

May 14, 2019  
DR-4407-CA FS 006  
Cal OES News Desk: (916) 800-3943  
FEMA News Desk: (916) 718-8540

# Fact Sheet

## California Wildfires Myth vs. Fact II

When disaster strikes, some will try to take advantage of the most vulnerable. To dispel some of the rumors circulating on the internet and social media about recovery efforts following the 2018 California Wildfires, FEMA is addressing the most common and reoccurring themes:

**MYTH:** FEMA trucks are being used for the debris removal mission in Butte County.

- **FACT:** FEMA is funding the debris removal mission in Butte County; Cal-Recycle is responsible for administering, overseeing and obtaining contracts for the removal of the debris.
- **FACT:** FEMA trucks are not being used to haul debris.

**MYTH:** Survivors are receiving calls from FEMA asking for money back.

- **FACT:** At no time will anyone from FEMA call a survivor and solicit or accept money.
- **FACT:** FEMA staff will **never** call and request someone verify personal information; **FEMA already has that information on file.**
- **FACT:** FEMA may ask a survivor to verify their **FEMA I.D.** (case number).
- **FACT:** FEMA may ask a survivor to verify the last four digits of their social security number but will never ask for all nine digits of an applicant's social security number.
- **FACT:** Do not give out personal or sensitive information to anyone who calls.
- **FACT:** If you suspect someone is not who they claim to be, call the local police or the FEMA Disaster Fraud Hotline: **866-720-5721.**

**MYTH:** Every operation is run by FEMA.

- **FACT:** FEMA works with many local and state government agencies, faith-based and non-profit organizations.
- **FACT:** FEMA may fund eligible missions and is responsible for reimbursement and technical support in those instances.
- **FACT:** The state may oversee a FEMA-funded mission, and in that scenario, the state may opt to obtain local and/or other governmental agency contracts.
- **FACT:** State and local contractors are not employed by FEMA.
- **FACT:**
  - FEMA staff do not build houses.
  - FEMA staff do not repair water lines.
  - FEMA staff do not drive debris trucks.
  - FEMA staff do not remove trees.

###

*All FEMA disaster assistance will be provided without discrimination on the grounds of race, color, sex (including sexual harassment), religion, national origin, age, disability, limited English proficiency, economic status, or retaliation. If you believe your civil rights are being violated, call 800-621-3362 or 800-462-7585(TTY/TDD).*

*FEMA's mission: Helping people before, during, and after disasters.*