

Read the latest news about [OREGON WILDFIRE DEBRIS CLEANUP](#)

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Wildfire Debris Cleanup Newsletter February 19, 2021

This monthly newsletter provides the latest information about Oregon's wildfire cleanup effort and what's underway to remove debris and hazard trees following the 2020 Labor Day wildfires.



Removing hazard trees keeps Oregon safe and moving, allows for replanting

The devastating wildfires that swept through Oregon in 2020 left an estimated 290,000 hazard trees behind and, as revealed by the latest winter storms, swift action is needed to mitigate the safety risk these trees pose near Oregon roadways and communities. In addition to removing property debris from lots throughout Oregon, the Debris Management Task Force is removing hazard trees to ensure the safety and mobility of travelers, communities, and recovery crews.

In harder hit areas such as the Santiam and McKenzie River corridors, people will notice a stark difference in the post-wildfire landscape and we've appreciated speaking with communities about what this will look like in recent weeks. As Oregonians, we all have an emotional connection to the natural beauty of our state, and the removal of hundreds of thousands of trees - while necessary - is a painful sight.

This necessary step, however, will clear areas to allow for replanting and rebuilding and is a difficult but crucial part of the recovery process. You'll likely see crews marking, cutting down, and clearing trees, branches and debris. You'll also see an increase in stacked logs and staging areas along the road with increased activity of crews and machinery. In active work areas, travelers are advised to stay alert near crews and follow traffic directions carefully. Expect traffic delays in travel time on weekdays and Saturdays, specifically during daylight hours. Traffic control will be provided by flaggers or a portable traffic signal. None of this is easy, but we're all in it together. Thank you for your partnership as we all work to recover and rebuild.



Helping house fire-impacted Oregonians, progress to remove debris continues in southern Oregon

The Almeda Fire devastated areas of Jackson County in southern Oregon and left more than 2,000 homes and properties burned. Hearing the call for assistance, the Debris Management Task Force quickly jumped at the opportunity to help make a future site for short-term housing happen for those who need it most. The first step of this work involves swiftly completing asbestos testing for the area to ensure environmental health and safety, followed by clearing debris from the 91 lots that make up the Talent Mobile Estates site. Through a partnership with FEMA's Direct Housing Mission, the site will then be redeveloped and equipped with temporary housing units to house survivors while they receive guidance and support for working towards a long-term housing strategy.

As of February 19, a total of nearly 450 lots are now in some form of activity in Jackson County as work wraps up at the Bear Lake Estates mobile home park in Phoenix and new work begins on 143 lots at the Mountain View Estates mobile home park in Talent. This also includes the 91 lots that will serve as a temporary housing site. [Air quality monitoring is underway](#) for those remaining in the area.

For weekly operations updates by each fire area, please visit the [Task Force news blog](#) for the latest information.

Free private well testing for wildfire-impacted properties

The Oregon Health Authority is providing free private well testing vouchers to property owners impacted by the 2020 Labor Day wildfires.

How it works:

1. If you're eligible for the program, apply online.
2. OHA will send you a voucher that covers the cost of a having a certified laboratory test a sample of your well water.
3. Follow OHA's guidance on how to assess your well, and collect a water sample.
4. Submit the sample and voucher to a laboratory for testing. The voucher will cover the cost of the lab test.
5. OHA will contact you with your test results and next steps.

More information, eligibility criteria and applications are [online](#). Application deadline is May 15 2021, while supplies last.

Note: You do not need to participate in the Step 2 cleanup program to qualify for OHA's well testing voucher.

Where to turn for the latest information

A global pandemic. Winter storms. Recovery and rebuilding. With so much underway, there's so much information to sort through. We hear you and have worked to put key resources in central, easy-to-find places for your easy tracking. For the latest information on hazard tree and debris removal, please track, save or bookmark these locations:

- Your local county webpages and information. County staff can help fill you in on the latest local news related to your community.
 - The [Debris/Hazard Tree removal webpage](#), where you can find helpful FAQs and other information.
 - Weekly operation updates and other news at the Debris Management Task Force news page: www.debriscleanupnews.com.
 - Track progress related to your property, if we've received your Right-of-Entry form, and other updates about what's [happening in your area through the interactive status map](#).
 - This e-newsletter. Please forward on to those in your community or networks who could benefit from the information.
 - Oregon [Office of Emergency Management social media](#) for the latest statewide updates related to all things wildfire recovery.
 - And if you still can't find what you're looking for, or need offline support, our hotline is available at 503-934-1700.
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Video spotlight

It takes a team. To make this work happen, ODOT oversees a thorough process for hiring contract crews and other disaster recovery experts. Hear from Katie Kroenlein-Hubler about the steps we take to work with local and diverse businesses.

In case you missed it

- [House Special Committee on Wildfire Recovery 02/17/2021](#)