

Presented by Putnam County
Emergency Services

2011

FIREWATCH **GUIDE**

- **Wildfire Risks & Hazards**
- **Fire prevention tips**
- **Commerical requirements**
- **Volunteers - How to help**



Residents and Visitors of Putnam County,

Putnam County Department of Emergency Services is committed to fire prevention and safety. Fires are deadly, costly and devastating. Consider the following:

- *More than 4,000 Americans die each year in fires and approximately 20,000 are injured (USFA)*
- *A fire can destroy a home and everything in it in a matter of minutes.*
- *The sentimental value of lost personal items and keepsakes cannot be estimated.*

Putnam County Department of Emergency Services is working together with local and state agencies to remind everyone that fires are more prevalent in winter than any other season. This is due in part to improper heating use, holiday decorations and winter storms that interrupt electrical service and cause people to turn to alternative heating and lighting sources. These and many other things contribute to the increased risk of fire during the winter.

Although the risk of many types of fire is higher during colder months, fire prevention should be practiced all year long. Please use this guide and take measures to protect your life and your property. This publication was assembled in partnership with the Palatka Daily News so that you and your family can be "firewise." There are many ways to prevent fires. It's not a question of luck. It's a matter of practicing and planning ahead!



*Sincerely,
Quin Romain,
Chief of Emergency
Preparedness and Operations*



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EMERGENCY PHONE NUMBERS

FOR EMERGENCY DIAL **911**

NON-EMERGENCY NUMBERS

Putnam County Emergency Management.....	386-329-0379
Putnam County Emergency Medical Services	386-329-0892
Putnam County Fire Services.....	386-329-0479
City of Palatka	386-329-0100
Putnam County Sheriff	386-329-0800
Town of Welaka	386-467-3171
Town of Interlachen	386-684-3811
Town of Pomona Park	386-649-4902
City of Crescent City.....	386-698-2525
Animal Control.....	386-329-0396
Florida Division of Forestry Burn Authorizations.....	352-955-2010

R E S I D E N T I A L 911 ADDRESSING

WHY POST YOUR 911 ADDRESS?

When lives and property are at stake, every second counts. Properly posted address numbers can be a vital link to your safety. A missing, incorrect or poorly marked address can delay emergency response when seconds can literally mean the difference between life and death!

In the interest of public safety, Putnam County has passed a Uniform Addressing Ordinance, number 2006-17. This ordinance requires that all homes and businesses display a visible correct street address.

The address numbers must be affixed to the front of the building or to a separate structure such as a post, wall or fence, so they are clearly visible from the roadway on which the building is addressed.

Building numbers shall be numbers (not Roman Numeral or spelled out) and must be at least 3 inches tall and ½ inch wide for residential and 6 inches tall and ½ inch wide for commercial buildings. The numbers must contrast with the immediate background. Materials used should be durable and reflective.

It is important to periodically check your address for obstruction by paint or shrubbery. Remember, if you can't see your address, neither can emergency responders!!!

If your home or business is located at a distance from the road, it is important to post the address on a fence or other structure that is easily visible from the road.

PutnamAlert.com

- Register at PutnamAlert.com and stay up to date with emergency information in Putnam County.

- Delivered to you on your home phone, cell phone and email.

WWW.PUTNAMALERT.COM

COMMERCIAL PROPERTY

Commercial Fire Inspections and Safety

Putnam County Fire Prevention Office is tasked with the Fire and Life Safety Inspections of commercial buildings within the County. These inspections are conducted on a periodic basis and involve a number of factors. Of concern to our office is the safety of the citizens. In all commercial structures we are responsible for ensuring the presence of fire extinguishers, exit signs, emergency lighting, and adequate paths of travel to reach the exits of a building. In some buildings we also ensure the presence and maintenance of Fire Alarm systems and Fire Sprinkler Systems. Items that are specific to certain businesses are listed below.

Assemblies:

- Churches, auditoriums, theaters, nightclubs and larger restaurants:
- Outward swinging doors with panic hardware
- Alarms and crowd management systems
- Fire Sprinkler Systems
- Ensuring that all exits are accessible and unlocked

Mercantile:

- Department Stores, Grocery Stores, Pharmacies, Convenient Stores
- Unobstructed isles and exits
- Safe storage and display of Hazardous Products
- Alarms and Fire Sprinkler Systems

Schools and Hospitals, and Correctional Facilities:

Ensuring the proper protection of the unique occupants of these facilities by staff members due to the decreased ability to self rescue.

Industrial and Manufacturing Facilities:

We work to ensure the use of safety systems and to ensure these safety systems function as designed to protect workers and the public from catastrophic events.

The Fire Prevention office also

works with the volunteer and career firefighters to complete Pre-Incident Fire plans for commercial structures to minimize the potential for loss of life and property in the event of a fire. These plans and information on businesses is stored in the department database and is available to responders during emergency situations.

HAVE YOU SEEN THESE SIGNS?



**Lightweight
Truss Roof**



**Lightweight
Truss Floor**



**Lightweight
Truss
Roof/Floor**

Florida Statute, Section 633.027 and Florida Administrative Code 69A-60.0081, require the owner of any commercial, industrial, or multi-unit residential structure of three units or more constructed of light-frame truss-type construction to install a symbol adopted by rule 69A-60.0081 of the Florida Administrative Code. "Light-frame truss-type construction" means a type of construction whose primary structural elements are formed by a system of repetitive wood or light gauge steel framing members.

The symbols must be installed within 24 inches of the left side of the main entrance to the facility. It must be located between 4 feet and 6 feet above grade, walking surface, or finished floor. Depending on the number of main entrances and their locations, additional symbols may be required. These symbols are required on all applicable buildings new and existing.

The symbol specifications are:

The Maltese Cross shall measure 8 inches horizontally and 8 inches vertically. The Maltese Cross shall be a bright red reflective color.

If you are unsure if you are required to have one of these symbols on your building, please contact the Fire Marshal's office at 386-329-1209 and we will answer any questions you may have. If a site inspection is necessary we will come out free of charge to help guide you in compliance with this rule.

FIRE PREVENTION - For All Seasons

The Fire Prevention Division of Emergency Services is tasked with protecting the public from fire disasters through public education, code enforcement, and fire prevention and investigations. In natural disaster situations the Fire Prevention Division works in support of Emergency Management and fire personnel. There are many ways to protect your family, home, and business from fire before, during and after disasters strike.

Practice Fire Safety All Year Long

- Secure all gas cans and other flammables making them less accessible to vandals and arsonists.

- Always stay alert when cooking and never leave cooking unattended. Unattended cooking is the leading cause of home fires in the U.S., so "stand by your pan!"

- Be careful when smoking. Never smoke in bed and always fully extinguish smoking materials before discarding them.

- Check your electrical outlets to ensure that circuits are not overloaded. Minimize the use of power strips, extension cords and outlet expanders.

- Keep your grill a safe distance from your home and deck.

- Be observant and report all suspicious activity to local authorities.

- Use caution when fueling generators. Fuel spilling on hot engine parts may ignite and cause serious injuries

- Never use generators indoors. Lethal carbon monoxide can build up in your home.

- Always change the batteries in your smoke alarms TWICE each year. Install carbon monoxide alarms in your home to alert you to the presence of this lethal and otherwise undetectable gas. Consider home fire sprinkler systems

in all new home construction.

Candles

- Take care when burning candles. Never leave candles burning overnight or when you leave home.

- Be sure candles are placed in sturdy, non-combustible holders and are kept well away from decorations and other combustible materials.

- Check candles frequently to make sure they don't burn down too far or drip hot wax.

- Don't leave children unattended in a room with lit candles, and always keep candles, as well as matches and lighters, up high, out of the reach of children.

- Don't display lighted candles in windows or near exits in case you need these to escape.

- Keep flashlights and fresh batteries on hand to use for lighting in the event of a power outage.

WINTER

December, January and February are the leading months for U.S. home fires

and home fire deaths.

Heating Equipment

- When purchasing new heating equipment, make sure it has the mark of an independent testing laboratory.

- Install and maintain heating equipment correctly, and be sure it complies with local fire and building codes.

- Where possible, have local building or fire officials check the installation and maintenance.

Portable and Other Space Heaters

- Portable and space heaters can be either electric-powered or fueled by



gas, liquid fuel (usually kerosene), or solid fuel (usually wood).

- All types must be kept at least 36 inches (1 meter) from anything that can burn, including furniture, bedding, clothing, pets and people.

- Space heaters must not be left operating when you are not in the room or when you go to sleep.

- Children and pets should be supervised at all times when space heaters are in use.

- If you have an electric space heater, check each season for fraying or splitting wires or overheating. Have all problems repaired by a professional before operating the space heater.

- Portable Kerosene Heaters - If you have a liquid-fueled space heater, use only the fuel recommended by the manufacturer.

- Always turn off the heater and let it cool down completely before adding fuel. Wipe up any spills promptly.

Fireplaces - If you decorate your fireplace with Christmas stockings or other seasonal decorations, don't burn fires in it.

Holiday Entertaining - Use caution with holiday decorations and whenever possible, choose those made with flame-retardant or non-combustible materials.

Christmas Trees - Choose a fresh Christmas tree, and put it in a stand designed not to tip over.

- Place the tree well away from heat sources and exits, and water it constantly.

- Replace any frayed or damaged cords.

- For outside decorations, use only those lights labeled for outdoor use. Always unplug all lights before leaving home or going to sleep and don't overload electrical outlets.

- Under no circumstances is it safe to use candles to decorate Christmas trees!

SPRING

- Fire extinguishers should be checked and recharged if necessary.

- Air Conditioning units and electrical cords should be checked.

- Be careful when burning yard debris. This is very dangerous.

- Review your family's Fire Escape Plan.

- Fuels for lawn and garden equipment should be stored in an approved container only.

- Pesticides and chemicals should be stored in an approved container and away from children.

- Swimming pool chemicals should be stored according to manufacturer guidelines.

SUMMER

Fireworks Safety - The best way to enjoy fireworks is to visit public fireworks displays put on by professionals who know how to safely handle fireworks.

- If you plan to use fireworks, make sure they are legal in your area.

- Never light fireworks indoors or near dry grass.

- Always have a bucket of water and/or a fire extinguisher nearby. Know how to operate the fire extinguisher properly.

- Do not wear loose clothing while using fireworks.

- Stand several feet away from lit fireworks. If a device does not go off, do not stand over it to investigate it. Put it out with water and dispose of it.

- Always read the directions and warning labels on fireworks. If a device is not marked with the contents, direction and a warning label, do not light it.

- Supervise children around fireworks at all times.

Barbecue Safety - Before using a grill, check the connection between the propane tank and the fuel line. Make sure the venturi tubes - where the air and gas mix - are not blocked.

- Do not overfill the propane tank.

- Do not wear loose clothing while cooking at a barbecue.

- Be careful when using lighter fluid. Do not add fluid to an already lit fire.

- Keep all matches and lighters away from children. Supervise children around outdoor grills.

- Dispose of hot coals properly - douse them with plenty of water, and stir them to ensure that the fire is out. Never place them in plastic, paper or wooden containers.

- Never grill/barbecue in enclosed areas, carbon monoxide could be produced.

Campfire Safety - Build campfires where they will not spread, away from dry grass and leaves.

- Keep campfires small, and don't let them get out of hand.

- Keep plenty of water and a shovel around to douse the fire when you're done. Stir it and douse it again with water.

- Never leave campfires unattended.

FALL

- Never park your car or truck over a pile of leaves or dry grass.

- Check all smoke and carbon monoxide detectors to make sure they work, and change the batteries.

- Have heating appliances serviced and chimney flues examined for defects.

- Have fireplaces and fireplace dampers checked.

- Fireplaces should be equipped with an appropriate screen or glass enclosure.

- Wood burning stoves should be examined and the flue and chimney checked for creosote buildup.

- Use only seasoned woods, and avoid soft woods like pine.

- Never use a flammable liquid to start a fireplace.

- Never overload the hearth with wood or artificial logs, the resulting fire may be too large for the unit.

- Put all ashes outdoors and away from the house in a metal container.

- Have a useable fire extinguisher available.



THINK FIREWISE



Florida's population has experienced rapid growth, particularly in the "wildland/urban interface" - the area on the edge of towns where developments are close to forests and other wildlands. Fire is a natural part of these areas, however wildfire threats can create a hazard for residents. On average, Florida experiences the 2nd highest number of wildfires in the nation.(FDOF)

Fire-resistant Roof Construction

Firewise construction materials include Class-A asphalt shingles, metal, cement and concrete products. Additionally, the inclusion of a fire-resistant sub-roof adds protection.

Fire-resistant Exterior Construction

Wall materials which resist heat and flames include cement, plaster, stucco and concrete masonry. Double pane glass windows can make a home more resistant to wildfire heat and flames.

Lean, Clean and Green Landscaping

With firewise landscaping, you can create defensible space around your home that reduces your wildfire threat. Large, leafy, hardwood trees should be pruned so that the lowest branches are at least 6 to 10 ft high to prevent

a fire on the ground from spreading to the tree tops. Within the defensible space, remove flammable plants that contain resins, oils and waxes that burn readily: palmetto, wax myrtle, yaupon holly, red cedar, and young pine.

Emergency Access

Identify your home and neighborhood with legible and clearly marked street names and numbers so emergency vehicles can rapidly find the location of the emergency. Include a driveway that is at least 12 feet wide with a vertical clearance of 15 feet -to provide access to emergency apparatus.



WANT A FIREWISE PROGRAM FOR YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD?

Goal: To raise awareness of wildfire hazards to property and encourage simple actions to improve safety from wildfires.

• Talk with experts and other community members about how to address wildfires issues.

2-3 hour Program

Objectives:

- To learn how to protect your own property from wildfire and assist emergency workers.
- To provide information about why homes burn.
- To learn about fire's natural role in Florida.

Activities:

- To understand local wildfire issues and threats.
- Learn how to assess whether your home and neighborhood is at risk.
- Learn what you can do to lower your risk from wildfire.
- Learn about fire's natural role in Florida.

Free Materials:

- How to Have a Firewise Home CD
 - Risk Assessment Guidebook
 - Informational Fliers
- All workshops are hands on and interactive and include presentations, videos, computer simulations, and discussion.

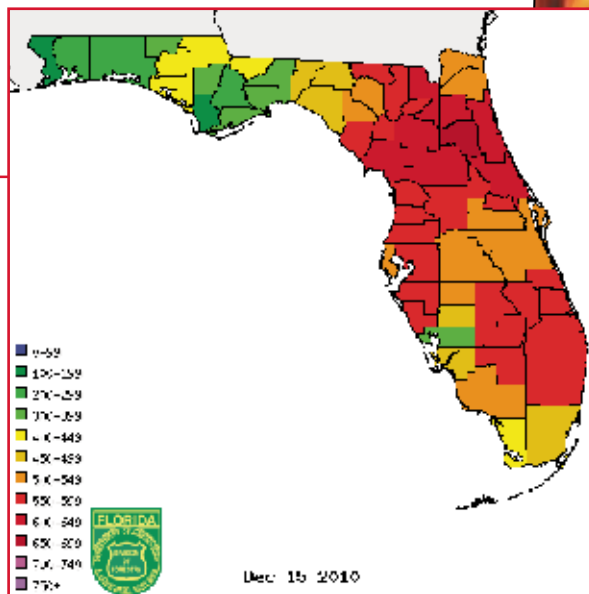
For more information and to schedule a Free Workshop

**Putnam County
Emergency
Management Services
386-326-2793**

DROUGHT INDEX

The Keetch-Byram Drought Index (KBDI) is used by the Florida Division of Forestry to indicate the dryness of the soil and surface fuels. High values of the drought index are associated with severe wildfire outbreaks such as the wildfire that occurred during 1998.

	VERY LOW	LOW	NORMAL	MODERATE	SEVERE
WINTER	0-100	101-180	181-400	401-540	541-800
SPRING	0-200	201-280	281-530	531-700	701-800
SUMMER	0-160	161-240	241-460	461-620	621-800
FALL	0-160	161-220	221-400	401-530	531-800



WILDFIRES RISKS AND HAZARDS

Wildland Urban Interface

Over the past fifty years, more and more Floridians have moved out of the cities to build homes and businesses in the outlying fringe areas known as the wildland urban interface. When dry years come, Florida experiences severe wildfires – wildfires that destroy homes, disrupt people's lives and impact our community.

Why Homes Burn

Wildland urban interface homes are usually lost because of the "little things" associated with the two most vulnerable parts of a home: the roof and the area immediately surrounding the structure. The most vulnerable part of the house is the roof and soffits. Wood shingles can easily catch fire from flying fire brands. Roofs with fire resistant shingles can also catch fire from embers if there is an accumulation of leaves and pine needles on the roof and in the gutters. Exposed eaves can allow fire brands into the attic and catch the roof on fire. Vinyl soffits are not recommended in fire prone areas unless they have backing of 1/8" noncombustible (wire) mesh. They melt easily and can allow fire brands in the attic area.

When Wildfire Threatens

Should your house be threatened by wildfire, you may be advised to evacuate by government officials. Do not try to fight the fire yourself if you have been asked to evacuate the area.

Protect Your Family

- Evacuate all family members as well as pets.
- Include special items needed for infant, elderly or disabled family members and pets.
- Contact a friend or relative and relay your plans of where you are going.
- Tune into a local television or radio station and listen for updates

and instructions.

- Place valuable papers and mementos in the car.
- Wear protective clothing – sturdy shoes, cotton, or woolen clothing, long pants, a long sleeved shirt, gloves and a handkerchief to protect your face.
- Choose a route away from fire hazards. Watch for changes in the speed and direction of fire and smoke.
- If you have time before you evacuate, take these steps to protect your home:
 - Protect the exterior of your home.
 - Close all exterior doors and windows.
 - Place combustible patio furniture in the house or garage.
 - Shut off propane at the tank or natural gas at the meter.
 - Make sure all garden hoses are connected to faucets and attach a nozzle set on "spray."
 - Fill trash cans and other containers with water. Soak rags, towels or small rugs with water to use in beating out embers or small fires.
 - Consider placing lawn sprinklers on the roof if water pressure is adequate.
 - Wet or remove shrubs within fifteen feet of the home.

Protect the interior of your home.

- Close all interior doors.
- Leave a light on in each room to increase the visibility of your home in heavy smoke.
- Remove lightweight and/or non-fire

resistant curtains and other combustible materials from around windows.

- If available, close fire resistant drapes, shutters or venetian blinds.
- Turn off all pilot lights.
- Move flammable furniture into the center of the home, away from windows and sliding glass doors.

For more information, contact your local Division of Forestry Office at 352-955-2010 or log on to <http://www.fl-dof.com>

KNOW THE LAW

Did You Know?

- Escaped debris burning is one of the leading causes of wildfires in Florida.
- The Florida Division of Forestry administers Florida's outdoor burning and forest fire laws.
- Some types of burning require an authorization from the Division of Forestry while others do not.
- Burning yard debris does not require an authorization but you must follow the rules for your area.

Burning Authorization Required

- Agricultural, silvicultural, land clearing, pile and acreage burning all require a burning authorization from the Division of Forestry.



Burning Authorization Not Required

Authorization is not required to burn yard debris as long as you meet the required setbacks and there are no local, city or county ordinances in place that prohibit burning. Check with your local, city and county officials to find out if there are any restrictions in your area.

What Is Yard Debris?

Yard debris is vegetative debris such as grass clippings, brush, leaves, tree limbs, palm fronds, etc., that are a result of yard maintenance.

You may burn yard debris as long as:

■ You meet the required setbacks and no local, city or county ordinances prohibit burning.

■ The yard debris was generated on your property and it will fit in an 8-foot diameter pile or non-combustible container.

■ Your fire is ignited after 9:00am Eastern Time and is extinguished one hour before sunset.

■ Smoke is not a hazard or nuisance.

NOTE: Piles greater than 8-feet in diameter will require an authorization from the Division of Forestry, must have suppression equipment on hand, and need to meet additional setback requirements.

■ It is illegal to burn household garbage (including paper products), treated lumber, plastics, rubber materials, tires, pesticides, paint and aerosol containers.

Outdoor Burning Tips

■ Check with your local Division of Forestry office to make sure it is legal to burn in your area.

■ Make sure you meet the required setbacks.

■ Clear an area down to bare soil around your pile to prevent your fire from spreading.

■ Burn only yard debris, no household garbage (includes paper products and newspapers).

■ Cover a non-combustible container with wire mesh to keep sparks from flying out and starting new fires.

■ Don't burn on windy days.

■ Never leave a fire unattended.

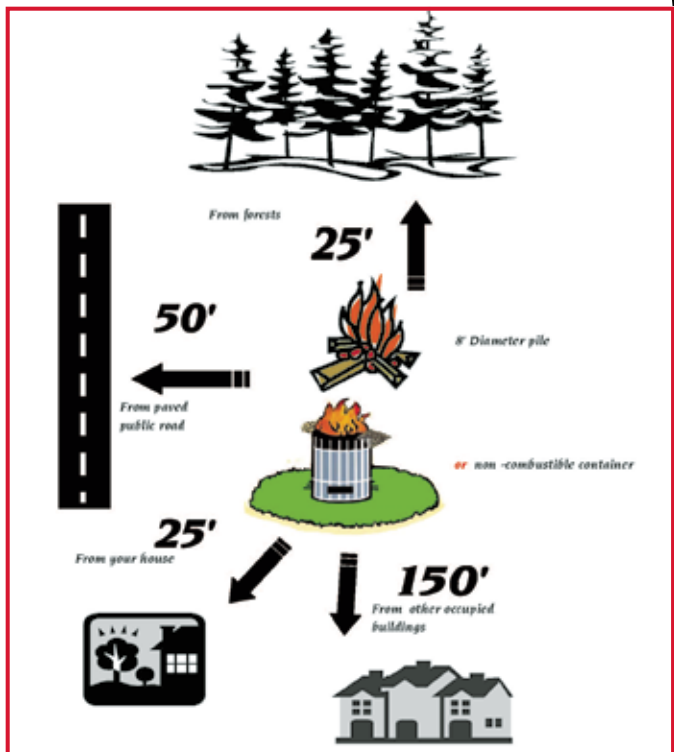
■ Keep a water hose or shovel handy in case your fire escapes.

■ Make sure your smoke does not obstruct visibility on nearby roads.

■ Be sure your fire is completely out before you leave.

■ Remember.. if your fire escapes, you may be liable for costs of suppression and damage to the property of others.

■ If you have questions on outdoor burning, please contact your local Division of Forestry Office at 352-955-2010 or visit our website at "<http://www.fl-dof.com>"



EMERGENCY SUPPLIES

When wildfire threatens, you won't have time to shop or search for supplies. Assemble a Disaster Supplies Kit with items you may need if advised to evacuate. Store these supplies in sturdy, easy-to-carry containers.

Include:

- A three-day supply of water (one gallon per person per day) and food that won't spoil.
- One change of clothing and footwear per person and one blanket or sleeping bag per person.
- A first aid kit that includes your family's prescription medications.
- Emergency tools including a battery-powered radio, flashlight and plenty of extra batteries.
- An extra set of car keys and a credit card, cash or traveler's checks.
- Sanitation supplies.
- Special items for infant, elderly or disabled family members.
- An extra pair of eyeglasses. Keep important family documents in a waterproof container. Assemble a smaller version of your kit to keep in the trunk of your car.

WATCH & WARNINGS

The National Weather Service in Jacksonville issues Red Flag Warnings & Fire Weather Watches to alert fire departments of the onset, or possible onset, of critical weather and dry conditions that could lead to rapid or dramatic increases in wildfire activity.

A **Red Flag Warning** is issued for weather events, which may result in extreme fire behavior that will occur within 24 hours.

A **Red Flag Warning** is the highest alert. During these times, all residents urge extreme caution, because a simple spark can cause a major wildfire.

A **Fire Weather Watch** is issued when fire weather conditions could exist in the next 12-72 hours.

A **Fire Weather Watch** is one level below a warning, but fire danger is still high. The type of weather patterns that can cause a watch or warning include low relative humidity, strong winds, dry fuels, the possibility of dry lightning strikes, or any combination of the above.

AFTER THE FIRE - Recovery from a fire

RETURN TO NORMAL

Recovering from a fire can be a physically and mentally draining process.

When fire strikes, lives are suddenly turned around. Often, the hardest part is knowing where to begin and who to contact.

THE FIRST 24 HOURS

Securing Yourself and the Site

Contact your local human service relief center, such as the American Red Cross or the Salvation Army, to help with your immediate needs, such as:

- ◆ Temporary housing
- ◆ Food
- ◆ Medicine
- ◆ Eyeglasses
- ◆ Clothing
- ◆ Other essential items
- ◆ Contact your insurance agent/company.

Cautions

Do not enter the damaged site. Fires can rekindle from hidden, smoldering remains.

Normally, the fire department will confirm that utilities (water, electricity and natural gas) are either safe to use or are disconnected before they leave the site. Do not attempt to turn on utilities yourself.

Be watchful for structural damage caused by the fire. Roofs and floors may be damaged and subject to collapse.

Food, beverages and medicine exposed to heat, smoke, soot and water should not be consumed.

Leaving Your Home

Contact your local police departments to let them know the

site will be unoccupied.

In some cases it may be necessary to board up openings to discourage trespassers.

Beginning immediately, save receipts for any money you spend. These receipts are important in showing the insurance company what money you have spent related to your fire loss and also for verifying losses claimed on your income tax.

If it is safe to do so, try to locate the following items:

- ◆ Identification, such as driver's licenses and Social Security cards
- ◆ Insurance information
- ◆ Medication information
- ◆ Eyeglasses, hearing aids or other prosthetic devices
- ◆ Valuables, such as credit cards, bank books, cash and jewelry

There are many people/entities that should be notified of your relocation, including:

- ◆ Your insurance agent/company
- ◆ Your mortgage company (also inform them of the fire)
- ◆ Your family and friends
- ◆ Your employer
- ◆ Your child's school
- ◆ Your post office
- ◆ Any delivery services

- ◆ Your fire and police department
- ◆ Your utility companies

Do not throw away any damaged goods until after an inventory is made. All damages are taken into consideration in developing your insurance claim.

If you are considering contracting for inventory or repair services discuss your plans with your insurance agent/company first.

IF YOU ARE INSURED

Give notice of the loss to the insurance company or the insurer's agent/company. Ask the insurance company what to do about the immediate needs of the dwelling, such as covering doors, windows and other exposed areas, and pumping out water.

Ask your insurance agent/company what actions are required of you. Some policyholders may be required to make an inventory of damaged personal property showing in detail the quantity, description and how much you paid for the items.

IF YOU ARE NOT INSURED

Your recovery from a loss may be based upon your own resources and help from your community.

- ◆ Private organizations that may



be sources of aid or information:

- ◆ American Red Cross
- ◆ Salvation Army
- ◆ Religious organizations
- ◆ Department of social services
- ◆ Civic organizations
- ◆ State or municipal emergency services office
- ◆ Non-profit crisis counseling centers

VALUING YOUR PROPERTY

You will encounter different viewpoints on the value of your property in adjusting your fire loss or in claiming loss on your federal income tax. Knowing the following terms will help you understand the process used to determine the value of your fire loss:

Your personal valuation: your personal loss of goods through fire may be difficult to measure. These personal items have sentimental value to you; however, it is objective measures of value that you, the insurer, and the Internal Revenue Service will use as a common ground for discussion. Some of these objective measures are discussed below.

Cost when purchased: This is an important element in establishing an item's final value. Receipts will help verify the cost price.

Fair market value before the fire: This concept is also expressed as Actual Cash Value. This is what you could have received for the item if you had sold it the day before the fire. The price would reflect its cost at purchase minus the wear it had sustained since purchase. Depreciation is the formal term used to express the amount of value an item loses over a period of time.

Value after the fire: This is sometimes called the item's salvage value.

Restoration Services

There are companies that specialize in the restoration of

fire damaged structures. Whether you or your insurer employs this type of service, be clear of who will pay. Be sure to request an estimate of cost for the work. Before any company is hired check their references. These companies provide a range of services that may include some or all of the following:

- ◆ Securing the site against further damage
- ◆ Estimating structural damage
- ◆ Repairing structural damage
- ◆ Estimating the cost to repair or renew items of personal property.
- ◆ Packing, transportation, and storage of household items
- ◆ Securing appropriate cleaning or repair subcontractors
- ◆ Strong repaired items until needed.

REPLACEMENT OF VALUABLE DOCUMENTS AND RECORDS

Here's a check list of documents you will need to replace if they have been destroyed, and who to contact for information on the replacement process.

Driver's license, Auto registration
Bank books (checking, savings, etc.)
Insurance policies
Military discharge papers
Passports
Birth, death and marriage certificates
Divorce papers
Social Security or Medicare cards
Credit Cards
Titles to deeds
Stocks and bonds
Wills
Medical records
Warranties
Income tax records
Citizenship papers
Prepaid burial contract
Animal registration paper
Mortgage papers

Department of motor vehicles
Your bank, as soon as possible
Your Insurance agent
Department of Veterans Affairs
Passport Service
Bureau of Records in the appropriate state
Circuit Court where decree was issued
Local social security office
The issuing companies as soon as possible
Records department in locality where located
Issuing company or your broker
Your attorney
Your doctor
Issuing company
The IRS Center where filed or your accountant
U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service
Issuing company
Humane Society
Lending institution



VOLUNTEER

How Do I Become a Volunteer and Why???

There are 18 Volunteer Fire Departments in Putnam County and even though the application process is a little different at every department it is still a fairly easy process. All you need to do is fill out an application. Your application will be processed through the department then through the County. Upon successful review, approval will follow. Upon successful completion of the background and other checks and official approval, you will be added to the current roster and eligible to participate in the V.I.P. Program, workers compensation and other perks provided by the Board of County Commissioners.

Why should you become a volunteer???

That is another easy explanation with a multitude of reasons. Here are just a few:

Becoming a Volunteer firefighter is the most rewarding way to serve your community and help your neighbor.

The most personally rewarding reason is the sense of family that is in the Volunteer Fire Service. Once a volunteer firefighter you are part of a family and a team. Many times your lives depend on each other; therefore, you tend to become very close friends, and more times than not these friends are there for you and your family no matter what the

situation.

The training you receive as a Volunteer Firefighter can also be built on with other classes in order to begin a career in a paid service. For example, Firefighter I is part of the career standard Firefighter II. So you get all of the benefits and if you really enjoy it you can bridge over to classes to begin a career. Over 50% of the current Putnam County Fire and EMS staff began their careers as Putnam County volunteers.

So what are you waiting for? Go to your local VFD or contact the Putnam County Fire Division at (386) 329-0234. Help us; help you and your family.

BECOME A VOLUNTEER!!

Don't want to train to be a firefighter, but still want to help...WE NEED YOU

JOIN THE SUPPORT TEAM

These individuals are dispatched to set up a rehab area for firefighters to rest, eat, and rehydrate. This is a very important job to assist in keeping our firefighters safe and healthy.

Other skills needed in the departments are web designers, maintenance, fund raising organizers, bookkeepers, and other skills as determined by the department.

Volunteer Fire Service Facts:

Every 23 seconds, somewhere in this country firefighters are responding to an emergency. About ¾ of those firefighters are volunteers.

Putnam County has 18 Volunteer Fire Departments with 454 members. Four of the 18 Departments have some paid staff. East Palatka and Satsuma have 2 paid firefighters on duty 8am until 8pm Monday through Friday. Crescent City and Melrose have one paid Firefighter 8am until 5pm Monday through Friday.

Each Fire Department's annual operational budget is different, based on call volume and other factors. The Volunteer Fire Stations are allocated monies annually from County fire tax. This budget is to provide fuel, medical supplies, fire equipment, communication



devices (pagers), electricity and other normal operating expenses.

It costs almost \$7500 per firefighter to provide the protective clothing to keep a firefighter safe while fighting fires.

Putnam County's VIP (Volunteer Incentive Program) provides to all Volunteers a small stipend to assist with covering some of the costs associated with volunteering. The stipend begins at \$4 per call and increases to \$8 per call upon successful completion of Florida Fire Fighter I certification. The program also covers the tuition and books for Florida Certification Firefighting Minimum Standards and Emergency Medical Technician. This program also provides

each member with an annual firefighter standards physical exam.

The majority of fire departments in the United States are staffed by volunteers.

Of the total 30,170 fire departments in the country, 21,235 are all volunteer; 4,830 are mostly volunteer; 1,790 are mostly career; and 2,315 are all career.



EXPLORERS PROGRAMS

The Exploring program has a long history within the BSA. The program got its start in the 1930s as the "Senior Scout" Division for boys 15 and older. In 1949, the Senior Scout Division became the Explorer Division.

In January of 1959, National replaced the Explorer program with the Exploring program.

Exploring Program

The Exploring program was a radical change from the Explorer program. Most activities would be built around six experience areas: Citizenship, Service, Social, Vocational, Outdoor, and Personal Fitness. Posts would also be encouraged to have a particularly large 'super activity' around their interest. More so than under the Explorer program, Exploring posts would be marked by specialty posts, especially in vocational areas. These career focused posts would soon become among the most widespread of all the specialties. In addition, Explorers would get their own Code and Motto. Before they just used the Boy Scout Oath, Law, and Motto. Overall, we see the Exploring program move away from being just an advanced Boy Scout program into a more unique and separate program.

In 1969, the BSA allowed young women ages 14–20 to join special-interest Explorer posts, which caused many posts to be become co-ed. Then in April of 1971, Explorers officially went co-ed.

Girls would be admitted to posts as determined by their chartering organization. Also in 1971, the upper age of Exploring was raised to 20 from 17. By the 1990s, girls comprised about half of Explorer membership.

Career Focused Exploring & Learning for Life

In August of 1998, National split Exploring in two. The various career oriented Exploring Posts, as well as the Career Awareness Exploring, would be moved over to the BSA's Learning for Life subsidiary, after which they would be referred to as the Learning for Life/Explorers. By doing so, Explorers would no longer be members of the BSA, no longer needing to adhere to BSA membership standards.

Putnam County Explorers Today

Over the years Putnam County has had several Explorer Posts, most notably with various volunteer fire departments and Putnam County Emergency Services.

According to Paul Fleteau, senior advisor for Post 811, explorers have the ability to participate in Basic Life Support competitions, provide support for firefighters at fire scenes, learn patient assessments and ride with the rescue units to name a few.

"They have an opportunity to have more ride time than those in school as EMTs. This is a great way for them to get a hands on feel for a career in Fire Rescue," Fleteau said.

The group has also performed fund raisers as service projects to local groups such as the MDA boot drive and participated in Relay for Life in full bunker gear.

"I think its important for them to see a service to others aspect. We do this job to help others," he added.

For information on Fire Rescue Exploring contact Paul Fleteau at 386-559-2143.



FIRE FIGHTERS

Firefighter Training:

To begin your volunteer career with your local department you will begin by taking 3 federal mandated on-line classes from FEMA. These classes will help you to understand how incident command is established and maintained. They are called NIMS 100, 200, and 700. Completion of these classes can be done at your own pace and from your own home, provided you have internet.

Prior to driving any County insured emergency vehicle you will be required to successfully complete a 16 hour Emergency Vehicle Operator Class. This class is 8 hours of class room and 8 hours of driving. The driving portion allows you to drive several different types of emergency vehicles in a controlled environment.

The initial medical training course is the First Responder class. This is a 40 hour class and is taught throughout the County at many locations. This class includes CPR and general first aid.

The Division of Forestry governs Wildland firefighting. We currently hold the NWCG S130/S190 40hour wildland firefighting class. Upon successful completion of this course you will be eligible to test for the Florida "Red Card". This card will allow you to provide mutual Aid wildland firefighting anywhere in the State of Florida when needed.

Firefighter I is a 230 hour basic structure firefighting class that is offered semi-annually. The fire fighter program content includes, but is not limited to, orientation to the fire service, fire alarms and communication, vehicles, apparatus and equipment, fire behavior, portable extinguishers, fire streams, fundamentals of extinguishment,

ladders, hoses, tools and equipment, forcible entry, salvage, overhaul, ventilation, rescue, protective breathing equipment, water supplies, principles of in-service inspections, and safety. Upon successful completion of this class you will be eligible to take the Florida Firefighter I certification exam.

All of the above training is offered free of charge to all Putnam County Volunteer Fire Service Volunteers. Putnam County provides additional Fire service related training including Firefighter II, EMT, Fire Officer, pump operator, and many more.



A APPLICATION



PUTNAM COUNTY EMERGENCY SERVICES FIRE DIVISION

410 State Road 19, Palatka, FL 32177

386-329-0234 Fax: 386-329-0897

Applicant Records Check

Print Name: _____

(Last) (First) (Middle) (Maiden)

Date of Birth ____ / ____ / ____ Sex: _____ Race: _____

Mailing Address: _____

9-1-1 Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ Zip _____

SSN: _____

Home Phone: _____ Cell: _____

Drivers License #: _____

Station or Explorer Post #: _____

I hereby authorize this Agency to check any and all records pertaining to criminal convictions and driver license information, and for any law enforcement agency to release information regarding any violations under Florida Statutes or Statutes of other Jurisdiction. I understand if accepted as a Volunteer a physical exam and drug screen will be required and provided by Putnam County.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

To the Residents of Putnam County:



Nancy Harris
DISTRICT 1
698-2776



Chip Laibl, Chair
DISTRICT 2
329-0210



Kenny Eubanks
DISTRICT 3
329-0213



Ed Taylor
DISTRICT 4
329-0205



Brad Purcell
DISTRICT 5
329-0214

We are pleased to present this copy of Fire Watch for 2011. Unexpected fires, whether in the home, at a business or as a wildfire, have the potential to cause long term and permanent damage to those who become victims. It is our hope that this magazine will help reduce the potential for a fire to damage lands, homes and businesses in Putnam County.

Wildfires are expected to be particularly active in 2011 due to current conditions mirroring those in previous active years. Most of us live in rural areas, and we urge all residents to do everything possible to increase the probability your home will survive a wildfire.

In Putnam County we are dependent on both our volunteer and paid firefighters who serve our community. Our volunteers spend hours training and responding to calls in our county. These departments always are in need of more help. If you are interested in becoming a volunteer firefighter or assisting our support personnel for fire scenes, please fill out the application on page 15.

It is our hope that you will find this publication helpful and informative. Please keep it handy as a resource for the potential fire hazards we face throughout the year. There is nothing more tragic than watching families lose their home or a small business close due to a fire. We would also like to remind you that you can sign up for emergency notifications through Putnam Alert system (registration information is available on page 3).

Working together to keep our community safe,

Your Board of County Commissioners

