel help everyone get out and firefighters get in as efficiently as possible.

Where is the evacuation "brain center"?

All aspects of the incident, including evacuation, are conducted out of the Emergency Operations Center (EOC), which is typically physically located at the Police Department.

Is evacuation mandatory?

Evacuation may or may not be mandatory – the evacuation order will specify this, based on the Chief's determination. However, if evacuation is called for, mandatory or not, and you choose to stay behind, be aware that you may be putting yourself and emergency personnel at risk. Furthermore, if you change your mind later, changed conditions may make it unsafe or impossible for you to leave. An order to evacuate is not called lightly, and it is based on the best judgment of the Fire Chief and incident commander for everyone's safety.

How do I and my neighbors find out that we are supposed to evacuate?

Monrovia has multiple systems to notify you to evacuate:

- **"Reverse 911" system** - A pre-recorded message will be sent to all landline telephone numbers within the evacuation area.

- **Nixle Subscribers** – Residents who have subscribed to the Nixle system by texting 888-777 will receive alerts, warnings and evacuation orders, as well as other public safety messages, via their preferred method, be it text message, voice message or email.
- **City Website** – During an emergency incident, the City website www.cityofmonrovia.org will provide updated information regarding evacuations.
- **Social Media** – Visit the City of Monrovia Facebook and Twitter pages, or the Monrovia Fire & Rescue Facebook and Instagram pages for real time updates
- **Radio and television** – when you hear warnings see or smell smoke, or other indications of an active fire, please tune in to your local media outlets.

Ok, I’m going – where do I go and how do I get there?

Evacuation personnel will direct you to the designated evacuation center – the location will depend on the incident. When evacuating, follow the driving directions given by incident personnel. They will pick the safest exit route based on current incident conditions. It may not be the route that you expect and it may not be the shortest route. When driving, use your headlights, drive slowly, do not tailgate, and DO NOT TEXT!! The greatest danger is that we ourselves cause an accident thereby blocking the road to firefighters trying to get in and our neighbors trying to get out.

In the event of an evacuation, the City will designate an Evacuation Center in the City where residents who are evacuated from their homes, may take shelter. The City will notify all residents of the location of the Evacuation Center. Alternate accommodations may also be available in local hotels. In the event of an evacuation, all information pertaining to Evacuation Centers and accommodations will be released to residents via the Nixle alert system, and the City’s website and social media sites. It is also encouraged that residents stay tuned to local media outlets to gain the most situational awareness.

What do I take with me?

If evacuations become necessary, please remember to bring medications, important documents, and emergency supplies in case you are away from your residence for a prolonged period of time.

When can I go back to my home?

You may not return home until the evacuation order has been lifted. Please, be aware of this when preparing to evacuate. Prior to the evacuation, when you are getting “Set”, is the time to move vehicles, animals and critical items, so that you can evacuate in one trip when the order is called. Additionally, getting “set” early and evacuating once the order has been issued will minimize issues of traffic backlogs .The Monrovia Fire Department has a policy of evacuate early; return early. This means that we try to be proactive before the need to evacuate becomes urgent, and we try to let people back to their homes as soon as it is safe.

What is a Red Flag Warning?

A Red Flag Warning is issued by the National Weather Service when low relative humidity, strong winds, dry fuels, or the possibility of dry lightning strikes, increase the likelihood of extreme fire behavior within the next 24 hours. A Red Flag warning generally applies county-wide, but the specific fire weather conditions vary from place to place. In Monrovia, our conditions may be more or less severe, so the Monrovia Fire Chief monitors our local conditions to determine the need for actions such as closure of wilderness trails and parks, bans on outdoor grilling, etc. When you hear that Red Flag or other hazardous conditions pertain, it is time to stay tuned to local media and review your family’s emergency response plan.