

February 17, 2021

Dear Landowner,

NOTIFICATION – As part of Oregon’s statewide wildfire recovery effort, work is underway in the McKenzie community in the Echo Mountain fire area to remove hazard trees adjacent to or near Highway 18.

This work is performed by state contract crews and the Oregon Debris Management Task Force (DMTF). The DMTF is working closely with Lincoln County to help the community recover through the removal and cleanup of remaining hazard trees in the area and is committed to making this a successful and safe operation. In order to access trees deemed a hazard by professional arborists, crews may also be evaluating trees in the state right-of-way (ROW) while also accessing various properties when necessary to mark or remove these hazard trees.

To help provide more information on the tree removal process, below is a list of frequently asked questions:

What’s the status of the property cleanup?

If you have chosen to participate in our cleanup program and have submitted a “Right of Entry” agreement, you can use your unique Access ID number on the interactive map to check the status of your property at wildfire.oregon.gov/cleanup

You may see crews performing Step 2 wildfire recovery work in your area or on your property. You can expect:

- ✓ Crews installing green address signs to track property details
- ✓ Crews assessing burned structures for asbestos and soil to ensure environmental compliance
- ✓ Professional and certified arborists evaluating, marking, and removing hazard trees identified as a threat to people or property
- ✓ Heavy equipment clearing debris from burned structure areas
- ✓ Crews monitoring dust levels and air quality during debris removal work

What is ash and debris cleanup?

Ash and debris removal is the culmination of cleanup for property owners. Before it can occur, any trees hazardous to crews must be removed. Hazard tree contractors are removing trees in some counties, in others the ash and debris contractors are doing all of the work needed. There may be testing for asbestos or other hazards, depending on the property.

Heavy equipment is used to remove the property destroyed by wildfire. The metal and concrete are separated out for recycling. All other materials are loaded into dump trucks for removal to the landfill. Each area of the state has contracts and agreements with local facilities and are following disposal rules and regulations. Debris includes structural debris, household items, burned cars, boats, trailers, and damaged concrete.

After all of the debris is gone, soil is tested to confirm that cleanup goals are met. Property owners then receive a letter from the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality with results, and the property is ready for rebuilding.

What is the process for assessing and removing hazard trees?

The DMTF, part of Oregon Governor Kate Brown's overall state recovery effort, is overseeing the monumental task of cleaning up ash and debris from the fire.

The DMTF has a team of arborists assessing trees and identifying hazard trees based on their current and expected health and distance to the road or debris cleanup location, and marking them with a blue dot and a barcode. The barcode is used to track the tree according to the Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA) requirements.

If I haven't signed a Right-of-Entry form, do hazard tree crews still have the right to enter my property?

Yes. The Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT), the lead agency overseeing the debris management effort, proactively manages and maintains the trees that grow on its ROW to protect and enhance public safety. Under Oregon Administrative Rule 734-035-0150, crews are permitted to enter all private properties near State highways to mark and remove hazard trees. Any trees on private property deemed a threat to State highways must be removed for public safety.

Who do I call with concerns or questions?

A DMTF hotline is available to answer as many questions and concerns as possible, knowing that there will be unique and individualized circumstances that require additional research or clarification.

Hotline: (503) 934-1700 Email: ODOT.Wildfire@odot.state.or.us

Where can I learn more about the overall cleanup process?

The Oregon Wildfire Recovery website has information about the overall process, including the removal of ash and debris: wildfire.oregon.gov/cleanup. On the site, you'll find helpful FAQs available in multiple languages, access to an interactive map showing progress over time, an online link to the Private Property Debris Removal Questionnaire, among other tools and information.

If you have not yet signed up for the DMTF monthly e-newsletter, we suggest that you do so. For more immediate and weekly latest news, visit our news blog: DebrisCleanUpNews.com.

Thank you for your continued partnership as we all work to help our community recover and rebuild.

Sincerely,

Debris Management Task Force and Lincoln County



wildfire.oregon.gov/cleanup



odot.wildfire@odot.state.or.us



Hotline 503-934-1700

Latest News Blog: DebrisCleanUpNews.com



OREGON

Debris Management Task Force

General Cleanup Frequently Asked Questions

Q Who is the Debris Management Task Force and what is the cleanup process?

A The Debris Management Task Force is comprised of staff from Oregon Department of Transportation, Office of Emergency Management, and Department of Environmental Quality. The task force is one part of the larger state response to help Oregon recover and rebuild from the 2020 Labor Day wildfires.

Our work is a two-step process. Step 1 involved removing hazardous waste left behind in burned areas. Step 2, happening now, involves clearing ash and debris from burned homes and businesses. We're also removing hazard trees that pose safety risks along roadways and in communities.

Participating in the cleanup process with the task force is voluntary but we highly recommend that we clean up on your behalf.

Q What will the hazardous waste and debris removal cost me?

A **Step 1:** Hazardous waste removal is provided at no cost to property owners.

Step 2: Property owners will pay no upfront cost and no government agency or contractor working for them will recoup any insurance money unless it is designated for debris or left over after you have rebuilt your home.

Q What if I want to take care of the cleanup myself?

A If you choose to do cleanup yourself, it will be at your own cost. Removal of hazardous waste and debris can be an expensive process.

Cleanup can also threaten your health. Asbestos can be present, and ash and debris can be harmful if handled improperly. You must follow DEQ and county specific guidelines for cleanup and disposal, or risk being fined.

Step 2 Frequently Asked Questions

Q What's included or eligible for Step 2 cleanup?

A Homes & mobile homes, businesses, structures, vehicles, trees and other property features are eligible for Step 2 cleanup. View the full list on wildfire.oregon.gov/cleanup. Note about vehicles: if you have a burned vehicle on your property, you should reach out to your insurance company and the

Oregon Department of Motor Vehicles to report the Vehicle Identification Number (VIN) before cleanup teams arrive. This notification is an important part of getting the vehicle removed from the property.

Step 2 Frequently Asked Questions

Q What's the timeline for Step 2, hazard tree and debris removal?

A Step 2 work began in December 2020, and it's estimated this work will take 6 to 18 months to complete for the entire state. This range is dependent on weather, property access limitations and the large area to be covered. The Wildfire Debris Removal Task Force will provide more clarity on timing as crews start to remove hazard trees and clear debris on a larger scale in February 2021.

Q What if I already started debris cleanup? Can I still opt in to the Step 2 debris cleanup?

A Yes. To opt in, you first must sign your county's All Wildfire Debris Right of Entry form to allow cleanup crews onto your property. Second, you must submit a Private Property Debris Removal Questionnaire, which will give us additional info about your property, allowing crews to work quickly and safely.

If you've used insurance money for debris cleanup that's OK. The state will take into account the work you've already completed before recouping insurance funds designated for debris.

Q What's happening to all the burned, damaged trees?

A Professional arborists have been out in burned areas assessing thousands of trees and marking ones deemed a threat to people or property as "hazard trees." Hazard trees are unsafe and must be cut down. You might have seen blue markings or barcode stickers on trees in your area; these markings designate those trees as hazards.

Q Will crews cut down hazard trees on private property?

A Trees will be evaluated by a professional arborist and crews will cut down hazard trees on private property if they pose a threat to cleanup crews or public areas, like roads or trails.

The state will make a good faith effort to contact owners about hazard trees before they cut them down. Felled trees will be cut into smaller log segments and left "as is" on the property if safe to do so.

Hazard trees on private property that don't pose an immediate threat to crews or public spaces will be left standing and are the responsibility of the property owner.

Q When will the Step 2 cleanup crews get to my property?

A It's still too early to tell when we'll be on specific properties. We need a few weeks to clear several properties and analyze how long those took us. Soon we'll have an online tool for property owners to look up their land and see when we predict we'll be there. Our goal is to be able to predict up to three weeks in advance. We'll notify owners when the tool is ready.

Note: winter weather may affect our predictions and progress.

Q What's after Step 2?

A After Step 2 cleanup is completed on your property, you'll be issued an official notice from the state. This ends the Right of Entry agreement, and you're free to begin the rebuilding process.

