



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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San Miguel/ Mora County News Release Calf Canyon/ Hermits Peak Fire

GUIDANCE FOR RESIDENTS RETURNING TO THEIR HOMES AFTER DESTRUCTIVE FIRES

Las Vegas – Counties of San Miguel and Mora would like to advise residents re-populating to utilize the following information for safe re-entry to properties affected by wildfire.

Homeowners should be aware of the immediate and long-term health risks associated with exposure to residential wildfire ash, debris, and household hazardous waste (HHW) chemicals.

Residential wildfire debris may contain some or all of the following:

- **Tiny particles of dust, dirt and soot that can easily become airborne and inhaled.**
- **Toxic amounts of heavy metals including arsenic, cadmium, copper, lead, and mercury.**
- **Asbestos.**
- **Hazardous materials such as propane tanks, air conditioners, batteries, cleaning products, pesticides, and herbicides.**

Sifting through your property will not jeopardize your claims for disaster assistance, including eligibility for future debris removal assistance. However, sifting through structural debris can present serious health and safety risks. Property owners who desire to search debris for possible salvageable items should do so with caution and with proper protective gear.

- **Avoid disturbing debris or kicking up ash.**
- **Avoid areas where chemical products would have been stored (e.g. cleaning chemicals, pharmaceuticals, beauty products, automotive). If you see any damaged, open, or unknown containers DO NOT sift in these areas.**
- **NIOSH-Certified air purifying respirator masks are highly recommended. A mask rated N-95 is more effective at blocking particles.**
- **Wear gloves, long shirts, pants, safety eyewear or any other protective clothing.**

- Change shoes and clothing as soon as you are off-site to avoid contaminating your vehicle, home, or other non-contaminated areas.
- Even with protective clothing and masks, children should not be exposed to wildfire ash or debris.

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