

## IMPORTANT NOTICES

### **BE AWARE AND VIGILANT FOR FLOODING AND DEBRIS FLOWS**

*We are seeing entirely new conditions and patterns of flooding and debris flow that we have not experienced previously. **Flooding could happen anywhere on the eastern and southern flanks of the 416 burn area during and after a rain event.*** The maps and resources provided herein provide good information, but given the 416 fire behavior, several years of drought conditions, new developments in the area and other factors, circumstances are highly variable resulting in new areas flooding and new debris paths occurring—different than have historically been experienced. These pictures and video were taken on July 25, 2018 and show flooding on private property that lies **neither within a designated flood plain or debris flow area.**

**Caution:** Do not drive or walk through floodwaters. Cars and people can be swept away. If you are trapped, call 911 and the operator will provide you with instructions and emergency personnel will respond to your location as soon as possible.

**All federal lands that burned are closed to the public.  
On private property, stay away of burned areas.  
Weakened trees can fall at any time.**

# Post-Fire Flood Preparedness & Action List for Homeowners

## 1 - Sign up for Code Red



Register your Cell Phone number with your Physical Address for emergency notifications through the La Plata County Code Red System.



**If you have moved or changed phone numbers since signing up you will need to re-register with your current information.**

[http://www.co.laplata.co.us/government/news/what\\_s\\_new/sign\\_up\\_for\\_emergency\\_notifications\\_with\\_code\\_red](http://www.co.laplata.co.us/government/news/what_s_new/sign_up_for_emergency_notifications_with_code_red)



## 2 - Purchase Flood Insurance

**Contact your insurance provider immediately to purchase Flood Insurance.**

- **The 30-day waiting period for flood insurance can be waived for areas affected by wildfires.**
- Wildfires may mean you need flood insurance
- Those in or near the burn area should consider purchasing flood insurance to cover any potential losses from a flood or mudslide.
- Homeowners' and renters' insurance policies do not cover flood damage.
- National Flood Insurance Program: Flood Insurance - how it works

## 3 Evacuate When Advised and Follow all Instructions



Follow all instructions provided by emergency personnel. They will provide you with an evacuation route and timeline. If you are notified of an evacuation, leave as early as possible or respond to the location provided by Code Red notification or the agency coordinating the evacuation on the ground for further instruction.

#### **La Plata County Search and Rescue:**

- In case of emergency, call 911.
- 416 response Community Hotline (970) 387-8500.  
Call between 7:00 am – 7:00 pm
- [website](#)



#### **American Red Cross La Plata County Chapter:**

- (970) 259-5383
- 1911 Main Ave Ste 240, Durango, CO 81301

## **4 Pre Evacuation Check List**

Create an evacuation plan and “go bag” using the San Juan Basin Public Health [Basic Evacuation Checklist](#).

## **5 Stay Informed**



### **Flood after fire: Assessment, Resources & Preparedness Tools**

The La Plata County webpage includes the most up-to-date & comprehensive information, maps and resources.

- ✓ Check the County webpage for updates and storm event warnings.
- ✓ Review maps on the County webpage to see if you are in an area threatened by debris flows.
- ✓ *Remember, these maps represent historic debris flow. Given the 416 Fire, new developments, drought conditions, and other variables, new paths of debris flow and flooding are occurring.*
- ✓ **Even if your home/property is not shown within the “historic debris flow areas represented on these maps,” you are strongly advised to:**

- **Purchase flood insurance,**
- **Sign up for Code Red:**
- **Be prepared to evacuate,**
- **Remove excess debris from your property before and after storm events;**
- **Clean and maintain culverts and ditches.**

## 6. Clear Waterways of Debris

It is important to start clearing as much debris as possible from ditches and within the channel of existing waterways. This can only safely be done prior to a rain event that could cause flash flooding.

After a storm event that has resulted in debris flow on your property, contact the NRCS to determine when it is safe to remove debris. Work with NRCS, local neighbors and ditch companies to clear debris and identify a safe location where debris can be moved/relocated.

**Animas Consolidated Ditch Company:** [www.animasconsolidatedditch.com](http://www.animasconsolidatedditch.com)

- 970-749-7983 or [meme@animasconsolidatedditch.com](mailto:meme@animasconsolidatedditch.com)

**Hermosa Ditch Company:**

- 970-385-5298

**NRCS:** See the next section for information

## 7. RESOURCES for Mitigating Flood Risk to Your Home and Developing Fire Mitigation Plan

### National Resource Conservation Service



**Contact:**

Jerry Archuleta  
 970-259-5466 -Office  
 970-317-9175 -Cell  
[jerry.archuleta@co.usda.gov](mailto:jerry.archuleta@co.usda.gov)

### **Private land disaster survey reports available through NRCS**

**Contact NRCS** for assistance with:

- assessing the damage to your home (i.e., disaster survey reports)
- to assess your risk
- learn about home protections such as use & placement of sandbags and other protective barriers, cleaning out culverts, and identifying yard debris that can become hazardous during a flood or debris flow event

- better understand the path of debris flow on your property & coordinating these actions with adjacent land owners, as to not cause additional problems.

**NRCS Resources**

- [NRCS Disaster Recovery Assistance National Webpage](#)
- [NRCS Technical Services](#) (Data, Maps, Analysis Tools)

**Pre-storm Event Preparation**

- ✓ Use Sandbags;
- ✓ move logs,
- ✓ rocks;
- ✓ clean & maintain culverts & ditches

**FireWise of Southwest**



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lo to sign up  
ch will  
should be

include personalized suggest  
taken to prevent damage for

<http://www.southwestcoloradofires.org/take-action/home-wildfire-risk-site-visit/>

**Colorado State Forest Service**



**Contact:**

Melissa Simmons  
970-247-5250

[MelissaR.Simmons@colostate.edu](mailto:MelissaR.Simmons@colostate.edu)

The Colorado State Forest Service (CSFS) – Durango Field Office has Forestry Information and Resources specific to private lands, including a list of contractors that can assist with debris removal and fire mitigation.

**CSFS Resources**

- [CSFS Webpage](#) - Make sure to review information under the header “*Post-Fire Rehabilitation Information*”
- [Contractor list](#)
- [Soil erosion control after a wildfire](#)
- [Replanting in Burn Areas: Tips for Safety and Success](#)
- [Insects and Diseases Associated with Forest Fires](#)

**Mountain Studies Institute**



As a community science and education organization, MSI is supporting the community to take a short and long term look at the impacts of wildfire on our communities and forests.

[MSI's 416 fire website](#) offers the following information:

- [Forest and Fire Ecology](#)
- [Monitoring post 416 fire](#)
- [Links to Resources](#)
- [Photos](#)

## 8. Re-entry

If you are evacuated or cannot get home because of flooding, immediately go to the evacuation center to receive instructions. In certain areas, you might need a rapid response tag to re-enter the area after a flood. To find current information on evacuation centers, check the La Plata County government social media pages or website.

**Facebook:** [https://www.facebook.com/LaPlataCounty/?ref=br\\_rs](https://www.facebook.com/LaPlataCounty/?ref=br_rs)

**Twitter:** [https://twitter.com/LaPlataCountyCO?ref\\_src=twsrc%5Egoogle%7Ctwcamp%5Eserp%7Ctwgr%5Eauthor](https://twitter.com/LaPlataCountyCO?ref_src=twsrc%5Egoogle%7Ctwcamp%5Eserp%7Ctwgr%5Eauthor)

**Website:** <http://co.laplata.co.us/>

## 9. Post Disaster Recovery

- Ensure that the structure is safe prior to doing work in the affected area. Walk carefully around the outside and check for loose power lines, gas leaks, and structural damage. If you have any doubts about safety, have your residence inspected by a qualified building inspector or structural engineer before entering.
- Do not enter your home if it was damaged by fire or flooding and the authorities have not declared it safe, if you smell gas, or have concerns about structural damage.
- Turn off the electrical power at the main source if there is standing water. Do not turn on power or use an electric tool or appliance while standing in water.
- When re-entering the building, use flashlights instead of lanterns or candles, in case there's a gas leak.
- Thoroughly clean and disinfect walls, hard-surfaced floor and other household surfaces to reduce risk of disease. Thoroughly disinfect surfaces that come in contact with food and children's play areas. Follow the safety instructions on the bleach you use to create a sanitizing solution.
- Discard contaminated food, wood cutting boards, cosmetics, stuffed animals, baby bottle nipples and pacifiers, and baby toys. •
- Do not try to save porous items that have become moldy. Discard carpet, carpet padding, rugs, upholstered furniture, mattresses, box springs,

papers and books if you see or smell mold. Replace fiberboard, insulation and disposable filters in your heating/cooling system.

- Hire a professional cleaning company to steam clean and disinfect salvageable furnishings.
- Contact your trash collection company about removing furniture, appliances and bulky furnishings, or take these items directly to a landfill.
- Use care when handling and transporting debris from buildings that are either partially damaged (when salvageable building materials remain) or completely destroyed (when only ash and debris remain).
- Remove vegetation debris and sediment transported by storm water into ditches, natural or manmade ponds or other low-lying areas to ensure they function properly. Handle and store vegetation debris in a manner that prevents its release into storm drains, streams, ditches and other surface waters.
- If the property has a propane tank system, turn off the valves if they are accessible and don't appear to be damaged. Tanks, brass and copper fittings and lines can be damaged in a destructive event and can be unsafe. If fire burned the tank, the pressure relief valve probably opened and released the contents. The property owner should contact the propane supplier immediately to have the system inspected, assess the damage and make repairs prior to reuse. Emergency response personnel should be contacted if there is evidence of severe damage or the propane tanks cannot be removed from debris.