



Public health considerations for residents returning home

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Safety precautions upon initial return to your home

- **Ensure that the structure is safe prior to doing work in the affected area.**
Wear closed toed shoes to walk carefully around the outside and check for loose power lines, gas leaks, and structural damage. If you have any doubts about safety, have your residence inspected by a qualified building inspector or structural engineer before entering.
- Be aware that the fire has changed the forest and trail systems in the area.
Please be especially careful in this new environment.

- **Ash pits are very dangerous for humans, pets, and livestock.** After a wildfire, the ground is typically black. If you encounter an area of white ash it may indicate an ash pit. Ash pits are formed when roots and other underground vegetation burns. The soil around a root system holds in heat, much like a brick oven. Below-ground fuel may continue to smolder and burn for days after the above-ground fire has been extinguished. These ash pits may be several inches, or several feet deep.
- **Do not enter your home** if it was damaged by fire and the authorities have not declared it safe, if you smell gas, or have concerns about structural damage.
- When re-entering the building, use flashlights instead of lanterns or candles, in case there's a gas leak.

Additional resources:

- CDC: [Safety guidelines after a fire](#)
 - Boulder County: [Air, soil, and water quality after a wildfire](#)
 - CDPHE: [Fire retardant in wildfires](#)
 - EPA: [A Brief Guide to Mold, Moisture and Your Home](#)
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Safety recommendations while cleaning up

Personal protective equipment (PPE)

- Wear long-sleeved shirts, long pants, gloves, shoes, socks, goggles, and a hard hat to protect your skin, eyes, and head. You can also wear an N95 respirator or mask to limit ash inhalation. You may also need foot protection if you're working in wet areas.
- People with medical conditions, like severe respiratory issues, or those who can't pass a fit test due to beards or facial features, and very young children shouldn't wear N95 respirators, as these masks require a tight seal and proper breathing effort, potentially worsening breathing for some or being ineffective if not fitted correctly.

Avoid unstable structures

Before starting work, inspect fire-damaged structures for hazards, and don't work around them until an engineer or architect says they're safe. If a structure shifts or makes an unusual noise, leave immediately.

Work in pairs

Consider implementing a two-person rule with routine radio or phone check-ins.

Personal hygiene

Ash may soil your clothes and irritate your skin. Remove exposed clothing, wash it separately, and take a bath or shower immediately after cleanup work in the burn area.

Avoid wild or stray animals

If bitten by any animal, seek immediate medical attention. Wound cleansing is especially important in rabies prevention.

People with health conditions

People with asthma, heart or lung conditions, children, and pregnant women should take extra precautions. This could include minimizing time in the burn area and seeking medical advice. If you suspect your water is contaminated, don't use it for drinking, cooking, or bathing. Pay attention to boil water advisories. Local authorities will let you know if your water is safe for drinking and bathing.

Anyone with specific health concerns should contact their healthcare provider.

Self care

Stay hydrated and carry water with you. Stop to rest when you get tired. Make sure you have had a tetanus vaccination in the past 10 years.

Gather emergency supplies, including respirators.

- Gather [emergency supplies](#), including a [snug respirator or mask](#). A respirator filters out smoke or ash before you can breathe it in.
- Remember the needs of [children](#); individuals with [medical conditions like asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease \(COPD\), diabetes, or heart disease](#); and those who are [pregnant](#).

Additional resources:

- CDC: [Community Respirators and Masks | Personal Protective Equipment](#)
 - CDC: [Safety Guidelines: Wildfires and Wildfire Smoke](#)
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Basic household cleanup

- Thoroughly clean and disinfect damaged areas to reduce risk of disease.
 - Sort contents of the damaged areas of the home to separate salvageable furnishings from unusable debris.
 - Hire a professional cleaning company to steam clean and disinfect salvageable furnishings.
 - Dispose of materials exposed to wastewater if they cannot be steam cleaned thoroughly or disinfected.
 - Discard contaminated food, cosmetics, stuffed animals, and baby toys.
 - Fire-damaged mattresses, pillows, foam rubber items, upholstered couches and chairs, books, and most paper products generally should be discarded.
 - Contact your trash collection company about removing furniture, appliances, and bulky furnishings, or take these items directly to a landfill.
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Physical hazards

Ash pits

Watch for areas of white ash that may indicate a dangerous smoldering ash pit. Below-ground fuel may continue to smolder and burn for days after the above-ground fire has been extinguished.

Debris

Broken glass, exposed electrical wires (whether they are “live” or not), nails, wood, metal, plastics, and other solid objects commonly found in areas of fire damage can cause puncture wounds, cuts, and electrical injuries.

- If unstable building structures, including flooring, stairways, railings, balconies, roofing, and fire escapes, are present, avoid them until the building department has cleared them for safety.
- Open doors and entryways to storage areas carefully, as stored materials may have moved into unstable positions and could fall.

Dust

Water may not be readily available. Bring water with you if your work requires water to suppress dust.

Electricity

Electrical hazards need to be repaired as soon as possible. Always avoid down or damaged electrical lines. If you see a downed power line, call 911 or your electric company.

Roadways, sidewalks, and bridges

Use caution, as these and other outdoor structures may be damaged or unstable.

Traffic and construction

Traffic may be rerouted or slowed, and restoration operations may result in heavier-than-normal traffic. Be aware of your surroundings and the presence of large construction vehicles.

Trees

Avoid burned or damaged trees. They may be unstable and can fall

Propane and natural gas

Propane and natural gas leaks

If you smell gas or think you've located a leaking propane tank, call 911. Because of the fire, propane providers were asked to inspect their tanks and remove unsafe units. If you find an abandoned tank that looks damaged but isn't leaking, contact your propane company or one of the propane providers in the burn area to help identify who is responsible for that unit.

Propane tanks

If you have a propane tank system, contact your propane supplier to ensure that your system is properly turned back on. Tanks, brass and copper fittings, and lines may have been damaged by heat and can be unsafe. If the fire burned the tank, the pressure relief valve likely opened and released the contents.

Heating oil tanks

If you have a heating oil tank system, contact a heating oil supplier to inspect your system before using it. The tank may have shifted or fallen from the stand, and the fuel lines may have kinked or weakened. The heat from the fire may have caused the tank to warp or bulge. Non-vented tanks are more likely to bulge or show signs of stress. The fire may have loosened or damaged fittings and filters.

Disposal of household chemicals

Everyday items, such as household cleaners, fertilizers, and pesticides contain dangerous chemicals that may have spilled in or near your home during the fire response. Be alert for leaking or damaged packaging and reactive household chemicals, such as drain cleaners and chlorine bleach.

Take these steps to prevent injury or damage:

- Keep children and pets away from leaking or spilled chemicals.
 - Do not combine chemicals from leaking or damaged containers; doing so might produce dangerous reactions.
 - Do not pour chemicals down drains, storm sewers, or toilets.
 - Do not try to burn household chemicals.
 - Mark and set aside unbroken containers until they can be properly disposed of.
 - Leave damaged or unlabeled chemical containers undisturbed whenever possible.
 - Do not put household chemicals in the trash.
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Toxic ash, dust, and debris

Ash and dust (particularly from burned buildings) may contain toxic and cancer-causing chemicals, including asbestos, arsenic, and lead. After a fire, all workers, residents, and visitors must proceed with caution. Workers should avoid the burn area on windy days when dust levels are high. Use recommended personal protective equipment. Anyone with underlying respiratory conditions should avoid the fire area until the natural vegetation returns, reducing dust levels. Review the [EPA protect yourself from ash factsheet](#).

Asbestos

Asbestos is a naturally occurring mineral added to many building materials to improve fire resistance, strength, and durability. Any building, even if recently constructed, may contain asbestos. Asbestos fibers likely remain in the ash when building materials burn in a wildfire. Therefore, the ash and remaining building debris must be treated as asbestos-containing waste material unless a certified Colorado asbestos building inspector samples the debris and ash and can determine that the debris is asbestos-free.

General safety recommendations

- Avoid entry: Do not enter partially damaged buildings or handle debris without precautions.
- Protective measures: Wear protective clothing and equipment.
- Tetanus vaccine: Ensure tetanus vaccination is up to date (within the last ten years).

Safe handling of ash and debris

The ash/debris should be handled in a way that will minimize potential exposure to asbestos fibers and other hazardous materials in the debris.

- Ash/debris must be wetted to minimize dust; packaged inside a container (such as an end-dump roll-off or truck) lined with double 6-mil plastic sheeting with the sheeting completely closed over the material and sealed once the container is loaded.
- Soil under/surrounding the building should be scraped to ensure that all ash and building debris has been removed from the site.
- Contractors should consult with the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) at 303-843-4500 (Englewood) to determine training and personal protective equipment that will be required for those handling this material.

Disposal of ash and debris

Ash and debris must be disposed of at an approved landfill. The following landfills can accept ash and debris from residential buildings completely destroyed or damaged by these fires that cannot be safely characterized for the presence of asbestos.

- Montrose County Landfill - 67999 Landfill Rd Montrose, CO, 970-615-6072
- Gunnison County Landfill - 1000 County Rd 42C, Gunnison, CO, 970-641-5522

For a list of additional Colorado landfills approved to accept assumed or confirmed asbestos waste please refer to CDPHE's [solid waste and materials management sites and facilities webpage](#) and follow the link to "Colorado Landfills accepting asbestos-containing waste from the public".

No other landfills are currently approved to accept ash and debris from buildings completely destroyed by these fires. In order to get approval to accept these materials, landfills must request and receive permission from the Hazardous Materials and Waste Management Division (HMWMD) which will include agreement to implement certain best management practices designed to protect landfill workers and nearby public from potential asbestos hazards.

Please contact the landfill before loads are taken there to confirm waste acceptance, alert them that the material is coming, and initiate a waste profile. The landfill should be informed that the material has come from the Gold Mountain Fire area and may contain suspect asbestos-containing materials or other hazardous materials. Please take debris directly to the landfill.

Recycling of metal and concrete foundations is permissible under the following circumstances: Metal debris must be washed clean of ash/debris prior to recycling. If you wish to recycle a concrete foundation, the concrete must be inspected by a Colorado certified asbestos building inspector to determine that it is free of asbestos-containing materials prior to recycling.

Review the [CDPHE Residential Debris Guidance Handout for Custer and Pueblo Counties](#). Please contact the Indoor Environment Program at (720) 507-5136 or

cdphe.asbestos@state.co.us if you wish to discuss any alternative to following this document or have any additional questions.

Additional resource:

CDPHE: [2025 Floods - Guidance: Management and Disposal of Flood Debris](#)

Indoor air quality

Air out your home

- When possible, air out your indoor spaces by opening windows and doors.
- If there is a lot of ash and debris outside your home, air out your home after debris has been cleaned up, and use air cleaners in the meantime.
- Use air cleaners to help remove particles and odors.
- CDPHE recommends air cleaners with HEPA filters for particles and activated carbon filters for volatile organic compounds such as benzene.
- Keep air cleaners on until the smells go away.
- Do not use ozone generators in occupied homes. Ozone is toxic to breathe, and using one of these devices in the home can create a potential health risk. High ozone levels can damage plants and materials such as paints, rubber, other natural materials, electrical wire coatings, fabrics, and artwork.
- If you do use a device that purposely generates ozone in an unoccupied space, use caution. Be sure to thoroughly air out the space (at least four hours) before re-entering. [More information on ozone generators](#).
- Two sources for finding air cleaners are:
 - [Association of Home Appliance Manufacturers \(AHAM\)](#)
 - [California Air Resources Board](#)

Check your HVAC

- Consider upgrading your HVAC filter to a MERV 11 or higher rated filter if your system can accommodate it.

- Replace filters as they become clogged or monthly for up to a year after the surrounding area is cleaned.
- Consider cleaning your HVAC ducts. [More information on air duct cleaning.](#)
- Rinse off furnace air intakes and air conditioning units

Deep clean the surfaces of your home

- Vacuum floors/carpet/rugs, drapes, furniture using HEPA-type vacuum cleaner or steam clean these surfaces.
- Clean all surfaces in the home, including walls and ceilings.
- Avoid actions that can stir up particles, such as dry sweeping and dusting.
- Before sweeping hard surfaces, mist them with water to keep dust down.
- Do not use harsh chemical cleaners or vinegar as they can react with chemicals in the ash. Soap and water are adequate to clean ash from hard surfaces.
- Once your home is cleaned, take off shoes and wipe pets' paws when coming inside.

Carbon monoxide poisoning prevention

When power has been out, using alternative fuel sources or electricity for heating, cooling, or cooking can cause carbon monoxide to build up in a home, garage, or camper. If inhaled, carbon monoxide (CO) is an odorless, colorless gas that can cause sudden illness and death. Every year, more than 400 people die in the U.S. from accidental carbon monoxide poisoning.

To prevent carbon monoxide poisoning:

- Never use generators, grills, camp stoves, or other gasoline, propane, natural gas, or charcoal-burning devices inside a home, garage, camper, or outside near an open window.
- You should never use a charcoal grill, hibachi, lantern, or portable camping stove inside a home, tent, or camper.
- Never run a generator, pressure washer, or gasoline-powered engine inside a basement, garage, or other enclosed structure, even if the doors or windows are open, unless the equipment is professionally installed and vented. Keep

vents and flues free of debris, especially if winds are high. Flying debris can block ventilation lines.

- Never run a motor vehicle, generator, pressure washer, or gasoline-powered engine outside an open window, door, or vent where exhaust can vent into an enclosed area.
- Never leave the motor running in a vehicle parked inside an enclosed or partially enclosed space, such as a garage.

If conditions are too hot or cold, seek shelter with friends or at a community shelter.

- Ensure that your home has at least one working carbon monoxide detector. Check the detector's batteries twice annually, and check smoke detector batteries at the same time.

Signs of Carbon Monoxide Poisoning

Exposure to carbon monoxide can cause loss of consciousness and death. The most common symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning are headache, dizziness, weakness, nausea, vomiting, chest pain, and confusion. People who are exposed to high carbon monoxide levels while sleeping or after drinking alcohol can die from carbon monoxide poisoning before ever having symptoms. If carbon monoxide poisoning is suspected, consult a healthcare professional right away.

Learn more about how to prevent [carbon monoxide poisoning](#).

Additional resource:

- CDPHE: [Indoor air quality after a fire](#)
- Washington State Department of Health: [Choosing a portable air cleaner](#)

Water and wastewater after a fire

Your well or septic system could be adversely affected by the fire, power outages, equipment failure from fire damage, or contamination of water supplies. Be

prepared, and have plenty of bottled water available for drinking and cooking when you return home. Please review CDPHE's Water Quality Control Division's [Guidance for property owners impacted by wildfires with homes served by wells and onsite wastewater treatment systems](#).

Wells

Use bottled water until you know your well water is safe.

Do not use private well water for:

- Drinking.
- Making ice.
- Making baby formula.
- Brushing teeth.
- Washing dishes.
- Preparing food.

Private wells may be affected by:

- Fire damage.
- Ash and debris.
- Loss of pressure.
- Damaged plumbing, pumps, pressure tanks, or electrical systems.
- Chemicals from burned structures, vehicles, plumbing, or other materials.
- Changes in water taste, smell, color, or clarity.

Before using private well water, inspect the well area if it is safe to do so.

- Visually inspect your well and other components of your water system for damage including melted wiring for pumps and the well head.
- If the well head has been damaged, temporarily cap or cover the well with a 5-gallon bucket to prevent contaminants from entering.
- If you find damage or contamination to your well or water system, do not drink the water and contact an appropriate contractor to repair the damage or treat your well.

- If your water tastes or smells earthy, smoky or burnt, you may need to thoroughly flush your water lines. Loss of pressure and power can impact the safety of your drinking water. Review [CDPHE's Taste, odor & color drinking water FAQs](#).
- When returning home, turn on a faucet in the household to see if water comes out. You should not hear any air being released from the faucet. The flow of water should be steady and uninterrupted. If you do hear air escaping from the faucet with water intermittently spurting out when it is turned on, that is an indication that the well and household plumbing had a loss of pressure and should be checked to make sure it is safe from bacteria.

If you have a cistern that was exposed to the fire, have the water in it tested before consuming.

Please review the [CDC's Private wells after a wildfire](#).

If you have concerns about water safety, have your water tested. For more information about water testing, visit CDPHE's [Drinking water: private wells webpage](#).

While awaiting results from your water testing, you can use your water for flushing toilets and it is reasonably safe to use in a shower or bath. Take care to avoid swallowing water. You should boil or disinfect water for drinking or cooking purposes and for washing dishes or other cooking utensils.

Please review the [CDC's How to disinfect wells after an emergency](#).

Public water systems

If you are on a public water system (i.e., you pay a water bill) please contact your public water system provider with any questions or concerns.

Septic systems

When returning to your property, inspect the area where your septic system is located for signs of damage from fire and traffic from fire-fighting operations. If you feel your

septic system may have been damaged, discontinue use until a licensed professional has inspected the system. The system may have been impacted if:

- Plastic piping above ground has melted.
- Evidence of vehicle traffic in the area of the system.
- The raised system was in the direct line of fire (i.e. grass on top is scorched).
- There is damage in the area where the pipes enter the home.

If you notice damage to any of these components, call your local OWTS permitting agency or a licensed OWTS professional for information and recommendations.

Considerations for resuming use of your septic system

- Continue to use your system if there are no signs of damage.
- Discontinue flushing or using sinks if drains are backing up, your lift station has no power, or your system has surfacing effluent in the soil treatment area. If the system is malfunctioning contact your local OWTS permitting agency or a licensed OWTS professional for guidance and instruction regarding repair and restoration of the system.

If you cannot flush toilets

- Use a portable toilet.
- Use a portable chemical or camping toilet, which can be purchased from a recreational vehicle or camping equipment supplier.
- Use a National Sanitation Foundation (NSF)-approved composting toilet, which can be purchased from a plumbing or ecological products supplier.
- For assembly information visit the [create your own at-home temporary portable toilet](#) webpage.

Personal hygiene

- Wash your hands often, or use disposable wipes or hand sanitizer.
- Use disposable utensils and dishes.
- Have extra trash bags and disposable wipes available.

Additional resources:

- CDPHE: [Drinking water guidance for Aspen Acres Fires](#).
 - CDPHE: [Post-wildfire - Onsite Water Treatment System \(septic system\) guidance](#)
 - CDPHE: [Flooded Onsite Water Treatment System \(septic system\) - guidance](#)
 - USDA: [Watershed programs information](#).
 - CDPHE [Private Well Shocking Instructions Video](#)
 - CDPHE [Nitrate in Drinking Water: Information for consumers and water providers](#)
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Food safety

Fire and smoke create insoluble tars or plastics, and their by-products that may be suspended in the smoke for an extended period of time. All of these make food products unsalvageable. Food exposed to fire can be compromised by four factors: heat, smoke, firefighting chemicals and power outages affecting refrigeration.

Loss of electrical power

- Always keep meat, poultry, fish, dairy and eggs refrigerated at or below 41°F, and keep frozen food frozen.
- If you lose power, keep the refrigerator and freezer doors closed as much as possible to maintain the cold temperature. Most refrigerators will keep food safely cold for about 4 hours if unopened. A full freezer will hold the temperature for approximately 48 hours if the door remains closed. For a freezer that is half full, keeping the door closed can maintain the temperature for 24 hours.
- If you need to open and close your refrigerator and power is going to be out for a prolonged period of time, use dry ice or block ice to keep your refrigerator as cold as possible. Fifty pounds of dry ice should maintain an 18-cubic-foot full freezer for two days.
- Discard perishable food that has been held at temperatures above 41°F for more than 4 hours.

- Discard any food that has an unusual odor, color or texture.
- Discard food in your refrigerator and freezer that looks suspicious, such as the presence of liquid or refrozen meat juices, soft or melted and refrozen ice cream or unusual odors.
- Never taste food to determine its safety.
- Food unfit for human consumption also is unfit for pets.
- **If in doubt, throw it out.**

Heat

- Food in cans or jars may appear to be fine, but if they have been close to the heat of a fire, they may not be edible.
- Heat from a fire can activate food spoilage from bacteria. If the heat is severe, the cans or jars can split or rupture, resulting in unsafe food.
- Discard foods in cans or jars, as extreme heat can re-cook canned goods and adversely affect the contents.

Smoke fumes

- Toxic fumes, which may be released from burning materials, are one of the most dangerous elements of a fire. The fumes can be hazardous, and they also can permeate packaging and contaminate food. Discard all meats and oil products such as butter and produce.
- Discard food stored in permeable packaging with friction-type closures and food packed in cardboard, cellophane or plastic wrap.
- Discard raw foods stored outside the refrigerator.
- Discard refrigerated or frozen food if it has an off-flavor or odor when prepared. Food stored in the refrigerator or freezer can become contaminated by fumes, as the seals are not necessarily airtight.

Firefighting chemicals

- Chemicals used to fight fires contain toxic materials that can contaminate food and cookware. While some of the chemicals may be listed as non-toxic to

humans, they can be harmful if swallowed. These chemicals cannot be washed off food.

- Canned goods and cookware exposed to chemicals can be decontaminated if they have not been subjected to severe heat. Wash with soap and hot water. After washing, dip in chlorine bleach for 2 minutes, in a solution as directed on the bottle's label. Rinse and let air dry. Discard all foods that have been exposed to chemicals.

Review [CDC's Keep food safe after a disaster or emergency](#).

For additional information, please contact the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment's Division of Environmental Health and Sustainability at 303-692-3645.

Mental health for adults and children

A natural disaster like a wildfire can significantly impact your emotional well-being. Take steps to ensure that you are taking care of your emotional needs during times of crisis.

Emotional awareness

The aftermath of a wildfire can include mood swings, sleep disruption, and stress reactions. It is important to be alert to your feelings so they do not become overwhelming. Weather patterns, such as high wind or lightning, may cause increased stress, anxiety, or physical symptoms related to stress, such as stomach aches or headaches.

Protect your emotional well-being

Feeling emotional after a disaster is normal, but there are things you can do to take care of yourself and others.

- Find opportunities to spend time with other people so that you stay connected.
- Talk to a trusted friend or adviser about what you are feeling.

- Participate in activities that you enjoy.
- Take frequent breaks from cleanup efforts.
- Write in a journal.
- Exercise (indoors if air quality is poor).
- Eat a healthy diet.
- Practice good sleep hygiene.
- Avoid relying on substances like alcohol or marijuana for stress relief. During times of great stress, their use can be counterproductive and lead to more stress, anxiety, and physical symptoms.

Help your children through the crisis

Parents are advised to pay close attention to their children's emotional well-being. Pay attention to your child's questions and tell them you are there to listen. Here are some tips to keep in mind:

- Be honest with your answers to your children's questions, but don't provide more information than necessary.
- Validate your children's feelings. They may be feeling scared, confused, or angry.
- Provide opportunities for your children to talk and explore other outlets for their expression, such as drawing or playing.
- Limit exposure to media.
- Avoid irrational promises like, "This won't happen again."
- Maintain the same daily schedule as possible (e.g., bedtime rituals).
- Ensure your children eat healthy food, exercise, and sleep well.
- Contact your students' school or child care center for resources and to see if they have noticed any changes in your child.

Watch for behavior changes in your children

Children may cry more, act out, exhibit regressive behavior like bedwetting, or show other changes in demeanor. These are normal stress responses and are usually temporary. Reassure your children that you are there for them. Watch for physical symptoms like stress-related stomach aches and headaches.

Review the National Child Traumatic Stress Network's (NCTSN) [Preparing children after a wildfire damages your community](#).

Seek help if you need it

It may take a while before you feel back to normal. If you are experiencing any of the following, please seek professional help.

- Difficulty managing your emotions
- Trouble completing daily tasks
- Caring for yourself or your family

Resources for children

- **Activity Book:** Ready Wrigley Prepares for Wildfires & Smoke ([English](#) & [Spanish](#))
 - **Wildfire and Wildfire Smoke Resources:** [Wildfire Smoke Action Plan](#) for children with asthma and additional information in English and Spanish at [Wildfire Smoke Action Plan for Children with Asthma website](#) from Pediatric Environmental Health Specialty Units (PEHSU).
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Tetanus

Following natural disasters like wildfires, it is important for both first responders and evacuated residents to be sure they are up to date on the tetanus vaccine. As cleanup and recovery efforts begin after a disaster, there is an increased risk of injury.

Tetanus is a concern for anyone with open or closed wounds.

Tetanus vaccination recommendations

Vaccination is recommended for all residents returning to an area affected by a disaster who are not up to date on their tetanus vaccine. The U.S. has three types of vaccines that include protection against tetanus: DTaP, Tdap, and Td.

DTaP and Tdap also include protection against diphtheria and pertussis (whooping cough). Td also includes protection against diphtheria. Children younger than 7 years of age receive DTaP, while children 7 years and older and adults receive Tdap or Td.

- Adults 19 years and older:
 - ❑ A tetanus-diphtheria (Td) booster is recommended every 10 years. A tetanus-diphtheria-pertussis (Tdap) vaccine should replace at least one regular Td dose to provide pertussis protection in adolescents and adults.
- Children and Adolescents:
 - ❑ Children typically receive tetanus-containing vaccines as part of their routine childhood DTaP (diphtheria-tetanus-pertussis) series.
 - Primary series at 2, 4, and 6 months of age
 - Booster doses at 15-18 months and 4-6 years
 - Adolescents - Tdap booster at 11-12 years of age
 - Td or Tdap booster every 10 years

If a child has not received or is not up to date with their routine DTaP vaccines, consult an immunizing provider to determine the appropriate [catch-up vaccination schedule](#).

Wound management and tetanus immune globulin (TIG)

Individuals without a clear history of at least three tetanus-containing vaccines who have any wound other than a clean, minor wound should receive tetanus immune globulin (TIG) in addition to a tetanus vaccine. TIG can help prevent tetanus infection.

First aid and medical consultation

Prompt wound care and infection prevention are essential. Anyone with a puncture wound or a wound contaminated with sewage, soil, or saliva should consult a

healthcare professional to determine if a tetanus booster or TIG is necessary, based on vaccination history.

For questions about tetanus vaccine recommendations for wound management, contact the Clinical Resources Unit of the Colorado Immunization Branch at 303-692-2700 or by email: cdphe_vacs@state.co.us.

For additional information, see CDC's [clinical guidance for wound management to prevent tetanus](#).

Vaccination

- Public health agencies and healthcare providers may consult with CDPHE at 303-692-2700 or by email at cdphe_vacs@state.co.us about any changes to routine vaccine recommendations or additional vaccine needs due to a disaster situation.
 - Staying up to date with vaccines helps ensure everyone is better prepared for emergencies.
 - ☐ Healthcare providers should verify that their patients are current on all recommended immunizations.
 - ☐ Patients can request vaccine records from their healthcare provider, or access their records through the [Colorado Immunization Information System \(CIIS\) public portal](#). Please note: CIIS records may be incomplete, as they only include vaccines reported to and entered into the system.
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Heat and wildfire smoke: Protect your health

High temperatures and wildfire smoke can create added health risks across Colorado. Use these steps to help protect yourself, your family, and your pets.

Know the warning signs

Heat exhaustion

Signs of heat exhaustion can include:

- Heavy sweating
- Weakness
- Dizziness
- Headache
- Nausea
- Muscle cramps
- Fainting

If a person exhibits symptoms, help the person move to a cooler place, loosen clothing, and offer water if they are awake and able to drink.

Heat stroke – medical emergency

Call 911 if someone has:

- Confusion
- Loss of consciousness or fainting
- Seizures
- Very high body temperature
- Skin that feels very hot to the touch
- Repeated vomiting
- Heat stroke means your body's cooling system is failing, which is why not sweating can be a sign

Smoke exposure

Wildfire smoke exposure can cause:

- Coughing
- Wheezing
- Chest tightness
- Shortness of breath
- Eye irritation

- Sore throat
- Worsening asthma symptoms

Seek medical care if symptoms are severe, do not improve after moving indoors, or include chest pain, trouble breathing, or confusion. Wildfire smoke can make anyone sick, but some people have a higher risk of getting sick. People most at risk include:

- People with [chronic conditions](#) like [asthma](#), Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease ([COPD](#)), [diabetes](#), chronic kidney disease, or [heart disease](#)
- [Pregnant women](#)
- [Children](#)
- [Responders](#)

Take steps to stay safe

When it is hot or smoky:

- Reduce outdoor activity during the hottest and smokiest parts of the day.
- Move exercise, yard work, and other strenuous activity to a cooler time of day.
- Take frequent breaks in shade or air conditioning.
- Drink water regularly, and before you feel thirsty.
- Wear lightweight, loose-fitting clothing.
- Use sunscreen and a wide-brimmed hat if outside.
- Stop activity if you feel dizzy, weak, nauseated, short of breath, or unusually tired.

People with asthma, chronic lung disease, or heart disease should follow their health care provider's action plan and keep medications available. Some medications need to be stored at a stable temperature, so keep them out of extreme heat.

Check air quality before going outside.

Wildfire smoke conditions can change quickly. Before exercising, working outside, or attending outdoor events, check current conditions. Please review the AirNow [Fire and Smoke Map](#).

If smoke is heavy, limit prolonged or heavy outdoor activity.

Pets can also be affected by wildfire smoke. When air quality is poor, limit your pet's time outdoors, especially if they have underlying health conditions.

Keep indoor air as clean as possible.

When smoke is present:

- Close windows and doors if you can do so while keeping indoor temperatures safe.
- If you have air conditioning or HVAC, use the system to recirculate indoor air.
- Avoid activities that add indoor air pollution, such as burning candles, smoking, frying food, or vacuuming.
- Evaporative or swamp coolers can pull smoke indoors. If temperatures allow, turn them off when smoke is heavy.
- A portable HEPA air cleaner or a DIY air cleaner may help reduce smoke indoors.
- If your home becomes too hot, go to an air-conditioned public space, cooling center, library, community center, or other cleaner-air location.
- Call 211 to find a cooling center or local resources.

Additional resources:

- CDPHE: [How to protect your health in higher temperatures and extreme heat](#)
 - CDPHE: [Wildfire smoke and health](#)
 - CDPHE: [Colorado Air Quality Summary and Advisories](#)
 - CDPHE: [Colorado Smoke Blog](#)
 - AirNow: [Fire and Smoke Map](#)
 - AirNow: [Protect Your Pets from Wildfire Smoke](#)
 - AirNow: [Protect Your Large Animals and Livestock from Wildfire Smoke](#)
 - National Weather Service: [Forecasts](#)
 - [211 Colorado](#)
 - Washington State Department of Health: [Choosing a portable air cleaner](#)
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The information contained herein was sourced from [Boulder County's website](#), CDPHE's Disaster Recovery Guide, and through guidance from subject matter experts at CDPHE.