



COUNTY OF VENTURA

800 So. Victoria Ave., Hall of Administration, Ventura, CA 93009
<http://www.ventura.org> <http://www.vcnewschannel.com>

THOMAS FIRE DEBRIS REMOVAL & HEALTH PRECAUTIONS UPDATE; JANUARY 2018

Cal Recycle will be removing ash and debris from the homes burned in the Thomas Fire beginning January 19, 2018 and extending into April, 2018.

Cal Recycle adheres to strict health standards during the removal process. These standards are designed to protect both the debris removal staff and the public.

Homes built before the mid-1970's may have lead from paint within their debris. Homes built before the mid-1980's may have asbestos within their debris. Depending upon the contents of personal property, other toxic substances may be present. These could include oil, ammunition and high concentrations of pesticides.

Initially, the Department of Toxic Substance Control (DTSC) inspects each of the affected properties. DTSC will remove any bulk asbestos found on the property.

Any remaining Toxic substances will be marked with **Pink/Red** paint. These areas should not be disturbed.

A secondary sweep of each property will occur removing any additional bulk asbestos located. Asbestos is heavy in nature and typically settles to the bottom of a debris pile.

A yellow sign will be posted on each property after the DTSC has cleared the location, allowing the work of Cal Recycle to commence.

For property owners who have completed the "Right of Entry" / ROE form allowing Cal Recycle to remove the burn waste from their properties, removal will begin near January 19th, 2018. Property owners will be notified of work at their location 24-48 hours prior to commencement of the debris removal.

For property owners NOT OPTING IN to the Cal Recycle program; guidelines and safety requirements for the removal of ash and debris will be issued by the County and City of Ventura. Residents opting out of the Cal Recycle program will be required to adhere to the same level of safety standards as Cal Recycle.

Cal Recycle has established a priority order for removal of debris. Taken into consideration for that order will be:

- Proximity to Schools
- Proximity to Hospitals
- Proximity to Private Day Care Centers
- Proximity to remaining homes
- Proximity to creeks, rivers and streams

Each property will have a 9-step sweep for removal. These steps include removal of ash, metal (including the remains of vehicles), debris, concrete and soil. Foundations will be removed as the soil under the foundation must be tested. Soil will then be tested to ensure that all toxic substances have been removed. The soil testing process will take 7-10 days. After the site is deemed to be clear, a green material or hydro-tack will be sprayed on the lot, this is used to hold down the soil, prevent erosion and dust.

Cal Recycle has a “Zero Dust Policy”. During the clearing process the health and safety of all is protected. Street sweepers will be running throughout the neighborhoods removing visible ash. Air monitors will be in place with daily air sampling being conducted. The results of the air sampling will be reviewed by the County of Ventura Environmental Health division. To prevent ash from becoming air-bound water tenders will be onsite, watering the ash through the removal process. Ash and debris will be placed into lined trucks. Once filled, the liners will be sealed to prevent spreading of ash during transportation. The ash and debris will then be disposed of in specific lined disposal sites, not with the usual household waste disposal.

At the conclusion of the debris removal, each property owner will receive a final report from Cal Recycle. Included in the report will be results of the soil testing which will demonstrate that the land is ready for rebuilding.

For those currently living in the burn areas, there is an unknown risk of exposure to toxins. Removal of ash from one’s own property should take place. If smoke or ash can be seen or smelled the wearing of an N-95 mask is suggested. Distribution points for N-95 masks can be found on VenturaCountyRecovers.org. Avoid outdoor exposure particularly on windy days until the ash and debris is removed. Place heating and cooling air circulation on recycle in homes and in vehicles to reduce exposure to smoke and ash.