



## Important Recovery Information from Boulder County

# Returning to your property after the Marshall Fire

It is important to remember that fire may have changed the environment around your home and community; please be cautious as you return to your home and neighborhood. Be prepared to see your community changed in ways that you do not expect and take time to process the changes if you need it.

### Supplies for returning home and beginning cleanup:

Residents should come prepared with attire and supplies to keep themselves safe while viewing their property, including a first aid kit, close-toed shoes, work gloves, long sleeves and pants that may need to be disposed of after cleanup, and masks to protect against ash and particulate (N-95 or P-100 rated). Additionally, supplies for documenting damage, specifically a camera, notepad, and pen will be helpful. Cleaning supplies, trash bags, and a vacuum with a HEPA filter can be helpful if available.

### Traveling to and viewing the property:

- When returning home or traveling through the area, residents are asked to slow their speeds and be alert to hazards such as weakened trees and structures.
- Residents are asked to limit driving to daylight hours only, to go directly to their homes, and remain in and around their home.
- Burned structures can have many hazards in and around them. Please be aware of ash pits, holes, sharp objects (such as exposed structural materials), as well as areas that are still burning or smoldering in the structure. Snow may be covering hazards, including areas that are still hot. Please be sure areas where you are stepping and reaching are safe to prevent injury.
- Power may not be restored to some these areas, and gas will likely not be turned on by the time residents return home.
- There is no potable water in the affected area, so residents should be prepared to bring bottled water with them for all water needs, including for pets. Never use water you think may be contaminated to wash dishes, brush teeth, prepare food, wash hands, make ice or baby formula.
- For residents without heat, please consider turning off the main water line and draining the house water lines to prevent a potential flood.
- With the power outages, food in your refrigerator and freezer may be contaminated or spoiled. Dispose of any food that has been exposed to smoke, soot or heat or has thawed. Dumpsters have been placed in central locations throughout the affected area for food disposal. Please do not use personal trash cans for spoiled food. The location of community dumpsters can be found on the Public Information Map: [boco.org/oeminfomap](http://boco.org/oeminfomap)
- As residents return to the fire area, if there are signs that suspicious activity has occurred, please call the tip line at 303-441-3674. If suspicious activity is occurring, please call 911 or the non-emergency line at 303-441-4444.

## Safety tips after returning home:

- Do not disturb ash or debris from fires!
- An N95 or equivalent mask is strongly recommended when you're cleaning your home and if you're outdoors in burn areas.

**PLEASE NOTE: Most face coverings worn to protect against COVID-19 are not adequate to protect against the fine ash particles created by a fire.**

- Wipe surfaces with a damp cloth and avoid harsh chemical cleaners – stick with soap and water.
- Only use vacuum cleaners with a HEPA filter.
- Take off your shoes before entering your home to avoid spreading ash.
- Get your HVAC ducts professionally cleaned as soon as you can, and replace your HVAC filters as soon as they appear soiled. Use the highest level of filtration recommended by the manufacturer.
- Consider an activated carbon pre-filter to reduce odors.
- Test your fire and carbon monoxide detectors to ensure that they work properly.
- If you are using a combustion space heater, make sure you follow the manufacturer's guidance for ventilation to prevent carbon monoxide exposure. Never leave the house or sleep while combustion space heaters are operating.
- Thoroughly check all visible plumbing fixtures and piping for leaks and be alert for signs of broken pipes inside the walls – especially exterior walls.

Visit <https://www.bouldercounty.org/safety/fire/safe-cleanup-after-a-fire/> for more information on how to safely clean up after a fire (See QR code below).

### Boulder Office of Emergency Management



### Boulder County Wildfire Cleanup

