



## **Relief and Recovery Assistance Guide**

### **416 Fire, La Plata County**



Information provided in partnership with  
United Way of Southwest Colorado and Western Colorado 2-1-

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## **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this Relief and Recovery Guide is to connect Colorado residents affected by the **416 Fire, La Plata County** with disaster assistance and information. This Guide lists information on many programs and agencies. Updates and verification are continuously being made to this document. Updates are available at [211colorado.communityos.org](http://211colorado.communityos.org) .

This Guide is arranged in sections based on needs and the types of services provided. Where applicable, there are tables arranged to show resources available within the county and statewide. Phone numbers and specific information regarding service eligibility, hours, etc. may also be outlined.

**You are welcome to dial 2-1-1, for help in finding available disaster assistance services. Language translation services are available. Individuals with hearing and speech disabilities can call Relay Colorado at 7-1-1 (or 1-800-659-2656) to indirectly access Western Colorado 2-1-1. You can also visit [www.wc211.org](http://www.wc211.org) to review resources and search the database of services in your local community. Western Colorado 2-1-1 will help identify the best local resources to fit your individual needs after a disaster or for life's everyday situations.**

**Disclaimer:** Western Colorado 2-1-1 shall have no liability or responsibility of any kind to any user, other person or entity as a result of these guidelines. Western Colorado 2-1-1 is not authorized to give legal, insurance policy, health or contracting advice. The use of any or all guidance presented is solely at the discretion of the user.

## IMMEDIATE RESOURCES

SERVICE	HOURS AND OTHER INFORMATION
Emergency Notification System Sign Up	Sign up to receive <b>emergency notifications</b> including evacuation and pre-evacuation notices on your cell phone or via email: <a href="https://bit.ly/CodeRed_signup">bit.ly/CodeRed_signup</a>
Community Emergency Relief Fund(CERF)	People who have lost employment due to the fire can now apply for some bridge funding support. <b>Call (970) 259-1086</b> Online application is <a href="https://swcoda.org">swcoda.org</a>
416 Fire Community Information Line	<b>(970) 385-8700</b>

## HEALTH CONCERNS

### Mental Health during a Disaster

Crisis counselors may provide outreach and education services about coping with the emotional difficulties in the aftermath of emergencies.

Symptoms include anger, fatigue, loss of appetite, sleeplessness, nightmares, depression, inability to concentrate, hyperactivity and/or increased alcohol or drug use.

Stress may manifest in a different way for everyone and may appear weeks or months after a traumatic event. If you or someone you know is experiencing distress or feeling overwhelmed by painful emotions related to recent events, call Axis Health 970-247-5245, San Juan Basin Public Health 970-247-5702, or the Colorado toll-free Mental Health helpline: 1-800-201-5264 where experienced crisis counselors can be reached. A TDD line is available at 303-432-5049. Translation services are available.

### Wildfire Smoke and Your Health

San Juan Basin Public Health (SJBPH) in conjunction with Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) have placed air quality monitors in the area. Data from the monitors show the amount of all the microscopic particles in the air that can cause respiratory problems, especially for individuals with respiratory illnesses or heart disease, the elderly, and children. **DISCLAIMER:**When viewing data on the map view of PurpleAir.com, please note that the real-time concentration of fine particulates is displayed. While this information is useful, CDPHE and SJBPH advise using the 24-hour average of PM2.5 for health recommendations. The PM2.5 24-hour average is the official health standard set by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

- SJBPH Office Monitor - <https://tinyurl.com/ycjplf5>

- North Durango Monitor - <https://tinyurl.com/ybzk7frh>

or via our website at <http://sjbpublichealth.org/416-fire-updates/>

San Juan Basin Public Health advises that you consider limiting outdoor activity or remain indoors if smoke is thick or becomes thick in your neighborhood. ***This is especially true for those with heart disease, respiratory illnesses, the very young, and the elderly.*** Consider relocating temporarily if smoke is present indoors and is making you ill. ***If visibility is less than five miles, smoke has reached levels that are unhealthy.*** Call CO-HELP for more information related to air quality: 1-877-462-2911, Monday-Friday 9 a.m. to 10 p.m. and Saturday-Sunday 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. For additional air quality information and monitors visit: [colorado.gov/airquality/colo\\_advisory.aspx](http://colorado.gov/airquality/colo_advisory.aspx) or [airnow.gov/](http://airnow.gov/).

#### Other tips to protect yourself:

- Close windows and doors and stay inside. However, do not close up your home tightly if it makes it dangerously warm inside.
- Only if they are filtered, run the air conditioning, your evaporative cooler, or the fan feature on your home heating system (with the heat turned off). Keep the outdoor air intake closed and be sure the filter is clean. Filtered air typically has less smoke than the air outdoors. Running these appliances if they are not filtered can make indoor smoke worse.
- Use HEPA room air filtration units if you have them.

- Avoid smoking and/or secondhand smoke, vacuuming, candles, and other sources of additional air pollution.
- Do not use paper dust masks; these do not filter out the particles and gases in smoke.

As temperatures cool in the evening inversion conditions worsen and smoke in low lying areas may become thicker, especially if the outdoor air is still. It tends to be worst near dawn.

- Close bedroom windows at night.
- To prepare for nighttime smoke, consider airing out your home during the early or middle of the afternoon when smoke tends to be more diluted. Use your best judgment. If smoke is thick during the day, follow the tips above.

### **Will a face mask protect me from wildfire smoke?**

San Juan Basin Public Health recommends that the public seek advice from their Primary Care Physician (PCP) regarding if they should wear a mask in our smoky conditions. The PCP will best know the health of their patients and make appropriate recommendations based on that knowledge. Respirator masks labeled N95 or N100 provide some protection – they filter out fine particles but not hazardous gases (such as carbon monoxide, formaldehyde, and acrolein). This type of mask can be found at many hardware and home repair stores and pharmacies.

- Choose an N95 or N100 mask that has two straps that go around your head. Don't choose a one-strap paper dust mask or a surgical mask that hooks around your ears – these don't protect against the fine particles in smoke.
- Choose a size that fits over your nose and under your chin. It should seal tightly to your face. These masks don't come in sizes that fit young children.
- If your child is experiencing respiratory symptoms contact your pediatrician or go to the nearest emergency room.
- Don't use bandanas or towels (wet or dry) or tissue held over the mouth and nose. These may relieve dryness, but they won't protect your lungs from wildfire smoke.

Anyone with lung or heart disease who is chronically ill should check with their health care provider before using any mask. Using respirator masks can make it harder to breathe, which may make existing medical conditions worse. The extra effort it takes to breathe through a respirator mask can make it uncomfortable to use them for very long. These masks should be used mostly by people who have any health conditions listed above, are elderly, or who need to engage in strenuous exertion outdoors. Please contact your primary health care provider if symptoms persist or become more severe.

San Juan Basin Public Health is a local public health agency, governed by a seven member local Board of Health, serving all residents of Archuleta and La Plata counties. For 70 years, San Juan Basin Public Health has improved the health and environment of the Southwest Colorado.

### **Symptoms Related To Wildfire Smoke**

- Eye, nose and/or throat irritation-itchy eyes and/or runny nose.
- Coughing, sore throat.
- Chest discomfort, rapid heartbeat, fatigue, and shortness of breath may be symptoms of a health emergency.
- There is an increased likelihood of getting a cold or having cold-like symptoms following smoke exposure.
- If you have asthma or another lung or heart disease, follow your doctor's advice about medications and respiratory management plan. If symptoms persist or are severe, contact your primary health care provider. **Dial 9-1-1 in an emergency.**

**If Smoke is affecting you and/or Your Family:**

- If you smell smoke and/or are beginning to experience symptoms, consider temporarily relocating to another area as long as it is safe for you to do so.
- Seek out locations where air is filtered. For example, heading to the local mall, movie theater or recreation center can provide some temporary relief. Local health officials can often help locate places with better air quality during extended smoke episodes.
- Close windows and doors and stay indoors. However, do not close up your home tightly if it makes it dangerously warm inside.
- Only if filtered, run the air conditioning, the fan feature on your home heating system (with the heat turned off) or your evaporative cooler. Keep the outdoor air intake closed and be sure the filter is clean. Filtered air typically has less smoke than the air outdoors. Running these appliances if they are not filtered can make indoor smoke worse.
- If you have any HEPA room air filtration units, use them.
- In smoky air, reduce your physical activity level. Avoid exercise or other strenuous activities in heavy smoke.
- Make healthy eating choices, drink plenty of fluid, get ample sleep, and exercise in clean air. Mitigate stress as much as possible.
- Avoid smoking, secondhand smoke, vacuuming, candles and other sources of additional air pollution.
- Commercially available dust masks may seem like a good idea, but they do virtually nothing to filter out the particles and gases in smoke.
- At night smoke can be heavy, especially if outdoor air is still. Close bedroom windows at night.

Adapted from the Colorado Department of Health and Environment ([www.cdphe.state.co.us/](http://www.cdphe.state.co.us/))

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### **Wound Care and Tetanus Vaccinations**

The risk for injury after a disaster is high, **especially during the clean-up** of debris. Proper care of wounds is important to avoid infection and other complications. Tetanus, a disease caused by bacteria that affects the body's nerves and muscles, is also a concern for persons with both open and closed wounds. Please review the following information regarding wound care and tetanus vaccinations. Do not hesitate to **dial 9-1-1 in a life threatening emergency**.

#### **Care for Minor Wounds**

- Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and clean water.
- Avoid touching the wound with your fingers while treating it.
- Remove obstructive jewelry and clothing from the injured area.
- Apply direct pressure to any bleeding wound to control bleeding.
- Clean the wound after bleeding has stopped:
- Examine wounds for dirt and foreign objects.
- Gently flood the wound with clean water, and then gently clean around the wound with soap and water.
- Pat the wound dry and apply an adhesive bandage or dry clean cloth.
- Provide pain relievers, if possible.

#### **Other Considerations:**

- Wounds in contact with soil and sand can become infected.
- Puncture wounds can carry bits of clothing and dirt into wounds and result in infection.
- Crush injuries are more likely to become infected than wounds from cuts.
  
- **Wound Care: Seek medical attention as soon as possible if:**
- There is a foreign object embedded in the wound.
- The wound is at special risk of infection (such as a dog bite or a puncture by a dirty object).
- A previous wound shows signs of becoming infected (e.g. increased pain, heat, swelling, redness, draining, or fever).



## **Tetanus Vaccinations**

**Tetanus vaccinations are recommended for all residents returning to the disaster area who have not had a documented dose within the past ten years.** If you receive a puncture wound or a wound contaminated with feces, soil, or saliva, a healthcare professional should determine if a tetanus booster is necessary, based on individual records. Patients without a clear history of receiving at least three tetanus vaccinations and who have a wound should get the tetanus immune globulin (TIG) as well as the tetanus vaccination. Please speak with your personal physician or contact **San Juan Basin Public Health - (970) -247-5702.**

## **FLOODING**

Post-fire landslide hazards include fast-moving, highly destructive debris flows that can occur in the years immediately after wildfires in response to high intensity rainfall events, and flows that are generated over longer time periods that are accompanied by root decay and loss of soil strength. Post-fire debris flows are particularly hazardous because they can occur with little warning, can exert great impulsive loads on objects in their paths, can strip vegetation, block drainage ways, damage structures, and endanger human life.

Flooding debris consists of materials, matter, objects and sediment that, after the water has risen, are unfit for use, in an unusable state, and likely to have a negative effect on the environment, human health or public health, and can threaten biodiversity.

### **Debris Clean Up**

**Avoid Mixing Wastes** While most flood debris typically contains household items, trees and brush and demolition-type waste from buildings, it can also contain harmful chemicals and other wastes that may have to be handled separately. Debris should be visually inspected to exclude mixing tanks, barrels and other containers with harmful industrial chemicals and potentially hazardous wastes. Household-type cleaners, home pesticides, paints and household chemicals can be safely disposed of in approved landfills and do not need to be separated from debris.

### **Drowning**

Flood water poses drowning risks for everyone, regardless of their ability to swim. Swiftly moving shallow water can be deadly, and even shallow standing water can be dangerous for small children.

Vehicles do not provide adequate protection from flood waters. They can be swept away or may stall in moving water. Do not drive into water at any time; you do not know how deep it is and/or if the road below has been washed out. The Centers for Disease Control report that over half of all flood-related drownings occur when a vehicle is driven into hazardous flood water.

# INSURANCE

## Homeowners Insurance

If your home has suffered damages because of the fire, please follow these guidelines regarding documentation and communicating with insurance agents.

- Residents evacuated from their homes should contact their insurance agents or companies immediately and let them know where they can be reached.
- Keep receipts. Out of pocket expenses during a mandatory evacuation are reimbursable under most standard homeowner policies; this may include living expenses while you are evacuated from your home.
- Be prepared to give a detailed list of damaged or destroyed personal property- this list should be as thorough as possible including a description of the items, dates of purchase and approximate age, cost at time of purchase and estimated replacement cost. Make a copy for yourself and a copy for your adjuster.
- Photos of the damage may help with your claims process-wait until authorities allow you back into your home.
- Make whatever temporary repairs you can. Cover broken windows, damaged roofs and walls to prevent further destruction. Save receipts for supplies and materials you purchase. Your insurance company may reimburse you for reasonable expenses in making temporary repairs.

Adapted from the Rocky Mountain Insurance Information Association

Information on the Homeowners Insurance Settlement Process can be found here

[www.rmiia.org/Homeowners/Walking\\_Through\\_Your\\_Policy/Settlement\\_Process.asp](http://www.rmiia.org/Homeowners/Walking_Through_Your_Policy/Settlement_Process.asp)

Contact the Colorado Division of Insurance if you feel that your insurance company is not handling your claim appropriately.

**(303)- 894-7490**

## Auto Insurance

If your vehicle has been damaged by the fire, do not try to start it. Contact your insurance agent. Do not attempt to dispose of your vehicle at the landfill; it will not be accepted.

Further information on Auto Claims can be found through the Rocky Mountain Information Insurance Association:

[www.rmiia.org/auto/steering\\_through\\_your\\_auto\\_policy/Filing\\_an\\_Auto\\_Claim.asp](http://www.rmiia.org/auto/steering_through_your_auto_policy/Filing_an_Auto_Claim.asp)

### **Renter's Insurance and Rights**

Renters/tenants are not responsible for the building in which they live; the landlord's insurance policy should cover damages to the building. Tenants ARE responsible for their own belongings and liability. If you rent and your personal property was damaged or lost because of the disaster, please contact your renter's insurance company as soon as possible.

Further information on Renters Insurance can be found here  
[www.rmia.org/Homeowners/Walking\\_Through\\_Your\\_Policy/Renters\\_QA.asp](http://www.rmia.org/Homeowners/Walking_Through_Your_Policy/Renters_QA.asp)

If a natural disaster damages or destroys a housing unit to the point of unsafe or uninhabitable living conditions (there are specific guidelines) this may violate the Warranty of Habitability Act. In this case, the landlord or the tenant may rescind the lease as long as the proper notice is given. Landlord-tenant laws vary from state to state and even county to county, please seek legal counsel for specifics (reasonable notice, health/safety repairs vs. uninhabitable living, security deposit, etc.). Information on rent abatement and/or security deposits should be disclosed in the lease.

\*Disasters often attract scam artists and those affected by the fire should be vigilant in protecting their personal assets. The best way to verify authorized insurance agent is to contact the Colorado Division of Insurance. Go to [www.dora.state.co.us/insurance/consumer/ConsumerMainPage.htm](http://www.dora.state.co.us/insurance/consumer/ConsumerMainPage.htm) and click on "Find a Licensed Company or Producer" (agent). Consumers can also call the Division of Insurance at 303-894-7490. Consumers should know that inspectors that come to your residence will never solicit for personal information such as social security and bank account numbers. Also, under no circumstances are insurance agents (and FEMA or SBA representatives) allowed to accept money- if you are solicited for an application fee or a fee to be put on a list to have your home repaired be cautious of this potential scam. \*

## **LONGER TERM ASSISTANCE AND INFORMATION**

### **La Plata County Department of Human Services**

The Department of human services may provide services to assist individuals and families in achieving self sufficiency and social well-being including financial assistance for shelter, food, and medical care. (970) 382 6150 [co.laplata.co.us/government/human-services](http://co.laplata.co.us/government/human-services)

**The Colorado Works Program** (sometimes referred to as TANF or Temporary Aid to Needy Families) provides temporary assistance and intensive support to help eligible families (households with children under age 18) secure employment and attain self-sufficiency. (970) 382-6150

### **Employment Assistance**

If you lost your job as a direct result of the fire, you may qualify for unemployment benefits. Please visit the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment for information regarding these benefits: [www.colorado.gov/cs/Satellite/CDLE-UnempBenefits/CDLE/1248095315478](http://www.colorado.gov/cs/Satellite/CDLE-UnempBenefits/CDLE/1248095315478)

**Colorado Workforce Centers** provide a variety of free services to assist job seekers. These include job listings, computer & internet access, career counseling and training for job seekers.

The local Workforce Center in Durango, CO will also be assisting individuals who wish to apply for job-attached unemployment if they have been affected by disaster. Please contact your La Plata County Workforce Center at (970) 247-0308 or contact Gabe Torres, Employment Specialist with the Workforce Center, at (970) 247-0308 ext. 232.

### **Change of Address**

A change of address form is available online at [www.usps.com/](http://www.usps.com/) or at any U.S. Postal Service location. If you change residence make sure that your address is current and all of the insurance agents that you have been working with are aware of your new address.

## FINANCIAL SERVICES AND CONSUMER ADVICE

Among many other stressors, disasters take a financial toll. Please review this link leading to the **Disaster Recover: A Guide to Financial Issues** to help you regain a sense of financial balance following a disaster, including suggestions on steps to take immediately, what to do in the initial weeks and months, and then how to begin planning again for the future.

[www.redcross.org/preparedness/FinRecovery/](http://www.redcross.org/preparedness/FinRecovery/)

### Social Security Payments

Anyone receiving Social Security payments that have been interrupted can go to any Social Security office to get an emergency payment. For information about changing mailing addresses, obtaining a new card, direct deposit, or locating the nearest Social Security office, call 1-800-772-1213 (TTY 1-800-325-0778) from 7 a.m. – 7 p.m. / Monday through Friday or go online at [www.socialsecurity.gov](http://www.socialsecurity.gov)

### Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI)

Those who already receive SSI and SSDI should contact the Social Security Administration directly at 1-800-772-1213 to learn how checks may be reissued, cards replaced or to report a change in address.

If you believe you have been a victim of fraud or if you want to find out how to avoid fraud when making purchases and paying for services, contact the Colorado Consumer Protection Division by telephone at 1-800-222-4444 or visit the website

[www.coloradoattorneygeneral.gov/departments/consumer\\_protection](http://www.coloradoattorneygeneral.gov/departments/consumer_protection)

### Other Resources Include:

<p><u>National Insurance Crime Bureau</u> 1-800-835-6422 <a href="http://www.nicb.org//">www.nicb.org//</a></p>	<p><u>Consumer Credit Counseling Service</u> mpowered - (303) 233-2773 Green Path - (888) 776-3765</p>
<p><u>Veterans Benefits</u> U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs 1-800-827-1000 TTY 1-800-829-4833 Or online at <a href="http://www.va.gov">www.va.gov</a></p>	<p><u>Insurance Complaints and Assistance</u> Colorado Division of Banking and Insurance Consumer Information 303-894-7490 Toll Free Outside of Denver 1-800-930-3745 Complaints 303-894-7499</p>

## **Donations**

Please direct item donations to Discover Goodwill Durango

Monetary donations can be sent to South West Community Foundation, which has a community emergency response fund at [www.swcommunityfoundation.org](http://www.swcommunityfoundation.org)

## **LEGAL SERVICES**

Below are local resources available to those who need legal counsel and services due to the disaster. If needed, please seek legal resources regarding housing, family, consumer, public entitlements, education, employment, and health care access.

Colorado Legal Services	<a href="http://www.coloradolegalservices.org/">http://www.coloradolegalservices.org/</a> 970-247-0266	Civil legal services for low-income individuals and families.
Four Corners Immigrant Resource Center	<a href="http://www.sanjuancitizens.org/">http://www.sanjuancitizens.org/</a> 970-375-9406	Referrals and Resources for immigrants.

## DOCUMENT REPLACEMENT

### Colorado Official Birth, Death,

San Juan Basin Public Health can help replace birth, death, marriage and divorce records. For more information call 970-247-5702 or visit [www.cdphe.state.co.us/certs/index.html](http://www.cdphe.state.co.us/certs/index.html).

### Marriage, and Divorce Records

La Plata County Clerk and Recorder, call 970-382-6280 at 98 Everett St. Durango, CO 81303

### Colorado Drivers License of Identification Cards

The Colorado Department of Revenue, Division of Motor Vehicles can help replace identification documents. Please visit [www.colorado.gov/revenue/dmv](http://www.colorado.gov/revenue/dmv) to download required forms or find your local Department of Revenue. Located at 329 S. Camino Del Rio Durango, CO 81303

### Replacement Social Security Cards

If your Social Security card was destroyed in the fire, it is important to replace the card because you will need to show the card to get a job, collect Social Security benefits and receive some other government services. Please visit [www.ssa.gov/ssnumber/](http://www.ssa.gov/ssnumber/) to apply for a new card. Located at 103 Sheppard Drive Durango, CO 81303

### Preserving Wet Documents

To preserve family treasures, review this informational link at the National Archives [www.archives.gov/preservation/disaster-response/guidelines.html](http://www.archives.gov/preservation/disaster-response/guidelines.html)



## RETURNING HOME

Do not return to your home until it is declared safe to do so by local authorities. Injury is very common after a disaster when returning home because of debris, sharp objects, and unstable structures. Protect yourself by wearing eye protection, a mask, sturdy boots, long sleeves, long pants and gloves when returning home and cleaning up.

### **Pets**

If animals are lost during the disaster please contact local veterinarians, humane societies, pet shelters, and other facilities that might house animals. Be prepared to identify and document ownership when claiming lost livestock. The United States Department of Agriculture Missing Pet Network website at [www.missingpet.net](http://www.missingpet.net) may be of assistance.

Handle pets carefully and calmly as animals can become upset and react in unusual ways after a disaster. When you are allowed to return home, animals may become disoriented because of altered familiar scents and landmarks caused by the fire. If possible, leave your pet with a friend or family member, veterinarian, or a boarding facility while you clean and restore your home. Animals are naturally inquisitive and there are many dangers present in a post disaster area (sharp objects, downed electric lines, wild animals, disorientation leading to pet becoming lost, etc.).

For help evacuation small pets, contact the La Plata County Humane Society at (970) 259-2847

### **When Returning Home**

- Use caution and good judgment when re-entering a burn area and your home. Never assume that the area is safe.
- Avoid damaged power poles or lines and down wires. Immediately report electrical damage.
- Watch for ash pits, holes full of hot ash created by burned trees and stumps.
- If your home was damaged, check with your local utilities company. Make sure gas and electricity are turned off before entering the area. Professionals should determine if gas and electricity are safe to turn on.
- If you smell gas or hear a blowing or hissing noise, open a window and quickly leave the building. Turn off the gas at the outside main valve. Always call the gas company if you suspect a leak. If you turn off the gas for any reason, a professional must turn it back on.
- Inspect the roof immediately and extinguish any sparks or embers.
- Recheck for sparks or embers throughout the home, including the attic and crawl spaces, for several days after the fire. Sparks and embers can reignite.

## **Propane Tanks**

- **Propane tank system- contact a propane supplier; turn off valves on the system and leave valves closed until the supplier inspects your system.** Tanks, brass and copper fittings may have been damaged from the heat and be unsafe. If fire burned the tank, the pressure relief valve probably open and released the contents.

## **Water Quality after a Fire**

Your well or septic system could be adversely affected by the fire, power outages, equipment failure from fire damage, or contamination of water supplies. Be prepared, and have plenty of bottled water available for drinking and cooking when you return home.

## **Wells**

Wells at undamaged homes should be safe, unless they were affected by a fuel spill. If your house was damaged, disinfect and test the water before consuming it. The water system may have become contaminated with bacteria due to loss of water pressure in the plumbing.

## **Public Well**

If you use water from a public well, have a water sample collected and tested before drinking it. It may have been contaminated with bacteria due to a loss of water pressure in the plumbing.

## **Tank**

If you have an above-ground tank that was exposed to the fire, have the supply tested. If you are in doubt about water safety, have your water tested.

## **Water District**

If you get your water from a water district, contact them to ensure that the water supply has not been contaminated.

You will also need to direct all Ditch Irrigation questions to your ditch company.

## **Septic Systems**

If you feel your septic system may have been damaged, discontinue use until a licensed professional has inspected the system. The system may have been impacted if:

- Plastic piping above ground has melted.
- The raised system was in the direct line of fire (i.e. grass on top is scorched).
- There is damage in the area where the pipes enter the home.

A lift station will not operate without power. Limit or discontinue use until power is restored.

Please contact San Juan Basin Public Health at (970) 247-5702 with questions or concerns regarding water safety.

### **Drinking Water Treatment in Emergencies**

Water supplies that are normally safe to drink and utilize for cooking and hygiene purposes may be adversely affected because of this disaster. If there is a water supply system disruption or loss of pressure because of line breaks, repairs, or power outages your water may need to be treated. If a safe supply of water is not available, it should be treated before being used for drinking, cooking, or brushing teeth.

San Juan Basin Public Health 970-247-5702 and CDPHE will notify you that water should be boiled or treated before drinking; listen to your local radio and TV stations for a **“boil water advisory”**.

The following treatments only work in situations where the water is unsafe because of the presence of bacteria. If the water is unsafe because of chemicals, oils, poisonous substances, sewage, etc., do not use the water for drinking. If the water is cloudy, it should be filtered before treating. Filters designed for use when camping, coffee filters, towels (paper or cotton), cheesecloth, or a cotton plug in a funnel are effective ways to filter cloudy water.

#### **Boiling (Boiling is the preferred method if available)**

- Boiling is the best way to purify water that is unsafe because of the presence of protozoan parasites or bacteria. Boiling should not be used when toxic metals, chemicals (pesticides, solvents, etc.), or nitrates have contaminated the water.
- Place the water in a clean metal or glass container and bring to a full boil. Continue boiling for at least one full minute.

### Liquid Chlorine Bleach

- If boiling is not possible, water can be made safe for drinking by treating with liquid household chlorine bleach, such as Clorox, Purex, etc. Household bleach is typically between 5% and 6% chlorine. Do not use bleaches that contain perfumes, dyes, or other additives. Be sure to read the label.
- Place the water (filtered if necessary) in a clean container. Add the amount of bleach according to the table. Mix thoroughly and allow it to stand for at least 30 minutes before using (60 minutes if the water is cloudy or very cold).
- Purifying tablets or chemicals designed for use when camping or backpacking can also be an effective way to treat water. Always follow the directions on the package.
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#### Treating Water With a 5-6% Liquid Chlorine Bleach Solution

(Allow treated CLEAR water to stand 30 minutes; treated CLOUDY water should stand for 60 minutes)

Volume of Water To Be Treated	Treating Clear Water Bleach Solution to Add	Treating Cloud, Very Cold or Surface Water Bleach Solution to Add
1 quart/ 1 liter	3 drops	5 drops
1/2 gallon/2 quarts/2 liters	5 drops	10 drops or 1/8 tsp
1 gallon	10 drops or 1/8 tsp	20 drops or 1/4 tsp
5 gallons	50 drops or 5 mL or 1/2 tsp	5 mL or 1 tsp
10 gallons	5 mL or 1 tsp	10 mL or 2 tsp

tsp=teaspoon; mL=milliliter

### Storing Treated Water

- Use proper storage containers. Store the water in containers that are made for water storage, or glass and plastic jugs previously used for juice, milk, pop, or bottled water.
- Clean containers thoroughly before using and make sure that the container has a tight fitting cap. Never use containers that were previously used for pesticides, chemicals, solvents, antifreeze, oils, etc
- Store in a cool place.

Adapted from the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment [www.cdphe.state.co.us/](http://www.cdphe.state.co.us/)

## CLEAN UP

### Debris Removal and Handling

No primary designated agency or service for handling or removal of debris at this time.

### Landfills Accepting Debris

Bondad Landfill: 1500 E. C. R. 310-318 (970) 247-8295	Marvel Convenience Center: 1765 CR 223 (970) 382-6376
Bayfield Convenience Center: 4496 CR 223 (970) 382-6376	City of Durango Transfer Station: 790 Tech Center Drive 970-259-2915

### Fire Debris Removal

Ash and contaminated debris should be contained and disposed in a safe manner to minimize health hazards. Proper clean-up helps ensure that property owners and neighbors are protected against potential hazards and health risks of unattended ash and debris. Colorado State regulations require that all properties be properly cleaned of ash and debris before a building permit can be issued

Ash and debris should be wetted and hauled to approved landfills in lined and sealed dumpsters. Scrap metal must be rinsed with water before recycling, concrete foundations must be inspected for asbestos before recycling. When wetting ash and debris use as little water as possible and be careful to prevent runoff from entering drainage and sewers.

### Asbestos

Asbestos is a naturally occurring mineral that has been added into thousands of various types of building materials to add fire resistance, strength, and durability. Asbestos-containing materials may be part of your building-especially if it was constructed before the 1970's. A number of local, state, and federal regulations cover the handling and disposal of debris potentially contaminated with asbestos. No designated agency or services at this time.

### Household Chemical Disposal

Household cleaners, fertilizers and pesticides may have spilled or the containers may have become compromised due to the fire or firefighting efforts. Keep children and pets away from leaking or spilled chemicals and call Poison Control Center (1-800-222-1222) or Emergency Medical Services (dial 9-1-1) if anyone ingested chemicals. Clean up any chemical spill immediately with rags that you don't mind throwing away. Allow the fumes in the rag to evaporate outdoors, then dispose of the rags by wrapping them in a newspaper and placing them in a sealed plastic bag in your trash can. Do not put household chemicals in the trash or bury, burn, or pour chemicals down drains, storm sewers or toilets. Take household hazardous waste to a local collection program. Also, do not combine chemicals or smoke while using or cleaning chemicals as this may produce dangerous reactions.

### Local Collection Program

Durango Recycles: (970) 375-5004	

### Fire Suppressant Safety Information

Please read below for information and precautions for all categories of wild-land firefighting chemicals and long-term retardants.

#### People

- Fire retardant contains ammonia and will sting if it gets into cuts or scratches or comes into contact with chapped or sunburned skin.
- Wash thoroughly with a gentle soap and water to remove all residues, as many of the fire chemicals could dry your skin.
- After washing, use a good-quality hand cream to minimize drying and chapping.

#### Wood and Metal Structures

- The red color of fire retardants comes from iron oxide (rust), which can be difficult to remove.
- Wash fire retardant off as soon as possible. Some of these products may discolor metal.
- Dampening a stained surface with water, and then scrubbing it with a wet, stiff-bristled brush has been effective.
- Power washers may drive the red colorant into the surface of the wood and should generally be avoided.
- Restrict water use to prevent puddles that may be attractive to pets.
- Avoid leaving standing puddles of water by using absorbent materials, such as sand or soil.

## **Vegetation**

- Rinse fire retardant off vegetation.
- Avoid leaving standing puddles of water by applying absorbent materials, such as sand or soil.
- Leaf burn may occur since fire retardants contain fertilizer and at levels higher than what is often sold at garden stores. This could cause vegetation and plants to appear dead after contact; however, they will generally recover and grow back, usually within one to two months.
- Fruit and vegetables exposed to fire retardant should be properly disposed of at a designated inedible food collection

## **Pets and Other Animals**

- Shampoo your pet thoroughly, since many of the fire retardants are very drying to skin.
- Use materials that will effectively absorb any puddles after shampooing, or in areas where animals may have access. Materials, such as sand, soil, or other adsorbents, should be used on any standing water or puddles.
- Avoid ingestion of water containing fire retardant or other chemicals – keep animals away from puddles.
- If your pet appears ill after drinking from puddles or standing water, make sure your veterinarian knows that the animal may have ingested a fertilizer-based product.

## **Food Safety after a Fire**

Food exposed to fire can be compromised by four factors: the heat of the fire, exposure to the smoke itself, chemicals used to fight the fire, and power outage as a result of fire. Generally, saving food that has been in or near a fire is not a good idea. Please dispose contaminated food at a local collection.

## Local Collection Program

See Landfills provided above.	
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### Heat

Food in cans or jars may appear to be fine, but if they have been close to the heat of a fire, they may not be edible. Heat from a fire can activate food spoilage bacteria. If the heat was severe, the cans or jars may have split or ruptured resulting in unsafe food.

### Smoke

Toxic substances which may be released in the smoke from burning materials are one of the most dangerous elements of a fire. The smoke can be hazardous and can also contaminate food. Any food stored in permeable packaging such as cardboard or and plastic wrap should be thrown away. Toxic smoke can permeate the packaging and contaminate the food. Discard any raw foods stored outside the refrigerator, such as potatoes or fruit, as they too could be contaminated by exposure to the smoke. Even food stored in the refrigerator or freezer can become contaminated by smoke exposure as the seals are not necessarily airtight. **If food from your refrigerator or freezer has an off-flavor or odor when it is prepared it should be discarded and not eaten.**

### Chemicals Used to Fight Fires

Chemicals used to fight fires contain toxic materials that can contaminate food and cookware. While some of the chemicals may be listed as non-toxic to humans, they may be harmful if swallowed. Fire-fighting chemicals cannot be washed off exposed foods. Foods that are exposed to chemicals should be thrown away. This includes food stored at room temperature, such as fruit and vegetables, as well as foods stored in permeable containers like cardboard and screw-topped jars and bottles.

### Decontaminating canned goods and kitchen appliances.

Canned goods that have not been exposed to heat and are not bulging or split open can be salvaged. Kitchen appliances (refrigerator, freezers, etc.) that were exposed to chemicals can also be decontaminated. Wooden cutting boards, plastic utensils, baby bottle nipples and pacifiers should also be discarded.

#### To decontaminate:

- Wash canned goods (remove labels), cookware, and surfaces of kitchen appliances with hot water and soap.
- Rinse surfaces with clear water.
- Dip cans and cookware in bleach solution (1-2 teaspoons bleach per gallon of water) for 15 minutes. Wipe surfaces with same solution.
- Re-label canned goods with permanent marker, include expiration date.



## **Power Outages**

The main concern with perishables stored in the refrigerator and freezer is the availability of electrical power. If a power outage has occurred, keep the refrigerator and freezer doors closed. Open the refrigerator as little as possible. Refrigerated items should be safe as long as the power is off no more than about 4 hours. A full freezer should keep foods safe for about two days; a half-full freezer, about one-day. If foods still contain ice crystals and/or if the freezer temperature is 41° F or lower and has been at that temperature no longer than one to two days, food that was safe when it was originally frozen should still be safe. These foods can be refrozen or cooked and eaten.

- Discard any perishable food that has been held at temperatures above 41° F for more than 2 hours, or any food that has an unusual odor, color or texture.
- Never taste food to determine its safety.
- If you have returned from being evacuated and are not sure if the power was shut off and then turned back on, check with your utility company.
- Check for suspicious signs in your refrigerator and freezer, such as the presence of liquid or refrozen meat juices, soft or melted and refrozen ice cream, or unusual odors.

**Remember** that food unfit for human consumption is also unfit for pets. **If in doubt, throw it out!**

## **Water Damage and Mold**

Water damage to your home from the firefighting efforts may increase the likelihood of mold contamination. To prevent mold growth, dry out your home as soon as possible (ideally within 24-48 hours). If mold has already started to develop it will often appear as spots, it may present in different colors and may smell musty. Mold may present certain health risks. In most cases, if visible mold growth is present, sampling is unnecessary. Health complications related to mold include nasal stuffiness, throat irritation, cough or wheezing, eye irritation, and in some cases skin irritation. Individuals with mold allergies may have more severe reactions. Immunocompromised individuals, as well as people with chronic lung illnesses may get serious lung infections if exposed to mold.

**To prevent mold growth dry out your home as soon as possible.**

- If weather permits, open doors and windows to create a draft.
- If your home has electricity and **an electrician has determined it safe to turn on** use fans and dehumidifiers to remove excess moisture by blowing the air outwards rather than inwards.
- Remove standing water with a “wet-dry” shop vacuum, an electric powered water transfer pump, or sump pump. Be sure to wear rubber boots if operating equipment in wet areas. A portable generator to power equipment to remove standing water may be utilized, however, be aware that improper use may lead to dangerously high levels of carbon monoxide and can cause carbon monoxide poisoning.
- Before turning on home heating, ventilating and air-conditioning systems have them check and cleaned by a service professional if mold is a concern

**Properly remove mold and sanitize the area to help prevent future mold growth.**

- If the area of mold growth is greater than 10 sq. feet it is recommended to consult a professional
- First wash the area/item with hot water and detergent and rinse with clean water.
- Wash the area/item with bleach mixture (1 cup bleach to 1 cup water). **\* Never mix bleach with ammonia-the mixture creates a toxic gas that can kill you\***. Rinse with clean water.
- Thoroughly dry the area/items.
- Discard items that CANNOT be cleaned with HOT water.
- Wear rubber boots, rubber gloves, goggles and an N-95 mask. Work in a well ventilated area.

Visit [www.epa.gov/mold/moldguide.html](http://www.epa.gov/mold/moldguide.html) for more information on mold growth and clean up.

### **Carbon Monoxide Poisoning**

Carbon monoxide (CO) is an odorless, colorless gas that can cause sudden illness and death if inhaled. When power outages occur during emergencies, the use of generators, grills, camp stoves, or other gasoline, propane, natural gas, or charcoal burning devices should never be used inside a home, basement, garage, or camper, or even outside near an open window.

Symptoms: Most common symptoms of CO poisoning are headache, dizziness, weakness, nausea, vomiting, chest pain and confusion. Exposure to CO can cause loss of consciousness and death.

Carbon Monoxide detectors should be checked twice a year, at the same time batteries are checked. If conditions at home are too hot or too cold, seek shelter with friends or at a community shelter.

## REPAIRS AND REBUILDING

If you are planning to renovate, de-construct, or demolish a structure damaged by the fire, you will need to obtain an inspection and any required permits

First speak with insurance agents and adjusters to discuss your coverage. Replacement costs will frequently include rebuilding to current codes and regulations. Improved methods and materials have become standard practice with more attention to updated weatherization and energy requirements. Be careful to choose a licensed and experienced architect and/or contractor and be cautious of scam artists and fraud.

Verify licensure, file complaints and find other consumer information through the following:

<b>Colorado Department of Regulatory Agencies</b>	1-800-886-7675	<a href="http://www.dora.state.co.us/index.html">www.dora.state.co.us/index.html</a>
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Colorado law requires at least three business days notice, prior to outdoor construction or digging. Whomever is excavating -property owners or contractors- must call the Utility Notification Center of Colorado (UNCC) by **dialing 8-1-1** or 1-800-922-1987. UNCC will mark the site with paint, flags or stakes. Please respect the marks and dig with care, hand digging within two feet to buried piping and facilities. For additional information visit the UNCC website at [www.uncc2.org/web/](http://www.uncc2.org/web/).

The American Red Cross has created this booklet with further information on how to recover from a fire:

[www.redcross.org/www-files/Documents/pdf/getting\\_assistance/pickingupthepieces\\_fire.pdf](http://www.redcross.org/www-files/Documents/pdf/getting_assistance/pickingupthepieces_fire.pdf)

## UTILITY CONTACT INFORMATION

To report problems with utilities or when utilities need to be shut off or during reconstruction, please refer to the following numbers:

### Electrical Services

<b>La Plata Electric Association</b>	<b>(970) 247-5786</b>	<a href="http://www.lpea.com">www.lpea.com</a>
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### Natural Gas Services

<b>Atmos Energy</b>	<b>(866) 322-8667</b>	<a href="http://www.atmosenergy.com">www.atmosenergy.com</a>
<b>Amerigas</b>	<b>(970) 884-2629</b>	<a href="https://www.amerigas.com/">https://www.amerigas.com/</a>
<b>Mesa Propane</b>	<b>(970) 247-3066</b>	<a href="https://www.amerigas.com/">https://www.amerigas.com/</a>

### Garbage Collection

<b>City of Durango</b>	<b>(970) 375-5004</b>	<a href="http://www.durangogov.org/index.aspx?nid=335">http://www.durangogov.org/index.aspx?nid=335</a>
<b>Waste Management</b>	<b>(970) 247-1821</b>	<a href="https://www.wm.com/us">https://www.wm.com/us</a>
<b>Town of Bayfield</b>	<b>(970) 884-9544</b>	<a href="http://bayfieldgov.org/services/recycling.asp">http://bayfieldgov.org/services/recycling.asp</a>
<b>Town of Ignacio</b>	<b>(970) 563-9494</b>	<a href="https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/ignacio/ignacio-utilities">https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/ignacio/ignacio-utilities</a>

### Phone Service

<b>ATT</b>	<b>(800) 288-2747</b>	<a href="http://www.att.com">www.att.com</a>
<b>Verizon</b>	<b>(800) 427-9977</b>	<a href="http://www.verizon.com">www.verizon.com</a>
<b>Spectrum</b>	<b>(833) 780-1880</b>	<a href="http://www.spectrum.com">www.spectrum.com</a>