

FACT SHEET

California Wildfires Household Hazardous Waste and Consolidated Debris Removal Programs

Mission: To expedite recovery, state and federal partners will coordinate closely with affected jurisdictions to remove fire debris from single-family residential lots and public facilities.

Phase I. Household Hazardous Waste Operations by County and Program

Phase II. Debris and Ash Removal Operations by County and Program

Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is the Consolidated Debris Removal Program?

- A. The Consolidated Debris Removal Program has two phases: removal of household hazardous waste and removal of other fire-related debris.

In **Phase I**, county, state and federal agencies have organized teams of experts from the California State Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) to inspect your property and remove any household hazardous waste that may pose a threat to human health, animals, and the environment such as batteries, asbestos siding, and paints. **Phase I** is automatic and includes both residential and may include commercial properties that have been destroyed by the fires.

In **Phase II**, Cal OES and local officials are coordinating with the CalRecycle to execute contracts and conduct fire-related debris removal from your property if you have elected to participate in the program by signing a Right of Entry Form (ROE).

2. What do I need to do?

- A. **Phase I:** Household hazardous waste: Operations are being planned and should begin soon.
Phase II: Debris and ash removal: Contact county officials to get a Right-of-Entry (ROE) which grants government contractors access to your property. Check your county's website for information on how to obtain the form. It will be posted when ready.

3. My house was destroyed in the fire. Can I go back onto my property to see if I can find any valuables or mementos?

- A. **Safe sifting through your property will NOT jeopardize your claims for disaster assistance.** Property owners who desire to search debris for possible salvageable items should do so with caution and with proper protective gear: eye protection, masks, gloves, long-sleeved shirts, and long pants. Residents should minimize contact with fire debris, which may contain materials that can be hazardous to your health. For more information visit: <https://calepa.ca.gov/disaster/fire/>
<https://www.cdc.gov/disasters/wildfires/index.html>
<https://calepa.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/sites/34/2016/10/Disaster-Documents-FireAsh.pdf>

4. When will the debris removal begin?

- A. Crews will begin removal of hazardous household waste. Removal of fire debris, other than hazardous household waste is scheduled to begin soon.

5. Who will pay for the debris removal?

- A. All initial costs will be paid by state and federal agencies. However, if property owners have insurance that specifically covers debris removal owners must inform local officials, and they may be required to remit that portion of the insurance proceeds that are specifically reserved for debris.

- 6. Once the household hazardous waste is removed by US EPA or DTSC, can property owners hire their own contractors to remove the remaining debris?**
- A. Yes. If you decide to remove fire-related debris from your property, you must obtain all the necessary permits and environmental clearances from your local government.
- 7. Can residents be present during the cleanup of their personal property**
- A. The safety of the general public and workers is a priority during debris operations. To prevent safety hazards, the public is encouraged to stay away from areas where debris removal operations are underway. Exclusion zones will be established surrounding the current work area to ensure safety of the public.
- 8. How will I know if household hazardous waste has been removed from my property?**
- A. Debris removal teams will mark the property indicating that household hazardous waste has been removed.
- 9. Is the debris-removal program only for houses that are completely destroyed?**
- A. This debris removal program is for fire-damaged or destroyed houses, as directed by local government. If you are unsure if your house qualifies for the debris- removal program, submit a Right-of-Entry form to your local government for assessment.
- 10. What is considered household hazardous waste?**
- A. Household hazardous waste is waste from houses that poses a threat to public health, animals, or environmental. Hazardous waste includes chemicals that are ignitable, toxic, corrosive and reactive. Examples include pool chemicals, car batteries, antifreeze, used oil filters, solvents, fertilizers, pesticides, propane tanks, disinfectants, aerosols, paint, bleach, and ammunition.
- 11. Are burned electronics and appliances (white goods) included in the household hazardous waste cleanup?**
- A. Teams handling hazardous waste will not remove appliances or electronic wastes, such as TV and computer monitors, computers processing units or cell phones. These materials will be removed as part of the overall debris removal process by a CalRecycle contractor.
- 12. Why not just have the contractors remove household hazardous waste as part of the general clean up?**
- A. Household hazardous waste must be removed without delay to protect the public health and safety. Additionally, hazardous waste could have significant long-term environmental impacts and should not be combined with the waste from the general cleanup that is going to the landfill.
- Removal of hazardous waste from the fire debris prevents these environmental contaminants from polluting the environment, and protects the workers and the public from exposure during debris removal efforts.
- DTSC removal crews are specifically certified to handle household hazardous waste.
- 13. If I have homeowner's insurance, can I still participate in the debris removal program?**
- A. Yes. However, to avoid a duplication of benefits provided by the state or federal government, your insurance company may be required to provide payment from your policy that is designated for debris removal.