

After the Fire – Asbestos in Wildfire Ash & Debris

LRAPA strongly recommends waiting for government funded assistance for hazard and debris removal.

Losing a home to fire is traumatic, both physically and emotionally. Sometimes there is physical injury or loss of human life, or the loss of pets. Always there is the loss of property, and items of financial or sentimental value.

During such crisis it is easy to not consider the hazardous nature of ash and debris on your property. It's important to understand hazards to your immediate and long-term health exist in that ash and debris. LRAPA encourages property owners wait and participate in the government cleanup response to clean your property and remove it of health hazards. **Performing your own cleanup may put yourself and others at risk.**

CLEANUP ASSISTANCE

The State of Oregon is working with federal, state and local partners to safely address ash and debris from the 2020 Oregon wildfires. Removing fire debris is a two-step cleanup process.

Step 1: Clearing properties of household hazardous waste to minimize exposure of hazardous materials to the public – **at no cost to property owners.**

Step 2: Removing ash, debris, and burned-out structures – **at no cost to property owners.**

To participate in this program you must sign a [Right of Entry](#) form and return to Lane County.

Cleaning your property may be a long and costly venture. Removal of household hazardous waste, and debris can be an incredibly expensive process, costing as much as \$75,000. Even with insurance, a majority of this cost may not be covered. The state and federal government is committed to paying for removal of household hazardous waste, which means you can reserve your insurance funds for other recovery efforts.

LRAPA strongly urges you to not remove hazardous materials and debris yourself because of the potential risks to your health and safety. However, if you take on cleanup yourself the following information will guide you through the asbestos cleanup process:

Cleanup for nonresidential property owners:

(and properties with more than four dwelling units)

Your property must be surveyed by an AHERA inspector to determine if your debris contains Asbestos.

If the survey shows asbestos are not present, then dispose of ash and debris as solid waste. *NOTE: Hazardous household materials may still exist in the debris and must be disposed of correctly. Contact your local garbage hauler or transfer station with questions about waste disposal.*

If the survey confirms your ash and debris contain asbestos then an [abatement contractor](#) must be hired to remove all ash and debris. The cleanup cannot be done by anyone other than a licensed abatement contractor.

Asbestos Inspectors and Contractors

AHERA Inspectors are trained and accredited asbestos professionals who can inspect a location for the presence of asbestos. [This list](#) has a few inspectors, but many more operate in Lane County. Abatement contractors specialize in removing asbestos, but many employ AHERA inspectors. [This list](#) is all the certified abatement contractors in Oregon.

Cleanup for residential property owners:

(including rental properties with no more than four dwelling units)

Your property must be surveyed by an AHERA inspector to determine if your debris contains Asbestos.

If the survey shows asbestos are not present, then dispose of ash and debris as solid waste. *NOTE: Hazardous household materials may still exist in the debris and must be disposed of correctly. Contact your local garbage hauler or transfer station with questions about waste disposal.*

If the survey confirms the ash and debris contain asbestos then you should hire an [abatement contractor](#) to remove all ash and debris.

You have the right to remove Asbestos Containing Waste (ACW) from your property yourself, but it is not advised. **Asbestos is cancerogenic, there is no safe level of exposure to asbestos.** Abatement contractors have specialized knowledge and training to handle and dispose of asbestos. LRAPA strongly recommends you hire an abatement contractor over removing and disposing of asbestos yourself.

However, if you decide to not hire an abatement contractor here are important rules:

- Only you—the property owner—and volunteers can remove ash and debris.
- You cannot pay or compensate anyone, in any form, who help with your cleanup.
- All ash and debris on the property must be treated as asbestos containing material.
- All ash and debris must remain adequately wetted during cleanup.
- All ash and debris must be packaged in **two(2) 6ml think** plastic bags.
- All ash and debris bags must be properly labeled as ACW.
- All ACW must be taken to a [facility permitted to accept ACW](#).

Bags & Labels

Plastic bags for asbestos cleanup, as well as asbestos warning labels, can be purchased at hardware stores and construction supply stores across Lane County.

Short Mountain Landfill is the only location in Lane County permitted to accept ACW. Short Mountain Landfill will need an [ASN4 Form](#) and payment of additional asbestos related fees before accepting any asbestos containing waste.

Reminder:

The cost of cleanup for your property has the potential to be high. Many homes and buildings in the affected area were constructed when asbestos was a common building material. Asbestos cleanup is expensive with costs reaching as high as \$75,000 for some properties. LRAPA strongly encourages you to participate in the federal, state and local response to help ease the financial burden of cleanup.

The federal, state, and local response is a two-step cleanup process. Step 1 is the removal household hazardous waste. This step will be provided to you at no cost. To participate in this program you must sign a [Right of Entry](#) form and return to Lane County.

Step 2 is the removal of ash and debris. This step is when asbestos containing material will be removed from your property. County, state, and federal partners are actively working to develop options for ash and debris removal. The process of cleanup and its funding are still being determined. Visit the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality's (DEQ) [Wildfire Cleanup and Debris Removal webpage](#) for the latest information as it develops.

Variance on Asbestos Rules

On Friday October 9th, 2020, LRAPA's Board of Directors approved a [temporary variance](#) suspending some requirements deemed unreasonable, burdensome, and impractical in the context of wildfire debris cleanup. This variance continues through October 1, 2021 and only applies to those affected by 2020 wildfires in Lane County.

Variance Information Relevant to Abatement Contractors:

(Variance only applies to properties impacted by 2020 wildfires in Lane County)

- No Abatement Notification, 10 day waiting period, or fee is required for work on residential properties with four or less dwelling units. *NOTE: LRAPA appreciates a courtesy notification to our office for record keeping of abatement work in the county.*
- The open accumulation of friable asbestos material or ACW is no longer prohibited.
- Maintain a negative pressure enclosure for cleanup is no longer a requirement.
- Mechanical equipment can be used to remove ACW outside a negative pressure enclosure.

Links

Right of Entry → <https://www.mckenzierebuilds.org/right-of-entry-for-cleanup>

Abatement Contractors → <https://www.oregon.gov/deq/FilterDocs/asb-contr.pdf>

List of some AHERA Inspector → <https://www.oregon.gov/deq/Hazards-and-Cleanup/Documents/asbAccredInspector2020.pdf>

Facility Accepting ACW → <https://www.oregon.gov/deq/FilterDocs/asb-LFILLS.pdf>

ASN4 → <http://or-lanerapa.civicplus.com/DocumentCenter/View/144/ASN-4-Asbestos-Waste-Shipment-Reporting-Form-Disposal-Form---Fillable-PDF?bidId=>

DEQ's Wildfire Cleanup Page → <https://wildfire.oregon.gov/cleanup>

LRAPA's Asbestos Variance → <https://www.lrapa.org/DocumentCenter/View/5220/LRAPA-Order-Approving-a-Temporary-Variance-to-Certain-Asbestos-Requirements-for-Wildfire-Cleanup---October-9-2020>