



OREGON OFFICE OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

April 28, 2021

Wildfire Recovery Update

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.

Hazard tree removal saves lives

Oregonians have emotional connections to the state's natural resources, particularly our vast forestland. Following the devastating wildfires of 2020 and the destruction left in its wake, it's more important than ever to ensure that Oregon can rebuild and recover safely and before the next disaster strikes. These efforts are currently underway throughout the state, with a key first step including the evaluation and removal of thousands of dead or dying trees posing threats to communities, property, utilities and roadways.

A variety of accountability and quality control measures are in place to ensure this work is done right. Using a detailed set of criteria created by certified professionals and regulatory experts, each fire-damaged tree near state highways and future rebuilding sites is examined individually to determine if it is healthy enough to safely remain on the landscape. Throughout the process, safety is maintained as the number one priority: for crews doing this important work, home and landowners working to rebuild and traveling these corridors, and recreators seeking solace and adventure in the outdoors.

Once a tree is determined too damaged to survive, and therefore a threat to safety and infrastructure, it is marked for removal. The same tree is then examined by two additional independent teams – including arborists and monitoring firms – to verify the need for removal. Checks and balances are in place to help ensure accountability; work is separated among different teams and companies and \$2,000 penalty fines are levied for each unmarked tree cut down.

This immediate assessment happens by determining which trees will pose safety risks during a five-year timeframe, as required for FEMA reimbursement. This means that trees posing threats now – and those that will in the future as communities rebuild – are being identified, evaluated and eventually removed before accidents happen. Reducing risk and ensuring no more lives are lost to the 2020 wildfires is the priority.

Just a few months into the process to remove the dead or dying hazard trees lining Oregon highways and future home sites, we are seeing positive results. More than half of the total estimate hazard trees have been methodically evaluated and marked for future removal, over half of the participating home sites have been cleared so that families and communities can start to rebuild, and roadways continue to remain open for safe travels. The mission to deliver both safety and environmental stewardship, while preserving and restoring Oregon's forests for future generations, continues to drive this important work. Together, we are rebuilding Oregon communities to be safer and stronger than before.

BY THE NUMBERS

Sheltered persons: **1,206**

Source: Oregon Department of Human Services

Individuals in Direct Housing: **293**

Source: FEMA Direct Temporary Housing Program

Hazardous trees removed: **27,521**

Source: Oregon Department of Transportation

Home Sites Cleared: **1,511** (54.3% of total home sites)

Source: Oregon Department of Transportation

Individual Assistance Registrants: **25,251**

Source: FEMA Direct Temporary Housing Program

Amount Approved: \$36.6 million

Source: Federal Emergency Management Agency

wildfire.oregon.gov

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Drinking water returns to Detroit

Drinking water has returned to Detroit's unburned homes and businesses. The City of Detroit, working with HBH Engineering, an Oregon-based consulting firm, has a new temporary water treatment plant up and running, supplying filtered water to properties with undamaged service connections. Extensive monitoring showed no contamination, lifting usage restrictions for those properties.

This is an important milestone in helping the city recover from last summer's wildfires. As more repairs are completed, more homes and businesses can be brought online. Work is also progressing on a permanent water treatment facility to serve Detroit into the future.

The Do Not Drink advisory remains in place for homeowners whose service connections were burnt due to potential contamination. Those homeowners have been given special notifications on acceptable water uses. A water system update has been posted to the City's [website](#) and an updated contact report is available [here](#).

Adapting to the Era of Megafires

The [World Forestry Center](#) has organized a summit to bring experts and community members together to discuss how we can mitigate wildfire impacts.

Five episodes have been scheduled for Wednesday, April 14, 21, 28 and May 5 and 12 at 10 a.m. PST. The topics covered include

1. [Understanding megafires and the threat ahead](#)
2. [Creating fire-adapted communities](#)
3. Building resilient landscapes
4. Responding safely and effectively to wildfire
5. Building a movement and implementing solutions

If you missed the first few episodes, you can catch recordings on the [World Forestry Center website](#) or follow the links above. If you want to catch the rest of the episodes, reserve your free ticket [here](#).

NOTE: This publication is released every Wednesday.

Check 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: Oregon Wildfire Recovery - Media Resources](#). It is also available in large print, braille and additional formats. For assistance, call 971-719-1183 or email language@state.or.us. We accept all relay calls, or you can dial 711.

Help is available for 2020 wildfire survivors!



Assistance with Basic Needs

Recovery starts with meeting basic needs.

If you have been impacted by the 2020 Oregon wildfires, call 211 or email help@211info.org to speak with a specialist about resources in your community.

Visit the Oregon Department of Human Services at govstatus.egov.com/or-dhs-benefits for help with food, childcare, and medical coverage.

Find a food bank near you at oregonfoodbank.org

Lines for Life

Lines for Life, a FEMA-funded outreach program, connects individuals with compassionate assistance and resources such as housing/shelter support, food assistance, legal assistance, transportation, small business relief and more. These services are free, confidential and have no eligibility criteria.



To connect with Lines for Life call 971-420-1029 for English, 971-420-1018 for Spanish, or email FEMAhelp@linesforlife.org.



INFORMATION RESOURCES

[Active Recovery Dashboard](#)

[Oregon Wildfire News](#)

[Emergency Management Websites by County](#)

[Oregon Insurance Commission](#)