



Kansas Department of Insurance

Commissioner Vicki Schmidt

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Consumer Connection: Prepare your home this Wildfire Awareness Month

Topeka, Kan. – This time of year calls for preparation for many storms and hazards. May is designated as National Wildfire Awareness Month because it is the time of year that wildfire risks rise significantly due to increased heat and dryness. The Kansas Department of Insurance reminds homeowners to evaluate their property for fire risks.

“Wildfire season is upon us; risk is typically higher from about May to November” said Kansas Insurance Commissioner Vicki Schmidt. “Taking a few precautions could help you prevent or lessen potential damage.”

Some precautions to take to protect your home against wildfires:

- Keep burnable materials away from structures. It is advisable to avoid outdoor burning during this time.
- Keep your chimney clean. Think about installing a spark arrestor or checking to ensure it is working properly.
- Keep at least 100 feet of garden hose attached to an outdoor faucet or spigot.
- Keep all vegetation and grass groomed within 105 feet of any structure. Make sure to pick up any sticks or scattered branches. Keep your wood pile and fuel tanks at least 30 feet from any structure.

The Kansas Forest Service provides resources on how to be prepared, how to forecast and report a wildfire and a Wildfire Risk Assessment Portal. To access these resources, visit www.kansasforests.org/fire_management/. If you or someone you know is having trouble with an insurance claim, please contact the Kansas Department of Insurance’s Consumer Assistance Division at 785-296-3071 or email KDOL.complaints@ks.gov.

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*The Kansas Department of Insurance was established in 1871, currently led by Commissioner Vicki Schmidt. The mission of the Department is to **regulate** companies that sell policies in Kansas to ensure solvency and compliance with state law, **educate** consumers about all things insurance and securities, and **advocate** for a strong and competitive market to give Kansans choices when shopping for products that meet their needs.*