

## Bird Owners Evacuate As Southern California Burns

**Many southern California bird owners ordered to evacuate their homes to escape wildfires**

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Smoke and ash in the air from a wildfire could be harmful to your pet bird's health.  
Courtesy Veronique Bos, California

More than a dozen wildfires burning across Southern California have destroyed more than 1,300 structures as of Tuesday, October 23, 2007. And more than 500,000 Southern California residents have been ordered to evacuate their homes.

Jerry Jennings, bird breeder and San Diego regional coordinator for the American Federation of Aviculture, evacuated all of his birds from aviaries at home in Fallbrook, California.

Jennings said being prepared to evacuate your birds is a key factor in an emergency like the wildfires. He said to plan ahead and make sure you have enough food and carriers to get your birds to safety. Jennings also noted the importance of having enough vehicles to transport your birds. "We had nine trucks hauling birds out of here," Jennings said.

In a natural disaster such as this, wind can change the situation in minutes and put your home in fire danger. Jennings said to have a plan for feeding and watering your birds during and after evacuating your home. Not only should you plan on having enough supplies to care for your birds when you are away from home, but you should consider supplies for after the fire is out.

"One minute you think you're OK. We thought that we'd be back here (at home) shortly. It turns out the fire wasn't as big of a threat as we thought. But it still could be," Jennings said. "Get out and wait it out, and hope that your home is there when it's over. You have to be thinking about what you're going to do when it's over (incase your home is no longer there.)"