



# COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ

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## PRESS RELEASE

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### DEBRIS REMOVAL PROHIBITED

Debris removal from fire damaged property is prohibited until property owners receive a hazard assessment and approval from environmental health authorities.

Property owners, tenants and members of the public should not attempt to remove, dig, sift or evaluate property debris. Fire sites are often toxic and include hazardous substances such as lead-acid and household batteries; compressed gas cylinders; bulk pesticides, fertilizers, and pool chemicals; paints, thinners, and aerosol cans; asbestos siding, pipe insulation, and tiles; e-waste and more.

Fire-damaged debris will not be accepted at any County waste facility and placement in residential or commercial trash collection bins will result in bins not being accepted by GreenWaste. Removal of hazardous waste must be completed by federal, state and local jurisdictions working under safe handling guidelines. Failure to follow these practices could jeopardize financial assistance and delay the rebuilding process.

“Fire debris can be toxic and needs special handling and disposal procedures,” Santa Cruz County Environmental Health Director Dr. Marilyn Underwood said. “It is critical that the public refrain from removing any fire-damaged debris from their property.”

Phase I hazardous debris removal will be completed at no cost to CZU Lightning Complex survivors with the assistance of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA), the California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA) and the Santa Cruz County Environmental Health Division (SCCEHD). All other debris removal must have an approved plan from the Environmental Health Division prior to removal. USEPA officials are working within the County, and the County will post information about progress on the Fire Recovery website at [www.santacruzcounty.us/firerecovery.aspx](http://www.santacruzcounty.us/firerecovery.aspx) once available.

Detailed information on debris removal, including an FAQ, is available at <http://scceh.com/Home/CZULightningComplexFire/DebrisRemoval.aspx>.