



# COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ

701 OCEAN STREET, SANTA CRUZ, CA 95060-4073

(831) 454-2000 WWW.SANTACRUZCOUNTY.US

CARLOS J. PALACIOS, COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

## PRESS RELEASE

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### PHASE I HAZARDOUS DEBRIS REMOVAL PLANNING

Phase I hazardous debris removal planning is expected to begin early next week with the assistance of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA), the California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA) and the Santa Cruz County Environmental Health Division (SCCEHD). Phase I includes the removal of hazardous materials including batteries, propane tanks, paints cleaners, pesticides and other things that can be caustic, ignite, explode, or cause immediate and significant health hazards. This debris must be removed before Phase II removal of ash and foundation materials can occur. Field work for hazardous debris removal will begin once planning work is complete.

“As residents return to their homes and evaluate the rebuilding process it is critical for them to be safe at their property,” noted Director of Environmental Health Dr. Marilyn Underwood. “That includes waiting for assistance with hazardous debris removal.”

Property owners, tenants and members of the public should not attempt to remove or evaluate property debris, including household hazardous waste. Contact with these materials can be toxic, result in long term health effects and/ or cancer. In addition, the debris must be disposed at specialized sites and cannot be accepted at County waste facilities or put in household garbage cans.

“After a fire, cleanup of household hazardous waste requires special handling and disposal. Our agency is here to assist with the safe assessment, removal and disposal of this waste,” said USEPA’s Pacific Southwest Administrator John Busterud.

Once Phase I field work begins, property owners will be able to follow the clean-up process by parcel on a forthcoming interactive map. Phase II debris removal of general debris, ash and soil may not begin until Phase I is finished and a completion sign is placed at the site by the field crews.



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Property owners returning to their property to look for personal items should protect themselves by wearing personal protective equipment (PPE), including respiratory protection, gloves, protective eyewear, and appropriate footwear.

Detailed information on debris removal is available at  
<http://scceh.com/Home/CZULightningComplexFire.aspx>.