Forest Fires

- **Protection Guidelines** (active tab)

Protection Guidelines

*Fire at Lavreotiki on 16 July 1985*

**GETTING PREPARED**

If you are in the countryside

- Don’t burn litter or dry vegetation and small branches (twigs) during the summer.
- Don’t use open-air barbecues in forests or places close to dry vegetation during the summer.
- Avoid open-air activities that may cause fire (i.e. torch weld, wheel or other instruments that create sparks).
- Never throw lit cigarettes in open-air places.
- Don’t leave rubbish in the forest. There is danger of ignition.
- Respect the signs prohibiting access in periods of high risk.

If your home lies inside or near a forest or a forest area

- Create a fire break around your home by clearing dry leaves and vegetation, pine-needles, branches etc at least within a 10 meter radius of your house.
- Prune the trees up to the height of 3 meters, according to their age and condition.
- Remove all dry branches from the trees and the bushes.
- Prune the trees within a 5 meter radius from your home so that their branches don’t lean on the walls, on the roof or the balconies.
- Space out around the building the woody vegetation so that the branches of one tree are at least 3 meters apart from another. For greater protection, remove the woody and bushy vegetation around the building at a distance of at least 10 meters, provided that the clearing of natural vegetation for the necessary protection of buildings is not contrary to the forest legislation provisions.
- Don’t install plastic drain spouts or pipes to the walls of the building.
- Protect the windows and the glass doors by installing shutters from non-flammable materials.
- Cover the chimneys and the ventilation pipes with non-flammable material so that the sparks will not penetrate the interior of the building.
- Don’t store flammable objects close to the house.
- Keep the fire-wood in closed and protected places.
- Don’t build uncovered fuel tanks close to the house.
- Be equipped with the appropriate fire-extinguishers and take care of their maintenance.
- Be equipped with a water hose with length proportional to the area you want to protect.
- Be equipped with a water tank, a simple non-electric powered pump and a water hose.

If you notice fire
- Call IMMEDIATELY the Fire Service call center (199) and give clear information about:
  - the location and the exact point where you are,
  - the location, the exact point and the direction of fire,
  - the kind of vegetation that is burning.

GETTING PREPARED
If fire is approaching your home

- Stay calm.
- Remove all the flammable materials from around the building to closed and protected places.
- Close all the passages (chimneys, windows, doors etc) to prevent sparks entering the building.
- Shut off all the gas and liquid-fuel supplies inside and outside the building.
- Close the awnings on the balconies and the windows.
- Open the gate of the garden to facilitate the fire fighting vehicle access.
- Put a ladder outside the building so that someone is able to climb immediately on the roof. The ladder should be placed at the opposite side of the fire direction.
- Connect the water hoses with the taps outside the building and spread them so that the perimeter of the building is covered.
- If visibility is reduced, switch on the interior and exterior lights of the building in order to be more visible through smoke.

If fire has reached your home

- Do not abandon the building unless your escape is completely secured.
- Do not take shelter in a car. The possibility of survival in a building constructed by non flammable materials is greater than that inside a vehicle close to smoke and fire.
- If you stay indoors:
  - Close firmly all the doors and windows.
  - Block up all the cracks with wet clothes, in order to prevent smoke penetration.
  - Remove the curtains from the windows.
  - Move any furniture into the center of the residence away from windows and exterior doors.
  - Close all interior doors to slow down the fire spreading in the building.
  - Fill up the bathtub, wash-basins and buckets so that you have spare water.
  - Gather all together in one room.
  - Keep a torch and spare batteries at hand in case of electric power failure.
- If your home is made of wood, seek shelter in a fire-resistant building.
- If organised relocation is ordered, strictly follow the instructions and the routes suggested by the Authorities.

After the fire is extinguished

- Get out of the house and at once put out the remaining hot spots.
Inspect for at least 48 hours, at regular intervals, the perimeter and the exterior of the building for possible re-ignitions.