



# County of Santa Cruz

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## PRESS RELEASE

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### PHASE I DEBRIS REMOVAL TO COMMENCE

The County of Santa Cruz is pleased to announce the commencement of Phase I debris cleanup, a critical step in the recovery process for residents impacted by the CZU Lightning Complex fires.

Beginning next week, crews from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency will begin remediating household hazardous waste in the CZU Lightning Complex burn area. The removal of hazardous waste is necessary to protect the health and safety of residents and the environment, and is being done at no cost to property owners.

Completion of Phase I debris removal will take several weeks, and include the removal of everyday products like paints, cleaners, solvents, oils, batteries, herbicides, pesticides, pressurized fuel cylinders and more. Weapons, ammunition and other dangerous materials will be identified for the Santa Cruz County Sheriff's Office for further processing.

USEPA crews include numerous team members, equipment and vehicles, and may lead to traffic delays. Crews wear white protective clothing and are clearly identified as USEPA team members including carrying identification, and will never approach residents individually for special access or to solicit goods or services.

USEPA's Phase 1 Status map will be available next week on the County's Fire Recovery page, [www.santacruzcounty.us/FireRecovery.aspx](http://www.santacruzcounty.us/FireRecovery.aspx). Completed properties will display a white USEPA placard and be noted on the Phase I Status map.

Once properties are completed, property owners will be eligible to move into Phase II debris cleanup. Property owners may choose a public option or pursue private debris removal. Both require prior approval of the Santa Cruz County Environmental Health Division (see Sept 3, 2020 order on debris removal: [www.santacruzcounty.us/FireRecovery/EHResources/EHDebrisRemoval.aspx](http://www.santacruzcounty.us/FireRecovery/EHResources/EHDebrisRemoval.aspx)).