Geography
Steep hillsides and canyons accelerate the spread of fires and make firefighting efforts more difficult. Canyons act as chimneys, trapping heat and intensifying combustion.

Weather
California’s mild Mediterranean climate with wet winters and hot, dry summers provides dry fuel in the summer and fall. Diablo winds that conduct hot, dry air from the Central Valley to the coast add to firestorm conditions.

Geology
A major earthquake on the Hayward fault could lead to another firestorm. The San Francisco earthquake of 1906, the Loma Prieta earthquake of 1989 and the 1995 earthquake in Kobe, Japan, led to major fires caused by broken gas mains and loss of water lines.

Lack of Prevention
Highly flammable vegetation is allowed to proliferate on private and public property. Many homes have shake roofs and wooden decks, which cause a fire to spread rapidly.

How likely is it that we will experience a big earthquake by the year 2043?
72% odds (10/15) for one or more magnitude 6.7 or greater earthquakes from 2014 to 2043. This result incorporates 9% odds of quakes not on shown faults.

SOURCE: U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY 1/2016