TIP SHEET

WILDFIRE

Wildfires can be intense and unpredictable as they devastate large areas in a small period of time. If you are in an area that could be exposed to a potential wildfire, the following tips and actions may be helpful to consider before a wildfire strikes.

Actions to take before wildfire season

Pre-Fire Planning

- ☐ Develop a wildfire emergency plan for your business
- ☐ Consider interruptions to utilities and communication lines in the plan
- ☐ Consider clean air requirements for the operation and how to prevent or mitigate disruptions to business as a result of high levels of outdoor smoke
- ☐ Discuss wildfire mitigation strategies with the local fire department
- ☐ Key employees may be impacted on the home front, so have back-ups; develop a post-wildfire contingency plan and exercise the plan

Location Typography and Siting

- ☐ Be cognizant of local terrain – fires will travel more quickly uphill; identify multiple access/escape routes to your business

Vegetation and Yard Storage

- ☐ Create a defensible zone by reducing the amount of combustible vegetation near buildings; parking lots make great defensible zones if there are no combustible (i.e., vehicles) in the lot

Create vegetation clearance zones

- ☐ 165 feet from a grassland exposures
- ☐ 330 feet from the shrub, woodland or forest exposures
- ☐ Ensure trees within close proximity of the property do not overhang the buildings; prune the lower branches to reduce vertical fire spread
- ☐ Retain the moisture content in the vegetation by regular watering
- ☐ Regularly remove combustible debris from roofs and other areas where debris may accumulate
- ☐ Locate above ground flammable gas or liquid storage as far as possible from structures
- ☐ Do not store valuable items outdoors

Building Construction

- ☐ During construction & renovations, take steps to reduce the structure's susceptibility to wildfire by incorporating fire safe building materials and techniques
- ☐ Equip HVAC air intake openings with automatic fire doors or dampers actuated by smoke detection
- ☐ Consider installing permanently fitted one-hour fire rated shutters for window openings

Automatic Protection and Sprinklers

- ☐ Verify appropriate water supplies exist to meet the fire department demands; consider installing exterior sprinklers for high valued assets

Actions to take when a wildfire threatens

☐ Implement your emergency plan

☐ Maintain a fire watch center and monitor emergency channels for instructions; prepare to evacuate the area when instructed by authorities

☐ Close all doors, windows and roof vent(s)

☐ Close fire shutters if installed and board up any broken windows

☐ If feasible, shut down HVAC units that draw air from the outside and/or verify filtration systems are properly designed and maintained to prevent smoke/fire migration into the building

☐ Move outside combustible storage away from buildings or locate within buildings; inside the building move combustibles away from windows and light metal walls

☐ If feasible, set sturdy ladders to roofs to allow for Fire Department access; if feasible, shut off gas lines to the building

☐ Keep lights on throughout your building to facilitate locating your building by fire department

☐ Keep charged water hoses available at the perimeter of the building for Fire Department use

☐ Evacuate when instructed by authorities

Additional Information

AIG clients can contact their Risk Engineer or Risk Consultant for additional support.

For more information on how to prepare, protect and recover, visit our Catastrophe Preparedness Center at www.aig.com/cat-preparedness