

Help for Mobilehome Owners Sustaining Damage from Southern California Fires

Recent information from the Department of Housing and Community Development indicates that at least four mobilehome parks suffered fire damage or destruction to over 200 homes as the result of recent wildfires in San Diego and Los Angeles Counties.

Local Assistance Centers:

Local Assistance Centers (LAC's) have been established in a number of locations in Southern California fire areas to coordinate assistance with lost documents, temporary housing, emergency needs and FEMA loans for fire victims. As a first step, homeowners should contact these centers for help. Go to the Office of Emergency Services website for a list of LAC addresses at:

<http://www.oes.ca.gov/Operational/OESHome.nsf/ALL/025B99508F36CBF58825737F00052385?OpenDocument>

Emergency Assistance:

The American Red Cross provides emergency food, clothing, shelter, and medical assistance to needy individuals and families. To contact the Red Cross or find a shelter near you, call 1-800-REDCROSS (733-2767). To register or find a loved one on the Safe and Well List visit the following website: <https://disastersafe.redcross.org/default.aspx>

Federal Office of Emergency Services (FEMA)

FEMA financial assistance will be available for temporary housing, partial assistance for homeowners with insurance, and assistance for those without insurance. Information is available at the LAC's. FEMA requests for information and applications for assistance are also being handled through e-mail and by phone.

Website - http://www.fema.gov/hazard/wildfire/ca_2007.shtm

Phone -1-800-621-FEMA (3362);

TTY 1-800-462-7585 (for speech or hearing impaired persons).

State Housing Assistance Grants:

The State Supplemental Grant Program provides housing assistance such as temporary housing, repair, replacement, and permanent housing construction. The program can also cover other needs such as personal property, medical, dental, funeral, transportation, and moving and storage expenses. These grants may be offered when assistance from FEMA's Individuals and Households Program has been maximized. Once maximized, your FEMA application is transferred to this program; there is no separate application process. Contact CA Department of Social Services, State Supplemental Grant Program at 1-800-759-6807 (TTY for hearing and speech impaired: 1-800-822-6268).

Western Manufactured Housing Communities Association - WMA Foundation:

The WMA Foundation is a California nonprofit public benefit corporation that can provide some assistance, based on need, to homeowners in parks who suffer damage from fire, earthquake, flood, or other disasters. Information can be obtained by

contacting WMA at: 455 Capitol Mall, Suite 800, Sacramento, CA 95814
(916) 448-7002; E-mail: info@wma.org

Replacing Lost Documents:

Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD): can assist homeowners with title and salvage documents affecting manufactured homes or mobilehomes destroyed in the fire. Contact HCD's Registration and Titling Division at (916) 323-9803 or toll free 1-800 952-8356.

The County Recorder or Clerk: can assist individuals in replacing important documents, such as birth or marriage certificates that were lost in the fires. Contact your local County Recorder Office in your phone book or go to the following website for a listing of all local County Recorder Offices:

<http://www.cdph.ca.gov/certlic/birthdeathmar/Pages/CountyRecorderOffice.aspx>

Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV): can assist individuals in replacing documents, such as drivers' licenses, identification cards, car, truck or RV registration certificates or certificates of title that were lost in the fires. In addition, DMV can assist in obtaining forms to change the status of vehicles that were damaged or destroyed as a result of the fires. Contact DMV at 1-800-921-1117 or 1- 800-777-0133, or you can look up your local DMV office on the following website: http://dmv.ca.gov/fo/offices/toc_fo.htm

Insurance:

If you have a homeowners insurance policy, contact your insurance broker or agent immediately. The California Department of Insurance can also provide assistance on insurance issues and claims. Call the toll-free Consumer Hotline at 1-800-927-HELP (4357) or visit www.insurance.ca.gov

Hiring Building Contractors:

BEWARE: During times of disaster homeowners anxious to begin the rebuilding process are often victimized by unlicensed individuals who take advantage of disaster victims. Typically these "unlicensed contractors" demand sizable deposits but never show up to do the work, or, if they do, perform inferior work. Always obtain a contractor's state license number.

The State Contractors License Board provides guidance on verifying a contractor's license, investigates complaints, and also provides information about hiring a licensed contractor, but the Board has no jurisdiction over unlicensed individuals. For information on hiring, or filing a complaint regarding, a contractor, contact CSLB Disaster Hotline M-F from 8 a.m. – 5 p.m. at 1-800-962-1125, or 24-hour Automated Phone Response System 1-800-321 CSLB (2752). Licenses can also be checked online at www.cslb.ca.gov

Tax Assistance:

The Franchise Tax Board provides guidance in obtaining tax relief for disaster casualty losses. Contact the Franchise Tax Board at 1-800-852-5711, (TTY/TDD) for hearing or speech impaired: 1-800-822-6268.

The California Board of Equalization offers extensions to file tax returns and relief of interest and penalties to taxpayers and fee payers directly affected by the disaster. Contact the Board of Equalization at 1-800-400-7115 (TDD/TTY 1-800-735-2929).

Veterans – Cal Vet Loans

Those with a CALVET loan and have suffered damage to their mobilehome caused by the Southern California Wildfires may contact the CALVET Claims Administrator at 1-800-626-1613 Ext. 0, or CALVET at 1-800-952-5626.