

**ORDER OF THE LOS ANGELES COUNTY HEALTH OFFICER**

**REVISED LOCAL HEALTH EMERGENCY ORDER PROHIBITING THE UNSAFE REMOVAL,  
TRANSPORT, AND DISPOSAL OF FIRE DEBRIS TO PROTECT COMMUNITY SAFETY**

**Original Issue Date: Wednesday, January 15, 2025**

**Revised Date: Monday, March 24, 2025**

**PLEASE READ THIS ORDER CAREFULLY.**

**WHEREAS**, on January 7, 2025, [Governor Newsom issued Executive Order N-2-25](#) that proclaimed a State of Emergency pursuant to the California Emergency Services Act within Los Angeles and Ventura Counties regarding the Palisades and other Fires and Windstorm conditions;

**WHEREAS**, on January 7, 2025, the Chair of the Board of Supervisors declared a State of Local Emergency pursuant to Chapter 2.68 of the Los Angeles County Code due to the conditions of disaster and extreme peril due the Windstorm and Critical Fire events experienced in wide areas of Los Angeles County;

**WHEREAS**, on January 10, 2025, the [Local Health Officer declared a local health emergency](#) due to the serious adverse health impacts to County residents due to the Windstorm and Critical Fire events;

**WHEREAS**, on January 14, 2025, the [County Board of Supervisors ratified both the proclamation of a local emergency and the local health emergency](#);

**WHEREAS**, on January 15, 2025, Governor Newsom issued Executive Order N-8-25 that authorized the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the United States Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) and any other individual or entity performing work at their direction, to provide mutual aid to the State of California and any affected areas, and to have the authority to enter private property in Los Angeles County to remove debris that may contain hazardous substances and to conduct any testing appropriate to ensure the hazards are mitigated;

**WHEREAS**, California Health and Safety Code Section 101040 authorizes the Local Health Officer to take any preventative measure that may be necessary to protect and preserve public health from any public health hazard during a declared State of Emergency and Local Emergency;

**WHEREAS**, California Health and Safety Code Section 101085 authorizes state agencies and political subdivisions to provide mutual aid to any area affected by a local health emergency;

**WHEREAS**, the potential for widespread toxic exposures and threats to public health and the environment exists in the aftermath of a major wildfire disaster, and debris and ash from residential and other structural fires contain hazardous substances that can result in adverse health impacts to the public;

**WHEREAS**, the combustion of building materials such as siding, roofing tiles, and insulation result in dangerous ash that may contain asbestos, heavy metals, and other hazardous substances, and household and business hazardous substances such as paint, gasoline, cleaning products, pesticides, compressed gas cylinders, and chemicals may have been stored in business locations, homes, garages, or sheds that may have burned or released in the fire, also producing hazardous substances;

**WHEREAS**, exposure to hazardous substances may lead to acute and chronic health effects and may cause long-term public health and environmental impacts; uncontrolled hazardous substances and debris pose significant threats to public health through inhalation of dust particles and contamination of drinking water supplies; and improper handling can expose workers to toxic materials, and improper transport and disposal of fire debris can spread hazardous substances throughout the community;

**WHEREAS**, the Health Officer of Los Angeles County finds that the Critical Fire and Windstorm events whose conditions have included an ongoing response to a number of destructive and wind-driven fires, which include, among others the Palisades, Eaton, Kenneth, Creek, Hurst, and Lidia Fires (Critical Fire Areas) that started on or about Tuesday, January 07, 2025, have created an imminent threat to public health in Los Angeles County in the form of contaminated fire debris from household hazardous waste and materials and structural debris resulting from the destruction of hundreds of structures;

**WHEREAS**, fire debris poses a substantial present or potential hazard to human health and the environment when improperly treated, stored, transported, or disposed, or otherwise managed;

**WHEREAS**, FEMA, the U.S. EPA, and/or the United States Army Corps of Engineers (U.S. ACOE) have established a voluntary Government-Run Debris Removal Program to ensure the safe removal, transport, and disposal of hazardous fire debris in a manner that protects public health and safety and complies with all federal, state, and local legal requirements;

**WHEREAS**, property owners that qualify but do not opt-in or participate in the established Government-Run Debris Removal Program must receive approval from the County of Los Angeles and a permit from the applicable local authority to proceed with fire debris removal in a manner that does not endanger the community and that complies with all federal, state, and local legal requirements;

**NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY ORDERED THAT:**

1. No removal of fire debris from private property containing one or more burned structures within the Palisades and Eaton burn areas may occur until a hazardous materials inspection and clearance has been conducted by the U.S. EPA. This is commonly known as Phase 1 of the wildfire debris removal and recovery operations and involves the survey, removal, and disposal of household hazardous materials from properties impacted by the fires. Properties that are deferred by the U.S. EPA, must comply with the requirements of Phase 2 of the wildfire debris removal and disposal process mentioned below.

The Palisades and Eaton Fire burn areas are defined as the Wildfire Perimeter Areas provided on the following Cal FIRE incident maps: <https://www.fire.ca.gov/incidents/2025/1/7/palisades-fire> and <https://www.fire.ca.gov/incidents/2025/1/7/eaton-fire>. The term “fire debris,” as used in this order, means ash or other burned or combusted debris resulting from the Palisades and Eaton fires that is intended to be discarded.

2. Upon the U.S. EPA’s completion of the Phase 1 inspection or deferment to Phase 2 for private properties within the Palisades and Eaton burn areas, the property owners who are eligible may opt-in to the Government-Run Debris Removal Program (Phase 2) for removal of the remaining fire debris on their property by completing and submitting a *Right of Entry (ROE)* form. Property owners of private property containing one or more burned structures within the Palisades and Eaton burn areas that do not opt-in to the Government-Run Debris Removal Program must complete and submit an *Opt-Out of Los Angeles County Local Debris Removal Program (Opt-Out)* application form and receive approval from the County and a permit from the applicable local authority to proceed with debris removal. More information, including the Right of Entry and Opt-Out Forms, are available on the Los Angeles County Recovers website at: <https://recovery.lacounty.gov>.

To reduce risk to the public and workers conducting fire debris removal, property owners who opt-out of the Government-Run Debris Removal Program must comply with the fire debris removal and disposal operational standards and protocols established by the State and County. These standards include, but are not limited to, CalOSHA Worker Safety and Health during Wildfire Clean-up requirements and use of appropriately licensed contractors with a Hazardous Substance Removal (HAZ) certification. Additional information for those property owners who opt-out and will manage the clean-up independently is on the <https://recovery.lacounty.gov/debris-removal/roe/>

3. Owners of properties within the Palisades and Eaton burn areas that DO NOT qualify for the Government-Run Debris Removal Program must use best management practices for fugitive dust control when conducting fire debris removal and disposal operations. Property owners or their contractors must control dust generated during the work to both prevent dust nuisances in the surrounding area and protect those involved in fire debris removal by following these dust control measures:
- a. General Dust Control Measures
    - i. Water or an approved dust palliative, or both, must be used at each site to prevent dust nuisance.
    - ii. Prior to removal, all areas of ash and debris to be removed must be pre-watered using a fine spray nozzle to prevent splashing.
  - b. Fire Debris Transportation
    - i. All fire debris must be transported to an approved landfill in a manner that prevents dust from escaping.
    - ii. All loads must be wetted and covered with a tarp, including concrete and metal debris.
    - iii. Ash and loose fire debris must be fully encapsulated with 10-mil plastic prior to loading and transport.
  - c. End-of-Day Debris Management
    - i. All fire debris materials not been removed or disposed of by the end of each workday must be consolidated, sufficiently wetted, and/or covered to prevent the offsite migration of dust or contaminants.
  - d. Watering Dry Soil Areas
    - i. All visibly dry, disturbed soil surface areas must be watered during work to minimize dust emissions.
  - e. Trackout Prevention and Cleanup
    - i. Trackout refers to dirt, dust, or debris left behind when vehicles or equipment drive from a site onto a public or private road.
    - ii. The property owner or contractor must prevent trackout from the site. If any does get out, it must be cleaned up right away, especially at the entrances and exits to the site.
    - iii. All visible trackout must be removed at the end of each workday.
    - iv. Cleanup of trackout must be done with adequate wetting before or during the cleanup by either first misting it and manually sweeping it up or using a rotary brush or broom to prevent dust from spreading.
    - v. The use of blower devices or dry rotary brushes/brooms for removing trackout on any public or private road is strictly prohibited.

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ORDER OF THE HEALTH OFFICER**



4. To evaluate potential risks from chemical or other contaminants that may be present in the environment, the County of Los Angeles Department of Public Health may collect representative soil and ash samples from public and private properties both in and within three miles outside of the Palisades and Eaton burn areas for testing. The results will be made public and help inform future health and safety recommendations.
5. This order applies within three miles of the Palisades and Eaton burn areas, in the incorporated and unincorporated areas of Los Angeles County, excepting the City of Pasadena.
6. All persons employing others for fire debris removal and disposal shall comply with CalOSHA Worker Health and Safety Standards.

**Copies.** The County shall promptly provide copies of this Order by posting it on the Los Angeles Department of Public Health’s website: <http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/>

**Issue Date.** This Order is issued on Monday, March 24, 2025, and will continue until it is revised, rescinded, superseded, or amended in writing by the County Health Officer.

**IT IS SO ORDERED:**

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Muntu Davis M.D., M.P.H.'.

**3/24/2025**

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**Muntu Davis, M.D., M.P.H.**  
County Health Officer,  
County of Los Angeles

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**Issue Date**