

**MEDIA ADVISORY**

August 22, 2024

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF TOXIC SUBSTANCES CONTROL TO BEGIN ASSESSMENT AND REMOVAL OF HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE AND BULK ASBESTOS FROM RESIDENTIAL PROPERTIES BURNED IN BOREL FIRE

Kern County, CA - On August 26, 2024, the California Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) will begin Phase 1 clean-up of residential properties destroyed in the Borel Fire, which is expected to take approximately four weeks to complete. Phase 1 activities include assessing and removing household hazardous waste (HHW) and bulk asbestos from burned residential properties in areas impacted by the Borel Fire. This is an automatic service at no cost to residents and right of entry is not required because HHW poses a significant threat to human health, animals, and the environment.

DTSC will consolidate and dispose of HHW including paints, cleaners, solvents, oils, batteries, herbicides and pesticides. Fuel from pressurized cylinders and tanks will be removed and marked with an "X" and left as scrap metal. Following a fire, these products require special handling and disposal, particularly if the containers are compromised. DTSC will also remove bulk asbestos items like siding, roofing, and certain types of floor tile. These efforts will reduce potential threats to public health and safety and allow other agencies to remove solid waste, debris and ash in the affected areas.

Kern County has also applied for Phase 2 debris removal, which includes the removal of debris, ash and hazard vegetation from private and public properties; however, we are still awaiting a determination on Phase 2 from California Office of Emergency Services. If Kern County is approved for Phase 2 debris removal, residents will be required to apply for this assistance and provide right of entry for these services to be provided on their property.

When Phase 1 is completed, we urge residents to wait for further instruction before engaging in any Borel Fire debris and ash removal or clean-up. Disturbance of debris and ash on properties outside of the Phase 1 HHW process may result in disqualification of Phase 2 debris, ash and hazard vegetation removal services that we remain hopeful to secure.

For more information:

- Kern County Public Health: <https://kernpublichealth.com/returning-home-after-a-wildfire/> or 661-321-3000.
- Borel Fire Community Resources and Information: <https://www.kerncounty.com/Home/Components/News/News/3202/34810>
- Borel Fire Call Center: 661-873-2660

Media Contact: For interview opportunities, please contact Michelle Corson at corsonm@kerncounty.com or 661-304-7766.

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