

## SAFETY TIPS FOR RE-ENTERING A BURNED AREA:

- Avoid damaged or fallen power lines.
- Check for gas leaks starting at the water heater. If you smell gas, get everyone out of the house, turn off the main gas valve, open windows and call your local utility.
- Be careful around burned trees that may be weakened by fire.
- Watch for ash pits (holes full of hot ashes) because they can cause serious burns.
- If electricity is off, before turning it on, **make sure all appliances are turned off**. Once you are sure all appliances are turned off, if there is no fire damage to your building and if the meter does not have any visible damage, you may turn on the main circuit breaker.
- Use a flashlight. **DO NOT** light matches or turn on electrical switches if you suspect gas leaks or electrical damage.
- Wear a face mask before sifting through debris. Spray ash and debris with a fine mist of water to protect from breathing in harmful dust or ash.

## IF YOU FIND ANY OF THESE CONDITIONS:

### FIRE & OTHER EMERGENCIES:

- Stay away. Report condition to a local fire or law enforcement official in the area and call 911.

### DAMAGED UTILITIES:

- Report electrical or gas problems to your local utility.
- If sewage is visible, limit access to the area (especially by children and pets). Contact your local health department for assistance.
- If your water system lost pressure or was disconnected, make sure it is safe to drink. Turn on the water. If you hear air escaping from the faucet, the water should be tested to make sure it is safe.

### RESOURCES FOR MORE INFORMATION:

[www.cdc.gov/disasters/wildfires](http://www.cdc.gov/disasters/wildfires)

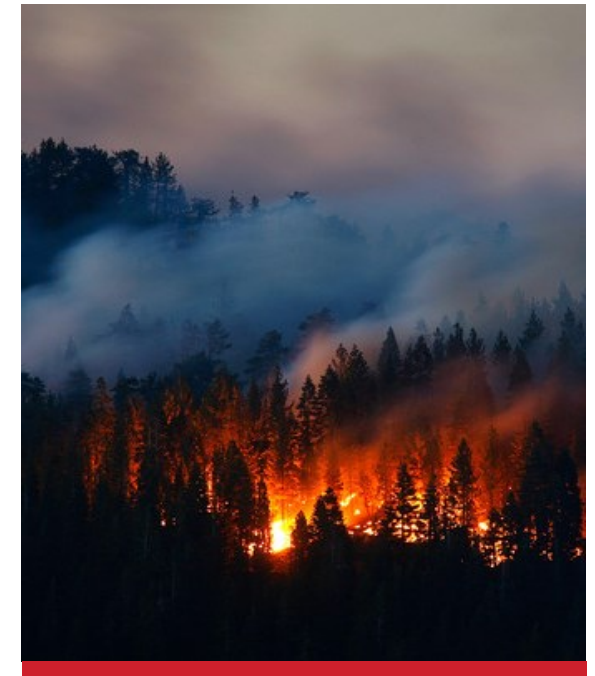
[www.ready.gov/wildfires](http://www.ready.gov/wildfires)

or

[www.cdc.gov/disasters/wildfires/cleanupworkers.html](http://www.cdc.gov/disasters/wildfires/cleanupworkers.html)



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# RETURNING HOME AFTER A WILDFIRE

Follow these precautions to prevent illness or injury after a wildfire.



## HEALTH EFFECTS OF ASH:

- Fire ash may be irritating to the skin, nose or throat and may cause coughing or nose bleeds.
- **AVOID** direct contact with ash by wearing gloves, long-sleeved shirts and long pants.
- If you get ash on your skin, in your eyes or in your mouth, wash it off as soon as you can.

## AT YOUR PROPERTY, TAKE STEPS TO PROTECT YOURSELF:

- If contact with ash cannot be avoided, use a well-fitted N95 mask for more protection. N95 masks can be purchased from most hardware stores.
- Treating minor cuts: clean minor cuts with soap and clean water before wrapping in clean bandage.
- Treating minor burns (affecting the top layer of skin): hold the burned area under cool, clean water until pain subsides. Then cover with a clean cloth or bandage. **DO NOT** apply butter or ointments.

## PROTECTING CHILDREN:

- Children should not be near areas where cleanup is in progress.
- DO NOT** allow children to play in ash.
- Wash and clean **ALL** children's toys before using.

## PROTECTING SENSITIVE PEOPLE:

- People with asthma or other lung diseases, pregnant women and older people should be especially careful because they are vulnerable to health effects from ash.
- If you have lung or heart problems, consult your physician before using a mask during cleanup.

## PROTECTING PETS:

- Do not allow pets near areas where ash is present.
- Clean ash off house pets if they have been in contaminated areas.

## FOOD & WATER SAFETY:

- Throw away food that has an unusual odor, color or texture.
- Throw away perishable foods in your refrigerator when the power has been off for 4 hours or more.
- Wash any home-grown fruits and vegetables from trees or gardens before eating.
- Find out if local tap water is safe to consume. Local authorities may issue advisories on safe water.



## USE CAUTION WHEN INSPECTING OR CLEANING YOUR HOME:

- Avoid getting ash into the air as much as possible. Do not use leaf blowers or other tools that will push ash into the air.
- Gently sweep indoor and outdoor hard surfaces followed by wet mopping.
- Recheck for smoke and sparks throughout the home, including the attic, for several hours.
- Extinguish any sparks or burning embers that could re-ignite.
- If you have a propane tank system, contact a propane supplier. Turn off valves on the system and leave them closed until the supplier inspects your stem.
- If you have a heating oil system, contact a heating oil supplier for an inspection of your system before using.
- NEVER** use generators, space heaters or any gas or kerosene appliances in enclosed spaces as this may result in carbon monoxide poisoning.
- Household hazardous materials like pesticides, solvents, automotive fluids and other chemicals should be properly disposed of to protect people and the environment.