

MANAGEMENT OF WILDFIRE DEBRIS

To ensure safety to workers, the public, and the environment, certain protocols must be followed during a wildfire disaster when removing structural ash and debris left from the fire. The City and County of Ventura are offering **two ways** for property owners to manage the debris and ash from the wildfire disaster.

1. Owners Who Choose to Participate in the State Sponsored Consolidated Debris Removal Program.

Residential properties with destroyed structure(s) from the wildfires are being offered a clean-up and debris removal service conducted by specialized work crews, contracted and managed by federal and state waste specialists. Under limited circumstances, some commercial properties may be eligible as well. This program is being paid for with state and federal funds. To avoid duplication of benefits, if property owners have a specified amount for debris removal in their insurance policy, they will need to provide that specified amount to the City for reimbursement of some of the costs of the clean-up. However, a property owner may participate in the program even if the property is not insured. Owners **must sign up** for this program by completing a Right-of-Entry form, to allow access to their property to complete the debris removal work.

Additional City and County information, and the Right of Entry form is available here: <https://www.venturacountyrecovers.org/debris-removal/>

2. Owners Who Choose Not to Participate in the State Sponsored Consolidated Debris Removal Program.

Due to the public health emergency, property owners are required to cause their property to be cleaned up and all burn debris must be removed in a timely manner. If property owners choose not to participate in the Consolidated Debris Removal Program described above (or if properties are ineligible), they may do so at their own expense with work performed by qualified personnel as set forth below.

Property owners in the City will submit a City of Ventura Local Debris Removal Program Application (see attachment) and work plan to the City for approval at least two weeks prior to commencing debris removal. After implementation of the approved work plan, the owner must submit a certification showing that all work has been completed as specified. The work must be completed pursuant to standards set forth by the City and State. These standards are established to ensure protection of public health and are the same standards applicable to the Consolidated Debris Removal Program. Documentation of adequate clean-up and proper disposal will be required. It is strongly encouraged that property owners review all requirements thoroughly before planning or pursuing their own debris removal. Property owners will not be allowed to build on their property until there is a certification of completion of the property cleanup and removal of all hazardous waste has been completed in accordance with applicable standards approved by the City.

A summary of the protocols and requirements is below:

Clean Up Operations	Clean Up Protocols
Site Documentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Measure and record foundation and clean-up area. • Notify appropriate entities of clean-up, including local utilities, Underground Service Alert (USA), and air quality districts.
Work Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a work plan that provides for site testing and analysis, hazardous waste and asbestos removal, debris removal, erosion control, soil grading, and confirmation sampling.
Application Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Owner or contractor will submit a City of Ventura Local Debris Removal Program Application to Public Works together with the work plan at least two weeks prior to proposed start date. • Once application and work plan are approved work may proceed.
Site Testing and Analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The property owner will need to hire a certified asbestos consultant and soil consultant to test the site.
Air Monitoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fugitive Dust – Dust is a significant concern and there should be adequate dust control water applied to burn ash materials at all times, most importantly during contractor disturbance and loading to meet applicable standards.
Hazardous Waste and Asbestos Removal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All remaining hazardous waste and household hazardous waste must be identified and disposed by a certified hazardous materials contractor. • Asbestos assessment is required and, if identified, removed by a licensed asbestos abatement contractor. • Waste must be disposed of at an approved location from the list provided by Public Works.
Debris Removal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remove ash and debris, metals, and concrete from the site and dispose of properly. • Recycle metals and concrete if possible. • Waste must be disposed of at an approved location from the list provided by Public Works.
Soil Grading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remove 3 to 6 inches of soil from the impacted area after the burn ash and debris is removed to a level of visually clean.
Foundations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completely remove and dispose of foundation; or • Submit a letter from a licensed civil or structural engineer certifying the foundation is acceptable for rebuild. The letter shall state reasons for their decision.
Confirmation Sampling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A licensed soil consultant will collect soil samples from 0-3 inches for confirmation sampling and compare soil sample results against clean-up goals. The testing standards will be provided by Public Works and will be the same standards used for the public cleanup.
Appliance and Vehicle Recycling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appliances and vehicles must be handled properly to meet the requirements of metals recycling facilities.

3. Owners Who Choose Neither Option Above and Fail to Adequately Remove Debris from Their Property.

Due to the public health dangers to the community, owners who choose **not to participate** in the state/federal sponsored Consolidated Debris Removal Program and who **do not accomplish** an adequate clean-up through the Local Debris Removal Program, will have the wildfire debris inspected by the City, and be subject to the City taking remedial action that may include, but not be limited to, hazard removal and/or relocation, clean-up, site evaluation, soil testing, and/or chemical analysis. All City expenses incurred for such inspection and mitigation, including but not limited to, contract work, staff time, and administration, are subject to full cost recovery from the owner with a lien recorded on the property.

Confirmation Sampling

Confirmation sampling should be conducted by a licensed professional after fire-related debris has been removed from a property. Representative soil samples must be collected and analyzed to determine compliance with clean-up goals used by the state and federal government which will be available at the Public Works Counter. The total number of samples to be collected should be based on estimated square footage of ash footprint:

Estimated Square Footage of Ash Footprint (Decision Unit)	Number of 5-Point Aliquots
0-100 square feet	1
101-1,000 square feet	2
1,001-1,500 square feet	3
1,501-2,000 square feet	4
2,001-5,000 square feet	5
>5,000 square feet	Must consult with local Public Works officials

All confirmation samples should be collected from a depth of 0-3 inches using a dedicated 4-ounce plastic scoop and be placed in 8-ounce jars. Samples should be shipped to an approved laboratory for analysis for Title 22 Metals for antimony, arsenic, barium, beryllium, cadmium, chromium, cobalt, copper, lead, molybdenum, nickel, selenium, silver, thallium, vanadium, and zinc by EPA Method 6020, and mercury by EPA Method 7471A. CalRecycle is currently using EPA Method 6020 in the Consolidated Debris Removal Program.

This information is based upon statutes and regulations and is intended to provide a basic overview to help achieve compliance. This document does not replace or supersede relevant statutes and regulations and is not intended as legal advice.