

WILDFIRE COVERAGE CHECKLIST

Always keep in mind that the firefighters and emergency responders come first!

MUST HAVES

- Media credentials
- Nomex or dual compliant top and bottoms
- Hardhat
- Leather gloves
- Work boots (not steel toe)
- Headlamp or handheld flashlight.
- Water, and plenty of it.
- Fire Shelter. You can find the old style yellow ones on ebay for under \$30, and it's enough to satisfy requirements. The newer ones are blue and they are pricey (+/- \$450).

OPTIONAL

- Fire shroud (neck cover)
- Fire goggles
- Police scanner programmed for fire channels
- Rooftop antenna for scanner
- Scanner app (Broadcastify and 5-0 radio are good options)
- Glow stick (mount on helmet at night)
- Inverter to power your laptop, battery chargers
- Fire extinguisher
- Chainsaw
- Two-day supply of food, water, for yourself and to share
- Cotton clothing worn under your fire gear
- Maps, downloaded to your phone or paper maps

SAFETY SUGGESTIONS

Keep out of the way of firefighters and emergency responders and be sure to park in spots that won't hinder them. Pull over and let them go by, even if they don't seem to be in a hurry. *No matter how stressed you are about coming up with "the picture" or meeting a deadline, the media does not come first.*

- Know and understand the terrain, weather conditions.
- Have your car headlights on at all times in a fire zone.
- When driving in, make a mental note for turnouts and safety zones. This is important to remain out of the way of firefighters, as well as to find a safe place to shelter if you get blocked in.
- Leave your car engine running if you are near fire.
- Always park facing your exit route.
- Have a full tank of gas before entering a fire zone.
- Carry Fix-A-Flat.
- Park well out of firefighters' way, and if possible, check to ensure you are parked safely.
- When possible, pair up with other photo/journalists. Watch each other's backs.

TRAINING

- FEMA There are many free online training courses available to the public, click [here](#).
- USFS National Wildfire Coordinating Group, click [here](#).
- Wildfire safety training and glossary, click [here](#).
- Committee to Protect Journalists, click [here](#).
- JOURNALISM COMMUNITY There is a lot of knowledge in our community. Check in with journalists who have wildfire experience – during the off season.
- COMMUNITY COLLEGES Check your local area community colleges – many offer fire science courses.

NO-NOs

- Do not show up to a fire in rain boots-they are not safe. Though they clean easily - they will melt even faster.
- Do not wear steel-toed shoes. The steel will heat, possibly causing damage to your feet.