



Alternative Fire Debris Removal Program Frequently Asked Questions

1. Does the fire debris and ash from burned structures have to be removed from my property?

Yes. The debris resulting from the North Complex West Zone Fire contains hazardous material in the ash of the burned structures and must be properly removed. Debris removal has two phases: removal of hazardous waste (Phase I) and removal of remaining hazardous materials and other fire-related debris and ash (Phase II).

In **Phase I**, local government, state and federal agencies have organized teams of experts from the California State Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (US EPA) to inspect your property and remove any hazardous waste that may pose a threat to human health, animals, and the environment such as batteries, herbicide, pesticide, propane tanks, paints, and e-waste. Phase I is automatic and includes residential properties destroyed by the fire. You do not have to take any action for Phase I of the cleanup process.

In Phase II, fire structural debris removal is required for properties where a structure of 120 square feet or more has been destroyed. In Phase II, property owners must choose one of two options for fire debris removal.

1. Property owners can participate in the government program by completing and signing a Right-of-Entry (ROE) Form, or
2. Property owners can hire properly licensed and certified contractors and consultants to complete cleanup in the Alternative Program. An Alternative Fire Debris Removal Program Application and Work Plan are required for participation in the Alternative Program.

Property owners may not perform Phase II cleanup themselves. *Property owners that meet the same qualifications listed for contractors or consultants may perform the work if they are qualified to do so as part of their work plan under the Alternative Program.*

2. Do I have to sign up to use the Alternative Program to cleanup fire debris if I will not be participating in the Government Program?

Yes. Property owners are required to complete an Alternative Fire Debris Removal Program Application and submit a Work Plan within the deadline to use the Alternative Program for debris removal. A Work Plan template is included with the Alternative Fire Debris Removal Program Application.

3. When can my contractor begin removing structural fire debris and ash from my property?

Your contractor may begin removing the fire debris and ash left by structures from your property in accordance with the Alternative Program after Phase I is complete on your property, and your Work Plan is approved by Butte County Public Health, Environmental Health Division. You will know Phase I is complete when a stake and laminated sign is placed in front of your property indicating Phase I is complete. You may also check the status of Phase I online at <https://buttecountyrecovers.org/ncf-phase-1/>

An important component of the Alternative Program is that your contractor MUST obtain a certificate to dispose of fire debris and ash at an approved landfill.

4. What type of contractor can perform the fire debris removal for the Alternative Program?

Property owners are required to choose a contractor with the proper California Contractors State License Board (CSLB) licensing and certifications to perform the removal of fire debris and ash, including hazardous material and asbestos.

The CSLB website has information to assist property owners with requirements:

<http://www.cslb.ca.gov/Resources/GuidesandPublications/DebrisRemovalFacts.pdf>

To verify a contractor's license, use the CSLB website:

<https://www2.cslb.ca.gov/OnlineServices/CheckLicense/CheckLicense.aspx>

It is recommended that property owners verify that contractors and consultants have adequate insurance and that the owner is included as an additional insured party under the contractor's insurance policy for the cleanup work.

5. Do I have to remove soil from my property?

There is a risk of potential soil contamination from the fire debris and ash. As a result, after the ash and debris are removed from the property to a level of visually clean, the contractor is required to remove an additional 3 to 6 inches of soil from the impacted area. Precautions need to be taken during transport of the material, as with the fire debris and ash, to prevent this material from blowing out of the vessel during transport. The precautions include covering the load with a tarp and reducing speed on unpaved roadways.

- After removing 3 to 6 inches of soil as part of the soil grading work, the contractor or consultant will need to collect soil samples from a depth of 0 to 3 inches for confirmation sampling. Results must be at or below cleanup goals as established.
- Confirmation sampling shall be conducted by a qualified environmental consultant, professional engineer, or professional geologist with experience in soil investigations, and is to be conducted after fire-related debris, ash and 3 to 6 inches of soil have been removed from the property.

6. Where do I take concrete and metal for disposal?

Your contractor should recycle metals and concrete if possible. The Neal Road Recycling and Waste Facility (NRRWF) can accept properly separated metal, concrete and ash. Concrete must not be over 2 feet in any dimension and not have exposed rebar over 5 inches. Concrete and metal must be generally free of ash and debris. Concrete and metal shall be wetted down on site and over the debris pile prior to transport. All loads must be tarped. Disposal fee schedule is currently under review and subject to change.

Metal

Auto chassis, mobile homes, and camping trailers are not accepted at NRRWF. Sections of fencing, posts, iron frames, etc. must be no longer than six feet. Chain link fencing should be rolled up (i.e. in 25' sections). Metal barrels must be dry with tops removed.

7. Where can my contractor dispose of the fire debris and ash?

A contractor may dispose of waste at a properly permitted landfill facility such as the Neal Road Recycling and Waste Facility (NRRWF). The contractor must present a certificate to dispose of fire debris and ash. Certificates for the Alternative Program are issued by the Butte County Public Health, Environmental Health Division.

8. The building on my property that burned is less than 120 square feet. What do I do with fire debris from these structures?

For properties that only have structures less than 120 sq. ft. debris, you are not required to remove fire debris and ash through Phase II Programs, Government Program or Alternative Program, however, you will need a certificate to dispose of fire-related debris. Please contact the Right of Entry (ROE) Center or Butte County Public Health Environmental Health Division to obtain a certificate to dispose of fire debris and ash to the Neal Road Recycling and Waste Facility. Disposal fees apply.