



News Release

Date: 9/21/20

Re-Entry Phase Opens to Allow Specific Residents to Survey Creek Fire Damage

The Fresno County Sheriff's Office and Fresno County officials are collaborating to identify safe zones for re-entry within the burn area of the Creek Fire. These designated areas, located inside evacuation order zones, will allow for short term visits by occupants, enabling them to survey damage and salvage items. At this time, four zones have been identified for re-entry on two separate days. Additional zones identified in the re-entry process will be announced in the future.

When: Tuesday, September 22 and Wednesday, September 23. Daily check-in starts at 10:00 am. Everyone must check out by 4:00 pm.

Who: On Tuesday, only residents in **Zones F1SA and F1R** will be granted temporary access to their properties. On Wednesday, only residents in **Zones F1SB and F1Q** will be granted temporary access to their properties. Access applies to only those who have had their homes destroyed. Anyone not a resident of the specified zones will not be admitted.

Where: Check-in station at Foothill Elementary School, 29147 Auberry Road, Prather, CA 93651.

What is Needed: Please bring official identification and a document proving residency. If your driver license does not contain your current address, bring a utility bill or something similar as we need proof of your address to allow you in for re-entry.

Important Terms

Re-entry: A reentry point is defined as an area within an evacuation zone where the fire has damaged / destroyed a person's land and / or structure(s). Temporary entrance times are assigned by county officials to property owners who are required to abide by stipulations and requirements established by both the Fresno County Sheriff's Office and County of Fresno.

Repopulation: An area deemed safe by officials where structures are intact, allowing residents and business owners to move back in for long term habitation.

Re-Entry Process and Expectations

Before returning to your verified address, you must check in with a county public health official. At the designated check-in location, public health officials will verify you being a resident and guide you through the process of gaining access to your property. Due to health and safety hazards created by the fire, you are urged to bring personal protective equipment (goggles, face masks, gloves, etc.) to wear. You are encouraged to wear pants, a long sleeve shirt and sturdy, close-toed shoes. You should also bring a second set of clothes or Tyvek coveralls. You will be able to take away items from your property, so please bring boxes and bags. Do not plan on loading up trailers full of items. After leaving your property, you must check-out at a location designated by the Sheriff's Office.

Various agencies will also be involved with the Creek Fire recovery effort and may provide additional assistance to property owners. Guidelines are subject to change based on operational conditions.

Safety Message – Hazard Advisory

The Fresno County Health Officer has issued a hazard advisory strongly suggesting no habitation of destroyed property until properties are declared clear of hazardous waste and structural ash and debris. Residents should understand they are entering a hazardous area at their own risk. They should wear protective gear and minimize time of exposure.

The public is reminded to stay aware of current fire conditions. Please continue to adhere to road closures and any evacuation warnings or advisories. If you see electrical wires on the ground, stay clear and contact PG&E immediately. Trees and poles with deep charring, particularly if still smoking, should be considered hazardous. Please drive slowly as emergency personnel continue to be in the area.

As you re-enter your property and evaluate damage, be aware that hazardous conditions may exist, particularly if a residence or out-building has burned. Hazards may include, but are not limited to: Embers, hot ash, asbestos, heavy metals, oils, fire retardants, pesticides, broken pipes, nails, glass, slippery surfaces, uneven ground, holes in the ground, unstable trees, unstable structures, propane tanks, ammunition, solvents, toxic airborne particles, by-products or plastic combustion and various other chemicals.

Resources for Disaster Survivors

County of Fresno – Local Assistance Center, Resources and Assistance

The County of Fresno has opened a multi-agency Local Assistance Center (LAC) at the Clovis Veterans Memorial District located at 808 4th Street, Clovis, CA 93612 to support residents impacted by the Creek Fire. The LAC is open seven days a week from 8:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. until further notice. This center will serve as a one-stop shop to help connect residents and property owners with assistance and resources available through a variety of state and local agencies. Available resources include, but are not limited to: Critical document replacement services, social services, economic recovery and financial services, motor vehicle services, healthcare, mental health services and Red Cross.

Mental Health

The Creek Fire has impacted our community in unimaginable ways. It is important to remember that anxiety, sadness and trouble sleeping are common responses to traumatic events. The effect of a disaster or traumatic event goes far beyond its immediate devastation. It takes time for survivors to grieve and rebuild individual and family lives. Please know that you are not alone and support is available.

The Fresno County Department of Behavioral Health (DBH) urges anyone who may be struggling to reach out for help. There are several resources available.

- The Fresno County DBH Warm Line provides non-emergency emotional and coping support to community members. Warm line operators provide supportive listening, practical coping ideas and information on how to get connected to behavioral health services. 559-600-WARM (9276) M-F 8 am- 5 pm
- Disaster Distress Helpline - a 24/7, 365-day-a-year, national hotline dedicated to providing immediate crisis counseling for people who are experiencing emotional distress related to any natural or human-caused disaster. This toll-free, multilingual and confidential crisis support service is available to all residents in the United States and its territories.
 - English: **1-800-985-5990** or text **TalkWithUs** to 66746
 - Spanish: **1-800-985-5990** and press "2" or text **Hablanos** to 66746

Visit <http://valleyhopeincrisis.com/> for an extended list of mental health resources and information.

Disaster Debris

Fresno County Department of Public Works and Fresno County Department of Public Health are working cooperatively with CalRecycle and other State partners in a program to facilitate property owners in the safe removal and handling of burn debris and ash caused from the Creek Fire.

Ash and burn debris contain hazardous material and wastes, which may include asbestos, heavy metals, by-products or plastic combustion and various other chemicals. If not handled properly, this ash can impact people at the point of handling and transporting as it may become airborne and impact schools and the public.

No ash or debris can be removed prior to the county, state or federal agencies performing a site inspection due to the Proclamation by the Health Officer and the hazardous waste and public health hazards that exist. A Right of Entry form must be signed by the property owners to allow assessment of personnel access to property.

Right of Entry forms will be available at the (city or town) Local Assistance Center and on the County website.

The State of California has a comprehensive cleanup plan and will be working with licensed local contractors to safely remove ash and debris in a manner that protects public health and safety. The improper handling and disposal of hazardous ash and materials may impact *you*, our children and schools.

County of Fresno

A Creek Fire website providing the latest information and resources for those affected at: www.fresnosheriff.org, www.co.fresno.ca.us/emergency or call (559) 600-4636.

Creek Fire Evacuation Zone Map:

<https://nifc.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=28ce52cb86bf49dea0adef5a78b3c1b5>

Creek Fire Property Damage Map: <https://arcg.is/1vaCOP>