



**Boulder County
Community Planning &
Permitting Department
Publications**

Marshall Fire Rebuilding and Repairs

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Permitting Department**
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Marshall Fire Rebuilding and Repairs in Unincorporated Boulder County

Boulder County Community Planning & Permitting (CP&P) is committed to helping residents to navigate the rebuilding and repair process. To that end, we are developing a framework that will facilitate rebuilding efforts in a streamlined way. The county will be prioritizing all Marshall Fire rebuilding and repairs and hiring additional staff to assist property owners and their agents with projects.

More information about rebuilding will continue to be provided as things develop. Please visit the Marshall Fire website at boco.org/MarshallFire, and subscribe to Marshall Fire Recovery News at boco.org/MarshallFireInfo to stay up-to-date as information is developed and released.

Steps in the rebuilding process include:

- Coordinated Cleanup and Debris Removal Program
- Private Debris Removal and Foundations
- Drinking Water and Well or Waterline Repairs
- Wastewater System Evaluation and Repairs
- Design, Planning & Zoning Review, and Building Permits
- Construction and Inspections
- Occupancy and Comfortable Living

Note: Some of these steps can be done concurrently to help reduce timeframes. These steps don't include working with your insurance company.

Coordinated Cleanup and Debris Removal Program

Property owners whose homes were damaged or destroyed by the Marshall Fire can participate in a coordinated debris removal program. Information about this program is available at boco.org/marshall-debris-cleanup.

There are several phases of debris removal, including clearing and addressing imminent hazards in the Rights-of-Way, curbside collection of smoke- and wind-damaged materials from properties that were not destroyed or significantly damaged by fire, sifting, hydromulching (to prevent the spread of ash), and coordinated private property debris removal for destroyed homes.

To participate, property owners must complete and submit a Right of Entry (ROE) form, which is available on the Debris Removal Program website, or by emailing ROE@bouldercounty.org or by calling 303-214-3203.

Private Debris Removal and Foundations

Every site will be required to remove ash, debris, irreparable structures, and other identified hazards. Fire usually destroys the structural integrity of structure foundations. A foundation must be evaluated by a Colorado Licensed Structural Engineer if you wish to try and reuse it. If the foundation is determined to be intact and structurally sound, it may be integrated into the building permit plan set for the new house though a site cleanup permit is still required. If the foundation is not reusable it should be removed as part of the property clean up.

Every site where a structure was destroyed or damaged beyond repair will need a deconstruction/site cleanup permit. If the foundation can be reused, the permit will address site cleanup only. If the foundation is to be removed, the permit will address site cleanup as well as deconstruction of the foundation. As part of the permit inspection process, the site will need to be verified clean to environmental and safety standards. Information on requirements is being developed and will be posted on the Marshall Fire website as soon as possible. Permit applications for deconstruction/site cleanup can be made through Boulder County's online application submittals webpage at boco.org/ApplyPermit. As part of the online permit application, please include the words "Marshall Fire" when entering the Project Description.

Drinking Water and Well or Waterline Repairs

Potable water in unincorporated Boulder County often flows from a private onsite well. Ensuring well water has been accurately tested for contaminants after the Marshall Fire remains critically important for homeowner safety and the broader community's public health.

As a first step, the County recommends that residents who receive water from a private onsite well visually inspect the wellhead and other components of the water system for damage, including melted wiring for pumps and the wellhead. If the wellhead has been damaged, temporarily cap or cover the well with a 5-gallon bucket to prevent contaminants from entering the well and contact an appropriate contractor to repair the damage and test the water.

Property owners should have private well water tested for bacteria, volatile organic compounds (VOC's) and Semi-volatile Organic Compounds (SVOC's), and heavy metals. Water lines should be thoroughly flushed and water filters in the house should be changed.

Local public health officials are working with partners to identify support for well testing and are finalizing guidance for property owners on well risk, which will include specific guidance and resources.

If your water does not come from a private well, it may be provided by a local municipality, water district, or community water system. For example, portions of Apollo Estates, Benchmark Estates, Panorama Park and Paragon Estates are included in the East Boulder County Water District, the South Vale subdivision has a community water system, and the City of Lafayette or City of Louisville may provide water in Spanish Hills. If water is supplied by a water service provider, please contact them directly. The status of connections and the system should be evaluated, and any necessary repairs made, prior to or in tandem with rebuilding.

Residents who have questions or concerns about water wells or water quality can email Boulder County Public Health at healthows@bouldercounty.org or call 303-441-1564.

Drinking Water Resources:

- Water Testing: bouldercounty.org/safety/fire/wells-and-wastewater-after-a-fire
- Wells & Wastewater After a Fire: bouldercounty.org/safety/fire/wells-and-wastewater-after-a-fire
- Guidance for Property Owners Impacted by Wildfires with Homes Served by Wells & Onsite Wastewater Treatment Systems: <https://assets.bouldercounty.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/guidance-for-property-owners-impacted-by-wildfires-with-homes-served-by-wells-and-owts.pdf>
- Licensed well contractors: <https://assets.bouldercounty.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/contractors-by-city.pdf>

Wastewater System Evaluation and Repairs

The status of wastewater systems and connections should be evaluated, and any necessary repairs made, prior to or in tandem with rebuilding. Property owners who think their septic system may have been damaged should have a licensed professional inspect the system. If the septic tank and/or soil treatment area (leach field) was not damaged it could be reused if the property is redeveloped. Sewer lines should be capped until ready to be reconnected. Property owners should consider having the septic tank pumped as part of property clean up.

If the property will not be redeveloped, the septic tank should be properly abandoned.

Wastewater Resources:

- [SepticSmart Program](#)
- [SepticSmart: Check Septic Records](#)
- [SepticSmart Licensed Professionals & Resources](#)

Design, Planning & Zoning Review, and Building Permits

Rebuilding and repairing homes will require building permits and, depending on if you rebuild the same or a different structure as before, may require planning and zoning review. You may need to work with a design professional to create or update plans for your home to meet Land Use Code and Building Code requirements. The county will prioritize all Marshall Fire rebuilding and repairs and expedite their review.

The county is currently evaluating the impacted areas and considering what issues need to be addressed when rebuilding, including what allowances and flexibility can be provided to property owners who want to make modifications to their preexisting structures.

- Property owners who are rebuilding the same structure that was lost in the fire (i.e., original location and footprint, same floor area or smaller, same or lower height) may move forward immediately and apply for a building permit, so long as they commit to rebuild with additional wildfire resiliency measures. The required wildfire mitigation measures include ignition resistant construction for roofing, siding, eaves, windows, doors, vents, gutters, fencing, decks, and accessory structures, as well as defensible space requirements to address the area immediately surrounding the home and landscaping.
- Property owners who wish to make changes to the pre-existing structure will need to proceed under an Article 19 (Procedures Following a Disaster) streamlined review. The Article 19 provisions will replace the Site Plan Review (SPR) process that is typically required and will allow for an expedited review of the pertinent issues. The Article 19 process is similar to what followed the Fourmile and Calwood Fires. Article 19 provisions will focus on limited issues (visibility impacts, wildfire resiliency, etc.) and will provide parameters and some allowances for acceptable changes. Adoption of Article 19 provisions requires review by the Planning Commission and approval by the Board of County Commissioners, but Community Planning & Permitting will schedule public hearings that expedite the adoption process for these regulations. We estimate these Article 19 provisions for rebuilding can be approved in mid to late March.

In an effort to assist property owners and their architects/builders, Community Planning & Permitting is assembling a package of parcel-specific information for every impacted property, which can be referenced for rebuilding. The information will include the size of structure(s) on record, planning approvals, and other relevant information and handouts.

Additionally, Rebuilding Coordinators will be assigned to each property owner or their agent. A Rebuilding Coordinator will help navigate the rebuilding process and answer questions. Property owners who are building the same structure that was lost may be assigned a Rebuilding Coordinator as soon as they are ready to proceed. Property owners who are making changes to their pre-existing structures will be assigned a Rebuilding Coordinator after adoption of the Article 19 regulations.

The county is currently utilizing the 2015 International Codes with local amendments including the Boulder County BuildSmart program, and plan to hold informational sessions with the community on the Building Code requirements. County staff are committed to working with you to help you design a more resilient and energy efficient structure.

Design, Planning & Zoning Review, and Building Permits Resources:

- Article 19 of the Land Use Code: boco.org/LUCodeArticle19
- Boulder County BuildSmart program: boco.org/BuildSmart
- Boulder County Building Code: boco.org/BuildingCode

Support for Building a High-Performance Home

Boulder County wants to make it easy for homeowners to build back in a way that is safer, healthier, more comfortable, less costly to operate, and cleaner for your family and for the planet. The impacted local governments and others are exploring incentives and programs for high-performance homes, as well as sustainable transportation solutions.

We are reaching out to clean energy and high efficiency equipment manufacturers, distributors, installers and trade groups to negotiate special discounts for those having to rebuild. We are also working to identify residents who need more assistance and resources due to income constraints and other barriers to recovery and rebuilding.

In the coming weeks we will be providing updated information and resources on Boulder County's Marshall Fire webpage at boco.org/MarshallFire