

Acronyms

GRF – Golden Rain Foundation

WCPD – City of Walnut Creek and the Walnut Creek Police Department

CCCYPD – Contra Costa County Fire Protection District

EOP – Emergency Operations Plan

CWS – Contra Costa County Community Warning System

Does GRF have an Evacuation Plan?

GRF does not have an evacuation plan and does not have the legal authority develop evacuation plans, issue evacuation orders, or manage evacuations. The WCPD is the civil authority responsible for ordering and managing evacuations. GRF will assist the WCPD with evacuations if requested and as directed.

Does the WCPD have a Rossmoor Evacuation Plan?

No WCPD does not have a Rossmoor specific evacuation plan but have assured GRF that they can manage a phased evacuation of Rossmoor. Unlike a hurricane, fires may come for any direction so preplanning evacuation routes is not feasible for fire evacuations.

How do evacuations work?

It is important to understand that evacuations are done pre-event and in stages. The first stage of an evacuation is an “evacuation warning” issued by the civil authorities. The warning tells people to be prepared to leave. At this time, you should ready your car and personal belongings should a mandatory evocation order be issued. The mandatory evacuation order is the second stage of an evacuation and at this time you are required, by law, to leave.

As we saw during the recent LNU and CZU fires evacuation warnings and orders are being issued sooner and for larger areas. Experts have learned that providing warnings and orders sooner rather than later saves lives and allows fire fighters to initiate firefighting efforts quicker. The experts have also said that if you feel unsafe or unsure about the situation that you should leave when evacuations warnings or orders are issued and not wait for evacuations orders. For example, if there is a fire in Lafayette that does not pose a threat to Rossmoor at the time, but you feel unsure or unsafe about the spread of the fire, you should leave. The experts have learned that the more people who leave prior to evacuation orders being issued, that fewer people will need to evacuate once the orders are issued.

Where should I go if evacuated?

When evacuation orders are issued, they will include location(s) that are outside the fire impact zones. While the order will include these location(s), you do not have to go there. In fact, during these COVID-19 times, you may be better off making arrangements to stay with those in your social bubble who live outside of Rossmoor.

The most important thing do is to evacuate when ordered and if the order says to leave Rossmoor then leave Rossmoor.

Several years ago, the then- CCCFPD Fire Marshal told residents to go to the golf course if evacuated. Should I go to the golf course?

You should only go to the golf course if directed to do so in the evacuation order. The golf course may serve as an evacuation staging area, but if the fire continues to spread in Rossmoor, this will compound the traffic needing to leave. Remember, follow the orders, and only go to the golf course if directed. The Fire Marshal's statement to go to the golf course was made prior to the wildland-urban interface fires. Since that time experts have learned that it is best when evacuations are required to move people well outside the threat zone. Again, while the golf course may serve as an evacuation staging area only go to the golf course when told to do so.

How will we all leave Rossmoor at one time?

Truth be told, it is impossible to evacuate all of Rossmoor at once, but then this is true for all areas within Walnut Creek. The infrastructure cannot handle all cars leaving Rossmoor, or any other area all at one time. Even if there was a second exit out of Rossmoor, it would likely lead to Tice Valley Blvd. or Olympic Blvd and both of those roads are choke points. Remember if Rossmoor is being evacuated its likely neighboring communities who use the same arterial roads which will overwhelm the infra structure. Finally, experts and fire mapping has shown that it is unlikely all of Rossmoor would need to be evacuated at one time.

How will Rossmoor be evacuated?

The experts have said that Rossmoor will need to be evacuated in phases. Which means that specific area(s) will be directed to evacuate while others can remain in place. If needed, additional areas can be ordered to evacuate, again without evacuating all of Rossmoor at the same time. For example, if a fire started in Lafayette near the top of Stanley Dollar Drive, those who live at the top of Stanley Dollar may be ordered to evacuate, but those live in other areas will not need to evacuate. If necessary, other area could evacuate, but again, not all of Rossmoor at one time.

How will I be notified of evacuation warnings or orders?

The civil authorities will use the CWS to reverse 911 call phones within the affected zone(s). The CWS can target specific areas, street or even homes to send notifications eliminating the need to notify all in Rossmoor. Additionally, the WCPD will use its Nixle system and social medial platforms such as Twitter and Instagram. Finally, GRF will assist using its Nixle system. If time and resources permit, drive by with loudspeaker announcements may be used.

Since the CWS uses reverse 911 technology you do not need to register for alerts, but if you want to register please visit <https://cwsalerts.com/>. You will only receive alerts for the area in which you register.

I have mobility limitations or do not drive; how will I evacuate?

Rossmoor is an independent living community and during an evacuation first responder resources at best, will be limited. If you have mobility limitations or do not drive, you should make plans with your neighbors to assist you during an evacuation. If you have care givers, develop evacuation plans with them. Finally, if you have mobility issues you should consider leaving when evacuation warnings are issued rather than waiting for the actual orders.

Are there other alternative exits around Rossmoor that I can use?

No there is only one identified exit for Rossmoor and that is the main gate. There are several alternative entrances around Rossmoor that will provide first responders access to Rossmoor and some of these entrances are located at County designated fire roads.

How do I prepare?

Prior planning and preparations for all types of disasters is critical. You should plan now for an evacuation. Have a go-bag ready with medications, important papers, clothing etc. that you may need. You can research how to prepare a go bag online. Make plans with out of the area family or friends with whom you can stay. While shelters will be available, during the pandemic, shelter beds will be limited. Talk to your neighbors and makes plans on how you can help each other. For more information specific to Rossmoor resident preparedness visit <http://www.rossmoorepo.org/> and click the "Resident Resources" box.

What has been done to mitigate fires in Rossmoor?

Both GRF and the Mutuals have met and in some areas exceed the CCCFPD fire mitigation efforts. This means that vegetation has been removed/cut down and tress limbed up. CCCFP inspects GRF and Mutual property each year to ensure mitigation requirements have been met. CCCFPD knows that these fire mitigation efforts do work. The fire that started outside of Rossmoor near the top of Stanley Dollar was quickly contained and did not spread into Rossmoor. A CCCFPD Fire Captain said that one of the required fire breaks in the open space area outside of Rossmoor, stopped the fire from further spread in the open space. While these fire mitigation efforts may not completely stop the spread of fire, they will certainly slow down the spread.