RED FLAG? CODERED? EXTREME FIRE DANGER?

What it All Means — and What You Should Do

If you live in wildfire country—basically all of California—you've likely seen or heard:
- A red flag flying at the fire station
- A CodeRED alert on your phone
- A fire danger sign with the arrow pointed to red

But what do these alerts really mean—and what are you supposed to do?
This quick-reference guide explains the difference and what actions to take.

Quick Comparison

Alert Type	Who Issues It	Why It's Issued	What It Means	What You Should Do
Red Flag Warning	National Weather Service	Dangerous fire weather: hot, dry, and windy	Fires will spread extremely fast and be hard to control	Put your go-bag in the car. Remove flammable items from your porch. Leave early if needed.
Extreme Fire Danger Rating	Federal and State Wildfire Agencies	Vegetation is critically dry due to heat, drought, or season	Fires ignite easily, burn intensely, and spread rapidly	Avoid spark-causing activities. No outdoor burning. Be extra cautious.
CodeRED Emergency Alert	Nevada County Office of Emergency Services	A wildfire or emergency is actively threatening your area	You may be in or near an evacuation zone	Follow alert instructions. Evacuation order: leave now. Warning: be ready to leave anytime.

Red Flag Warning

A Red Flag Warning is issued by the National Weather Service when wildfire weather conditions are extreme—typically high heat, low humidity, and strong winds.

Why It Matters:
Many of California's most deadly fires—like the Camp, Tubbs, and Oakland Hills fires—occurred during Red Flag weather.

What To Do:
- Put your go-bag in your car
- Move flammable items (like cushions) off porches and decks
- If you need more time to evacuate, leave early
- Stay alert for nearby fire activity

Extreme Fire Danger Rating

This rating comes from wildfire agencies like CAL FIRE and the U.S. Forest Service. It's based on how dry the vegetation and fuels are due to season, heat waves, or drought.

According to the National Wildfire Coordinating Group:
"Fires start quickly, spread furiously, and burn intensely... Direct attack is rarely possible and may be dangerous except immediately after ignition."

What To Do:
- Don't mow, trim, or use spark-producing equipment outdoors
- No outdoor burning or open flames
- Avoid smoking outside
- Double-check your evacuation plan and supplies

CodeRED Emergency Alert

CodeRED alerts are issued by Nevada County's Office of Emergency Services when an emergency—like an active wildfire—is happening now.

Types of Alerts:
- Evacuation Order – Leave immediately
- Evacuation Warning – Be ready to leave at a moment's notice
- If you need extra time due to pets, health, or mobility: leave early

What To Do:
- Keep your go-bag in your car
- Get your animals ready
- Follow the instructions in the alert

Sign up for CodeRED:
www.ReadyNevadaCounty.org/EmergencyAlerts

Final Summary

Alert	What It Means	Your Action
Red Flag Warning	Extreme fire weather (wind, heat, low humidity)	Prepare to evacuate. Remove combustibles.
Extreme Fire Danger	Critically dry fuels; high ignition potential	Avoid fire-starting activities. Be ready.
CodeRED Alert	Emergency near you; evacuation warning or order issued	Follow instructions. Leave if ordered.

Understanding Fire Emergency Alerts

Stay informed & prepared for fire dangers.

1 Red Flag Warning Issued

Indicates extreme fire risk due to specific weather conditions.

2 Extreme Fire Danger Level

Critically dry vegetation raises significant wildfire risks.

3 Avoid Outdoor Activities

Prevent engaging in activities that could spark fires during heightened danger.

4 Prepare a Go-Bag

Essential items to facilitate a quick evacuation should be packed in advance.

5 Remove Flammable Items

Eliminating potential ignition sources from around your home can help prevent spread.

6 CodeRED Alert Activation

Alerts you of immediate wildfire threats in your vicinity.