If you are approached by the media regarding a reported wildfire-related fatality in your jurisdiction, the following talking points may be used. Start with message A1 or A2, then follow the instructions within that box.

**A1**
We were notified by the medical examiner/coroner about a fatality possibly due to a wildfire. Our condolences go out to the family.

Go to message B1 or B2.

**A2**
We have not been notified of any recent fatalities linked to wildfires.

Go to message C.

**B1**
Out of respect for the family, we are unable to share any details.

Go to message C.

**B2**
On [insert date], a [gender] [“____ years old” or “between the ages of ___ and ___”] died during the storm.

Go to message C.

**C**
Burns can be rapid and fatal. People should remain safe by:

a. Listening to local authorities and evacuating when ordered.

b. Burning debris safely outside by limiting your burn pile to a six foot by six foot area.

c. Preparing homes and landscapes using fire prevention techniques.

For more information, visit [insert relevant website].
MESSAGE MAPS ABOUT WILDFIRE-RELATED SAFETY

Message mapping is one of the most important risk communication tools that public health agencies can employ. The goal of a message map is to convey important information in a concise and easy-to-understand fashion.

General Guidelines for Completing a Message Map

- Stick to three key messages or one key message with three parts for each underlying concern or specific question.
- Keep key messages brief. The reader should ideally spend less than 10 seconds per line.
- Develop messages that are easily understood by the target audience. (For communications with the general public, use a 6th to 8th grade readability level.)
- Place messages within a message set. The most important messages should occupy the first and last positions.
- Develop key messages that cite credible third parties.
- Use graphics and other visual aids to enhance key messages.
- Keep a positive tone. Messages should be solution-oriented and constructive. Try to balance negative messages with positive ones.
- Avoid unnecessary use of “absolute” words such as no, not, never, nothing, and none.5
The following is a message map that could be used when addressing the general public regarding wildfire-related safety.

**Main Message**

“Since [March/April/May/June/July, etc.], there has/have been ___ wildfire fatalities in Wisconsin. To help you and your loved ones stay safe during this wildfire season...”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Messages</th>
<th>Supporting Information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Message 1** Prepare your home and landscaping with fire prevention in mind. | **Supporting Info 1** Fuel breaks between landscaping and home can prevent the spread of wildfires.  
**Supporting Info 2** Using fire-resistant materials may help your home survive a wildfire.  
**Supporting Info 3** Weekend activities, like pruning trees and mowing the lawn, can aid in wildfire prevention. |
| **Message 2** Be careful while burning debris and follow the directions of the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. | **Supporting Info 1** Call 1-888-WIS-Burn to check on daily burning restrictions.  
**Supporting Info 2** Never burn on a windy day, as embers and sparks may ignite surrounding vegetation and start a wildfire.  
**Supporting Info 3** Ninety percent of wildfires are caused by human activity. |
| **Message 3** Prepare for evacuation and leave when local authorities advice. | **Supporting Info 1** Burns from wildfires can be life threatening.  
**Supporting Info 2** Preparedness efforts, including an emergency plan and kit, will save you time during an emergency.  
**Supporting Info 3** Wildfire conditions can change rapidly. Leaving early can save lives. |