

Helena Fire Debris Ops FAQ

The County of Trinity together with the State of California (CalOES) are offering a voluntary debris cleanup program through CalRecycle for property owners with burned structures due to the Helena fire. This fact sheet specifically addresses questions about debris cleanup for those residents impacted by the fire.

Residents can sign up for the program by filling out a Right of Entry (ROE) form, which can be found online (www.trinitycounty.org) and at the Debris Recovery Operations Center (information below). The cleanup program will not send crews to any property unless an ROE has been filled out and submitted.

Helena Debris Removal Operations Center (DROC)
1400 Main Street, Weaverville (next to Ace Hardware)
Hours: Monday – Friday from 8 AM to 5PM, Saturday 8 AM to 12PM

This cleanup program is funded by the State of California emergency fund; yet under state law the program is required to seek any funds designated in the owner's insurance policy for debris removal for properties cleaned (please see "Insurance FAQ" fact sheet for complete details). This program is a service offered to help alleviate hardship during this time of need and protect the community from human and environmental health risks. The purpose of the program is to leave your property clean and safe, ready to rebuild.

When can I rebuild? Who certifies that my lot is clean?

At the conclusion of the entire debris cleanup program, CalRecycle will provide each property owner with a certificate that verifies the lot is clean. When you receive this certificate, you can then show it to the County to receive a building permit. CalRecycle estimates these certificates can take up to three months to issue.

What if I want to clean up my lot independently?

All parcels with burn debris must be cleaned up and certified clean. The CalRecycle program is voluntary. Otherwise owners must clean up their property independently and according to County requirements. (See For those requirements).

The health and safety of the community is the number one concern. When you follow the County's cleanup standards, not only are you following the law, you are keeping your community safe. The County will take enforcement actions, including stop-work orders, against those who do not comply with the mandatory cleanup standards.

When will the cleanup crews be on my property?

Due to the high volume of program participants, we are unable to give property owners an exact date for their cleanup. However, you will receive a call from the Debris Removal Program between 24-48 hours before the removal takes place. (Refer to the "Who's on My Property?" fact sheet to learn more about the steps of the cleanup.) The teams are flexible to the needs of the community and are here to help. If you'd like the cleanup workers to save something from your property, just let them know.

What about the trees cut-down on my property from the initial response and/or utility companies?

Debris removal operations will not dispose of trees cut down by responders and utility crews. If necessary, those trees will be put aside to allow for the removal of the debris. They will not be removed from the site. Only those trees which compromise the safety of the debris removal crews will be cut down. If the property owner wants to keep the wood from those trees, please indicate this on the ROE in the Notes section. The trees will be cut into rounds and stacked on the property. If the property owner does not want the wood from the trees, it will be removed.

Tips from the Emergency Responders:

Check identification of those on your property. Certified cleanup crews are always prepared to show you their ID. Refer to the "Who's On My Property?" fact sheet for more information.

If you didn't sign a "Right of Entry" form with the County, no one from the program will go onto your property. If you see someone you don't know and they do not provide proper ID, contact local authorities.