



## Public Health Brief

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### LOCAL PUBLIC HEALTH ORDER

#### **EMERGENCY ORDER OF THE ALPINE COUNTY HEALTH OFFICER REGARDING TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS ON RE-ENTRY TO AFFECTED AREAS; AND PROHIBITING ENDANGERMENT OF THE COMMUNITY THROUGH THE UNSAFE REMOVAL, TRANSPORT, AND DISPOSAL OF FIRE DEBRIS**

**WHEREAS**, the Alpine County Board of Supervisors proclaimed a local state of emergency on July 20, 2021, and the Governor issued a Proclamation of a State of Emergency on July 23, 2021, due to conditions of extreme peril caused by the Tamarack Fire, which destroyed homes and damaged other structures; and

**WHEREAS** the potential for widespread toxic exposures and threats to public health and the environment exists in the aftermath of a major wildfire disaster. Debris and ash from residential structure fires contain hazardous substances and the health effects of hazardous substances releases after a wildfire are well-documented; and

**WHEREAS**, the combustion of building materials such as siding, roofing tiles, and insulation result in dangerous ash that may contain asbestos, heavy metals, and other hazardous materials. Wells may be contaminated and require chlorination following a period of power outages. Household hazardous waste such as paint, gasoline, cleaning products, pesticides, compressed gas cylinders, and chemicals may have been stored in homes, garages, or sheds that may have burned in the fire, also producing hazardous materials; and

**WHEREAS**, exposure to hazardous substances may lead to acute and chronic health effects, and may cause long-term public health and environmental impacts. Uncontrolled hazardous materials and debris pose significant threats to public health through inhalation of dust particles and contamination of drinking water supplies. Improper handling can expose workers to toxic materials, and improper transport and disposal of fire debris can spread hazardous substances throughout the community, and

**WHEREAS**, hazardous materials inspection and removal is ongoing and a determination has been made by Incident Command and CalOES that residents may re-enter areas affected by the fire, provided that they



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Alpine County Health Department, 75-B Diamond Valley Rd., Markleeville, CA 96120

Alpine County Board of Supervisors, Phone: (530) 694-2281

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follow the provisions of this Order. Restrictions on debris removal must remain in effect to ensure the ultimate safe clean-up of fire-damaged structures and equipment; and

**WHEREAS**, Health and Safety Code section 101040 authorizes the Health Officer to issue orders to protect public health and safety in the context of a local emergency; and a Proclamation of Local Health Emergency by the Alpine County Health Officer was proclaimed on July 24, 2021, and ratified by the Alpine County Board of Supervisors on July 30, 2021; and,

**WHEREAS**, the Alpine County Health Officer finds that the Tamarack Fire has created conditions hazardous to public health and safety in the form of contaminated debris from household hazardous waste/materials and structural debris, which poses a substantial threat to human health and the environment unless its removal and disposal is performed in accordance with developed standards for fire remediation.

**NOW THEREFORE**, the Alpine County Health Officer **DECLARES** and **ORDERS** as follows:

1. A local health emergency continues to exist in Alpine County due to debris from the Tamarack Fire being or containing hazardous materials which are public health hazards and threats to the public health and safety.
0. Materials posing an immediate and imminent threat, such as unexploded ammunition and household hazardous wastes are present in the debris. The process of removal by trained professionals working through Alpine County and the California Office of Emergency Services (CalOES) is in progress. County and State officials are assessing the evacuation area.
2. No cleanup activities of burned structures or other construction activities shall commence without the prior written authorization of the County of Alpine's Building and Environmental Health Divisions and/or representatives from CalOES responsible for incident response, and then, only in compliance with adopted cleanup standards and construction safety guidelines.
3. Pending the enactment of additional requirements to address the Tamarack Fire disaster clean up, property owners choosing not to participate in a State Fire Debris Clearance Program, if one is established in Alpine County, must register with and obtain the permission of the Alpine County Public Health Department – Environmental Health Division, before beginning the removal of fire debris and conduct their private debris removal, transport, and disposal in a manner that does not endanger the community.
4. No one shall temporarily occupy or camp on private property unless and until standards for such temporary occupancy are approved by the Alpine County Building and Environmental Health Divisions, (and the Board of Supervisors if required under County or State law).



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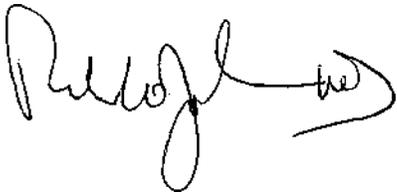
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5. **IT IS FURTHER DECLARED**, pursuant to California Health and Safety Code section 101080, that this **EMERGENCY ORDER OF THE ALPINE COUNTY HEALTH OFFICER REGARDING TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS ON RE-ENTRY TO AFFECTED AREAS; AND PROHIBITING ENDANGERMENT OF THE COMMUNITY THROUGH THE UNSAFE REMOVAL, TRANSPORT, AND DISPOSAL OF FIRE DEBRIS**

created and presented by the Tamarack Fire shall not remain in effect for a period in excess of seven (7) days unless it has been ratified by the Alpine County Board of Supervisors and shall be reviewed by the Board of Supervisors at least every 14 days until the local health emergency is terminated.

6. **IT IS SO ORDERED:**

Date: July 31, 2021



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Alpine County



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