

WHAT TO DO AFTER YOU EVACUATE

- Stay tuned to local television, radio or NOAA Weather Radio for latest updates.
- Check The Bastrop County website for updated information www.bastropcountytexas.gov
- Register for services at www.bastropcountylongtermrecovery.org
- Watch for effects of wildfire smoke in the air: The Texas Department of State Health Services warns that smoke can pose a serious health threat, especially if you have chronic heart or lung disease. Children and older adults are also at greater risk. Even healthy people can be affected by smoky conditions. Smoke from wildfires is a mixture of gases and fine particles from burning trees and plants. It can hurt your eyes, irritate your respiratory system and worsen symptoms from pre-existing conditions. Common symptoms of smoke exposure include:
 - Coughing
 - Scratch throat
 - Irritated sinuses
 - Shortness of breath
 - Chest pain
 - Headaches
 - Stinging eyes
 - Runny nose

If you experience any of these symptoms:

- Limit outdoor activities as much as possible.
- Keep the windows and doors of your home shut.
- Run the air conditioner with the fresh-air intake closed and use high-efficiency particulate air filters.
- Avoid cooking as much as possible.
- Do not burn candles or use fireplaces.
- Do not use vacuum cleaners which can stir up dust already inside your home.
- Keep your airways moist by drinking plenty of water.

UPON RE-ENTRY

- **Ash:** Adults should use a protective respirator mask (N-95 or P-100) while cleaning up areas in which ash particles cannot be controlled. Ash and dust from burned buildings may contain toxic and cancer causing chemicals including asbestos, arsenic and lead. Children should not be in the area while cleanup is in progress.
- **Electricity:** Avoid downed or damaged electrical lines. Electrical repairs should be done by a qualified technician.
- **Carbon Monoxide:** Place generators, power washers and other fuel burning devices at least 50 feet away from the house and away from open doors and windows to avoid carbon monoxide poisoning.
- **Natural Gas:** Do not enter an area or building where you smell gas. Do not turn on the lights or light a match. Leave the area immediately, then call 9-1-1.
- **Propane:** If a home propane tank is damaged and leaking, call 9-1-1 and the propane service provider. Do not transport leaking propane tanks in a car or dispose of them in the trash.

- **Food:** Discard food that may have spoiled, thawed or come into contact with hazardous materials like fire retardant or ash. Loss of power to refrigeration and freezer units can cause food to spoil. If you're not certain food is safe, throw it out.
- **Water:** Check with the water provider to be sure that water is safe to drink because water pressure may have been lost during the fire. Water from a damaged water system or well may require disinfection by boiling for 20 minutes or stirring in 1/8 teaspoon of unscented bleach per gallon and letting sit for 30 minutes.
- **Debris:** Get a tetanus shot if you have not had a booster in 10 years or can't remember when your last shot was, and be careful. Broken glass, exposed wires, nails, wood, metal, plastic and other debris can cause puncture wounds, cuts and burns. Falling trees and tree limbs while using chain saws can cause severe injuries.

WATCH FOR SIGNS OF TRAUMA OR STRESS

Mental health is also a concern as people deal with the traumatic events that surround a fire. Common feelings after a wildfire include fear, sadness and guilt. People can have trouble sleeping or feel jumpy, irritable, or numb. These symptoms are normal, and there are things people can do to cope with traumatic events:

- Take breaks from cleanup efforts and don't overdo it. Get rest, drink plenty of water, and accept help from others.
- Return to as many personal and family routines as possible, and find ways to relax and do something that you and your family have enjoyed in the past.
- Exercise, but do so indoors if the air quality isn't acceptable.
- Talk about your experiences and feelings with family, friends or clergy, and keep a journal.
- Upsetting times can cause some people to use alcohol or drugs to cope with stress. In the long run, that will not help and may lead to other problems.

Resource Links/Fire Safety Prevention Programs

- [State Fire Marshal's Office](#)
- [National Association of Fire Investigators](#)
- [International Association of Arson Investigators](#)
- [Hays County Fire Chief's Association](#)
- [Texas Commission on Environmental Quality \(TCEQ\)](#)
- [Texas Commission on Fire Protection](#)
- [Texas Forest Service](#)
- [U.S. Fire Administration](#)
- [National Fire Protection Association](#)
- [Texas Department of State Health Services](#)
- [FEMA Wildfire Information](#)