



OREGON OFFICE OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Wildfire Recovery Update

September 29, 2021

The Oregon Office of Emergency Management, in coordination with state and federal partners, distributes this update of collated and verified information on Oregon's wildfire recovery efforts.

Protecting air quality during clean up

Local environmental health is a top priority of the Debris Management Task Force. Burned ash and debris may include hazardous contaminants, and those contaminants can get into the soil below. The task force is taking soil samples from each property and assessing them for contaminants, including arsenic, barium, cadmium, chromium, lead, mercury, selenium and silver. As long as the samples are below certain levels (an amount that causes no harm to human health), then the soil is considered safe and ready for rebuilding. Read more at [Debris Cleanup News](#).

In addition to conducting required asbestos testing, state contractors are visually monitoring and controlling dust to protect air quality during ash and debris cleanup work. If dust issues occur, crews will stop work and fix the issue before resuming to protect public health. Questions about dust from private contractors are not part of state cleanup work and can be directed to local city and county public health departments.

Prepare for flooding after wildfire

Thanks to the recent rains and cooler weather, the 2021 wildfire season is slowing down. While this is welcome news, it coincides with Oregon entering flood season. Oregonians need to be prepared for possible flood events, especially those near areas impacted by wildfires; these lands face an increased risk of flood, debris and mudflow risks for up to several years after the disaster because the scarred land cannot absorb rainfall. Similar to being prepared for any disaster, the best way to be flood ready is to know your flood risk, sign-up for weather alerts and purchase flood insurance. Homeowners insurance doesn't cover natural flood events, so now is the time to purchase flood insurance. Visit Floodsmart, the National Flood Insurance Program, and understand it takes 30 days for a new policy to take effect. Sign up with [OR-Alert](#) for flood warnings and alerts, and make a plan that includes an evacuation strategy for your family (and pets) or business. Visit [ready.gov](#) for more helpful tips.

BY THE NUMBERS

Sheltered Persons: **748**

Source: Oregon Department of Human Services

Individuals in Direct Housing: **561**

Source: FEMA Direct Temporary Housing Program

Hazardous Trees Removed: **67,505**

(65.8% of total hazard trees)

Source: Oregon Department of Transportation

Home Sites Cleared: **2,714**

(88.8% of total home sites)

Source: Oregon Department of Transportation

Individual Assistance Registrants:

25,251

Source: FEMA Direct Temporary Housing Program

IA Amount Approved: **\$37.4 million**

Source: Federal Emergency Management Agency

wildfire.oregon.gov

Media Inquiries
fire.info@state.or.us
503-378-7872

Construction update on the Gateway Transitional Housing Project

Construction crews are working hard laying the foundation for the Gateway Transitional Housing Project, which will provide stable housing for 53 families with kids in the Phoenix-Talent School District. Check out [this video](#) of the construction progress being made. Travel trailers will be arriving in the coming weeks, with an anticipated grand opening later this fall. Oregon Housing & Community Services invested \$1.7 million in grants and a low-interest loan to the Talent Urban Renewal Agency to support the project, which was also backed by a separate grant from the People's Bank of Commerce Foundation. The Gateway site — the first in Talent to house wildfire survivors — is targeted at survivors who might not be eligible for FEMA support.

Disaster preparedness tips when living in manufactured homes/RV parks

For individuals and families living in a manufactured home or RV park, extra disaster protections are required. Be better prepared for disasters:

- **Gather important documents**
 - A document that confirms your residency (rental agreement/receipt for rent/letter from landlord)
 - The title to your home ([Oregon Manufactured Home Ownership document system](#))
 - Your insurance policy
- **Understand the [Oregon Residential Landlord and Tenant Act](#)**
- **Talk to your neighbors about how to be prepared as a community**

2020 wildfire survivors given opportunity to purchase their temporary housing unit

At the request of the state, FEMA activated the Sales and Donations Program providing 2020 wildfire survivors the opportunity to purchase their currently occupied Transportable Temporary Housing Units (TTHU) at adjusted fair market value. Participation in this program is voluntary and an occupant's decision not to participate does not impact their eligibility in the direct housing program during the period of assistance.

Residents will receive information about the sales program, including a form to submit back to FEMA expressing interest. Once their response is received, a FEMA representative will contact them to begin the process. The home purchase program provides housing stability for survivors and it removes a barrier to recovery by giving them an affordable solution in a tight housing market.

Santiam State Forest re-opens

Most of the Santiam State Forest south of Highway 22 will re-open Oct. 1, along with non-motorized access to the Stout Creek block north of the highway. This includes re-opening the Rock Creek area, which was not damaged by fire (the Rock Creek Campground remains closed for the season).

Additionally, the Santiam Horse Camp and associated trails are still closed as recovery efforts continue after 2020's fires. The Stout Creek area north of Highway 22 was affected by fire and is open to non-motorized access only. Maps, closure areas, and anticipated re-opening timelines for popular areas are posted to the [Santiam State Forest recovery site](#).

This publication is released bi-weekly on Wednesdays. Follow wildfire.oregon.gov or visit our [Twitter](#) or [Facebook](#) pages for additional updates.

This publication is available in Spanish, Russian and Vietnamese on the [Oregon Wildfire Recovery website](#). It is also available in other languages, large print, braille or a format you prefer. For assistance, call 971-719-1183 or email language@oem.state.or.us. We accept all relay calls, or you can dial 711.

