

January 22, 2022

Dear Homeowners Affected by the Marshall Fire in Unincorporated Boulder County:

I am sorry that your community was affected by the Marshall Fire. My name is Andrew Whelton and I am a professor at Purdue University, and my team will provide free technical support (and possibly water testing) to owners of private drinking wells impacted by the Marshall Fire and will be in Boulder County Colorado January 23-29, 2022.

Since January 5, 2022 my team has been providing water systems damage and testing support to the City of Louisville, Town of Superior, private homeowners, and most recently East Boulder County Water District. We have also provided support to the Boulder County Health Department. [Understanding what types of issues to look for when assessing private wells, etc. and what and how to test is important so that contractor decisions, repairs, and insurance claims can be supported.](#) We are offering to help at no expense to you.

I have more than 20 years of experience helping communities respond to and recover from disasters that affect water systems and buildings. We have supported communities impacted by the 2021 Oregon wildfires, 2018 Camp Fire, 2017 Tubbs Fire and others. My team and I have been helping state and county health departments nationwide support private well owners and building owners after fires. We have supported chemical spill and other plumbing contamination public health responses elsewhere.

We would like to provide you the following:

- (1) Free onsite technical assistance to include discussions and/or system damage inspections. We would be happy to meet and talk with you about actions to consider for well and building plumbing assessments. This can be done on a request-by-request basis. We can meet virtually or in-person.
- (2) Free drinking water chemical testing for heavy metals such as lead, copper, zinc, and volatile organic compounds (VOC) like benzene and others. VOCs are class of many chemicals found in drinking water systems after a fire. Testing would require the water system to have power or pressure so that water can be collected. Test results would be provided directly to you. The data would then be anonymized, and not identify specific persons or properties. We expect to start analyzing the samples collected the week of January 31, 2022.

You can reach out to me by email at awhelton@purdue.edu and/or telephone 540-230-6069. This effort to support you is funded by Purdue University and the Center for Plumbing Safety.

Please feel free to contact me. We have seen firsthand many communities impacted by fires become stronger and more resilient. It is important to know how to assess the water system damage, sample and test correctly. Our discussions should support you in your insurance discussions too.

Sincerely and Respectfully,



Andrew Whelton, Ph.D.

Professor of Civil, Environmental, and Ecological Engineering

Director of the Healthy Plumbing Consortium and Center for Plumbing Safety
