

WILDFIRE DEBRIS

Debris removal safety checklist

REMEMBER! Contact your insurance company to report the loss before you do any cleanup or removal on your property.

- Only return to your property when officials have deemed it safe. Fire damaged structures can be unstable and dangerous to enter.
- Use caution when disturbing building materials to prevent physical injury or other health effects. Be especially careful while walking on or standing in fire debris.
- Wear protective gear such as gloves, protective glasses, and masks when handling debris. Safety boots and hard hats are especially important, burned areas have many loose nails and unburned structures can be unstable.
- Complete any required or recommended testing.
- In the case that asbestos was found at the property, handle debris according to [best practices for treatment and removal](#).
- Be on the alert for leaking containers and reactive household chemicals. Hazardous materials and pressurized containers can be especially dangerous to handle after a fire. It is recommended to use a specialist to identify and remove these materials.
- Open burning of materials by individuals should be avoided, and may be illegal in your area.
- Remove standing water and wet materials as quickly as possible and dry out the building to avoid mold, bacteria, and insects.
- Never dispose of hazardous household products in the trash, sink, drain, or toilet.
- Cover debris loads during transport and use water to reduce dust and ash while moving and loading fire debris.
- Do not attempt to cleanup or dispose of lithium batteries (found in electric vehicles) as they can remain volatile for extended periods of time.
- Clean recyclable materials and metal with water prior to transport to reduce the spread of asbestos or other contaminants in the ash.
- Do not discharge water containing ash into the stormwater system or surface waters, as it can cause water quality issues.
- Scrape soil under the area where ash/debris was deposited to ensure all hazardous debris is removed from the site.