

VERNONIA RURAL FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

Wild Land Cleanup

Spring is around the corner, and that means eventually we'll see warmer temperatures and drier weather conditions – we've probably all seen enough rain to last for quite a while.

Now is the time to start thinking about the coming dry season and the threat of wildland fires.

Start thinking about your property. What trees, shrubs, or open fields of grass on your property need to be cut back or mowed down? When you remove the fuel (trees, brush, shrubs) you limit what a wildland fire has to burn. And it's especially important to remove

those fuels when they are near your home or outbuildings.

This year will probably be similar to those in years past. It will become very dry and the fire danger will once again rise to levels of concern. So please take the time to start off early this year and remove those fuels.

Things that you can do:

- Clean out your gutters
- Trim trees back that are near structures
- Trim back or remove large shrubs that are near your home or outbuildings
- Mow down tall grasses and weeds
- Create a safe approved area to burn

yard debris

- Get all of your yard debris burned early in the season (with valid burn permit)

Please remember that you need a valid burn permit to burn yard debris in the Vernonia Rural Fire Protection District. You can pick up your burn permit at the Fire Station located at 555 E. Bridge Street in Vernonia.

When burning yard debris, please remember that you cannot burn anything other than yard debris.

You cannot burn:

- Household trash
- Construction materials of any type



- Tires or petroleum products
- Old furniture such as mattresses, couches, chairs, etc.

For more tips on how you can prepare and protect your property during Wildland Fire Season, go to <https://www.ready.gov>.

Build Your Own Emergency Supply Kit

The recent stretch of bad weather and the flooding around areas of Columbia County, along with some periodic regional power outages, was a good reminder that most of us are probably not as prepared for a disaster, big or small, as we should be.

Having a simple Emergency Supply Kit on hand and accessible is one thing all of us can do to be better prepared.

A disaster supplies kit is simply a collection of basic items your household may need in the event of an emergency. Try to assemble your kit well in advance of an emergency. You may have to evacuate at a moment's notice and take essentials with you. You will probably not have time to search for the supplies you need or shop for them.

You may need to survive on your own after an emergency. This means having your own food, water, and other supplies in sufficient quantity to last for at least 72 hours. Local officials and relief workers will be on the scene after a disaster but they cannot reach everyone immediately. You could get help in hours or it might take days.

Additionally, basic services such as electricity, gas, water, sewage treatment, and telephones may be cut off for days or even a week, or longer. Your supplies kit should contain items to help you manage during these outages.

Food

Consider the following things when putting together your emergency food supplies:

- Store at least a three-day supply of non-perishable food.
- Choose foods your family will eat.
- Remember any special dietary needs.
- Avoid foods that will make you thirsty.
- Choose salt-free crackers, whole grain cereals, and canned foods with high liquid content.
- Following a disaster, there may be power outages that could last for several days. Stock canned foods, dry mixes, and other staples that do not require refrigeration, cooking, water, or special preparation. Be sure to include a manual can opener and eating utensils.

Suggested Emergency Food Supplies

The following items are suggested when selecting emergency food supplies. You may already have many of these on hand.

- Ready-to-eat canned meats, fruits, vegetables, and a can opener
- Protein or fruit bars
- Dry cereal or granola
- Peanut butter
- Dried fruit
- Nuts
- Crackers
- Canned juices
- Non-perishable pasteurized milk
- High energy foods
- Vitamins
- Food for infants
- Comfort/stress foods

Food Safety and Sanitation

Flood, fire, natural disaster, or the loss of power from high winds, snow, or ice could jeopardize the safety of your food. Knowing what to do before and after an emergency can help you reduce your risk of illness and minimize the amount of food that may be lost due to spoilage.

Power outages can occur at any time of the year and it may take from a few hours to several days for electricity to be restored to residential areas. Without electricity or a cold source, food stored in refrigerators and freezers can become unsafe. Bacteria in food grow rapidly at temperatures between 40 and 140 °F, and if these foods are consumed, people can become very sick.

Do:

- Keep food in covered containers.
- Keep cooking and eating utensils clean.
- Keep garbage in closed containers and dispose outside, burying garbage if necessary.
- Keep your hands clean by washing them frequently with soap and water that has been boiled or disinfected.
- Discard any food that has come into contact with contaminated floodwater.
- Discard any food that has been at room temperature for two hours or more.
- Discard any food that has an unusual odor, color, or texture.
- Use ready-to-feed formula, if possible, for formula-fed infants. If using ready-to-feed formula is not possible,

it is best to use bottled water to prepare powdered or concentrated formula. If bottled water is not available, use boiled water. Use treated water to prepare formula only if you do not have bottled or boiled water. Breastfed infants should continue breastfeeding.

Don't:

- Eat foods from cans that are swollen, dented or corroded, even though the product may look safe to eat.
- Eat any food that looks or smells abnormal, even if the can looks normal.
- Let garbage accumulate inside, both for fire and sanitation reasons.

Note: Thawed food usually can be eaten if it is still "refrigerator cold." It can be re-frozen if it still contains ice crystals. To be safe, remember, "When in doubt, throw it out."

For more information about food safety during an emergency, visit FoodSafety.gov.

Water

Water is an essential element to survival and a necessary item in an emergency supplies kit. Following a disaster, clean drinking water may not be available. Your regular water source could be cut-off or compromised through contamination. Prepare yourself by building a supply of water that will meet your family's needs during an emergency.

You should store at least one gallon of water per person for three days. A normally active person needs about three quarters of a gallon of fluid daily, from water and other beverages. However, individual needs vary, depending on age, health, physical condition, activity, diet, and climate.

To determine your water needs, take the following into account:

- One gallon of water per person per day, for drinking and sanitation.
- Children, nursing mothers, and sick

people may need more water.

- A medical emergency might require additional water.
- If you live in a warm weather climate more water may be necessary. In very hot temperatures, water needs can double.
- Keep at least a three-day supply of water per person.
- It is recommended you purchase commercially bottled water, in order to prepare the safest and most reliable emergency water supply. Keep bottled water in its original container and do not open until you need to use it. Observe the expiration or "use by" date. Store in cool, dark place.

Preparing Your Own Containers of Water

If you decide to prepare your own containers of water, follow these recommendations:

- Purchase food grade water storage containers from surplus or camping supply stores to use for water storage.
- Before filling with water, thoroughly clean the containers with dishwashing soap and water and rinse completely so there is no residual soap.
- If you choose to use your own storage containers, choose two-liter plastic soft drink bottles – not plastic jugs or cardboard containers that have had milk or fruit juice in them. Milk protein and fruit sugars cannot be adequately removed from these containers and provide an environment for bacterial growth when water is stored in them. Cardboard containers also leak easily and are not designed for long-term storage of liquids. Also, do not use glass containers, because they can break and are heavy.

You can view these safety tips and find other resources for Emergency Preparedness at: Ready.gov.

VRFPD Budget Meeting

Ever wonder where your tax dollars go?

Now is your chance to find out how the Fire District is spending its funding.

Budget meetings for the 2019-2020 fiscal year start March 12 at 6:00 pm.

We always encourage our community to be involved and would like a few people to join our budget committee.

Calls responded to January 1-31

Fire	2
Emergency Medical Service	42
Hazardous Condition	0
Service Call	10
Good Intent	1
Severe Weather & Natural Disaster	0
Special Incident	0
No Emergency Found	0
False Alarm	1
Total	56