

Northern California Wildfires – October 2017

Partial list of resources for Survivors/Persons impacted

Where to look for help

FEMA Disaster Assistance | 800-621-3362

- In English <https://www.DisasterAssistance.gov/>
- En Español <https://www.DisasterAssistance.gov/es>
- Mobile device (multiple languages to choose from): <https://m.fema.gov/>



FEMA/County Local Assistance Centers (LAC)

In person at various Local Assistance Centers (LAC), which are one-stop shops with critical services for residents who have been impacted by the fires, in Sonoma, Napa, and Mendocino Counties. See follow links for latest locations and status:

- City of Santa Rosa/Sonoma County Community Information and Recovery Resources <http://sonomacounty.ca.gov/EOC-and-PIO/Fires-October-2017/Community-Information-and-Recovery-Resources/>
- Napa County Information <http://www.countyofnapa.org/>
- Napa LAC: <http://www.napalac.com/>
- Mendocino County Fire Information <http://www.mendocinocounty.org/fireinfo>

Small Business Administration (SBA) loans may also be available to individuals and businesses to repair or replace disaster-damaged property, inventory, and supplies. Homeowners and renters may also be eligible for SBA loans to repair or replace disaster-related damages to homes or personal property.

Please register with FEMA online before arriving to the LAC if possible. Doing so will reduce the time it takes to register for services. See this check list to help speed up the process: <https://www.disasterassistance.gov/get-assistance/application-checklist>

Online/phone resources

- Call 2-1-1 for a variety of services, including **post-disaster mental health or grief counseling for children, adults, and senior**, or visit:
 - 2-1-1 Sonoma County <http://211sonoma.org/>
 - 2-1-1 Napa County <http://www.211bayarea.org/napa/>
 - 2-1-1 Mendocino County <http://www.211mendocino.org/>
- Congressman Mike Thompson Fire Recovery Guide <https://mikethompson.house.gov/FireRecovery>
- Coping with a Disaster or Traumatic Event – Centers for Disease Control and Prevention <https://emergency.cdc.gov/coping/families.asp>

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- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)
 - English speakers: 800-985-5990
 - Spanish speakers in the US: 800-985-5990 or text HÁBLANOS to 66746
 - Deaf/hearing impaired: use relay service: 1-800-985-5990
 - Text TalkWithUs to 66746

Insurance

Contact your insurance company's (local) agent, onsite representatives posted at major shelter(s), or insurance company's toll-free phone numbers to begin claim process.

Tax Relief

- Internal Revenue Service: <http://bit.ly/2yn7y94>
- Franchise Tax Board: <http://bit.ly/2ibqJMS>
- State Board of Equalization: <http://www.boe.ca.gov/proptaxes/faqs/disaster.htm>

Non-Profit Funding

"If you are an individual in need of assistance due to the Redwood/Potter Fires, please contact North Coast Opportunities and Mendocino Coast Children's Fund." See contact information below.

Pets/Animal Shelters

- Humane Society of Sonoma County: <http://sonomahumane.org/>
- Humane Society of Napa County: <https://napahumane.org/>
- Sonoma County Animal Shelter: <http://www.theanimalshelter.org/> 707-565-7100
- Yuba-Sutter SPCA: <http://www.yubasutterspca.com/>
- Napa County Animal Shelter: <http://www.countyofnapa.org/AnimalShelter/>
- Marin Humane Society <https://www.marinhumane.org/> 415-883-4621
- SPCA of Solano County <http://www.solanospca.com/>

Sources:

- From Donations to Volunteering: How to Help Fire Victims | The California Report | KQED News <https://ww2.kqed.org/news/2017/10/18/from-donations-to-volunteering-how-to-help-fire-victims/>
- How you can help people affected by the North Bay fires (or get help if you are an evacuee) – SFGate <http://www.sfgate.com/local/article/how-to-help-north-bay-fires-napa-santa-rosa-12264095.php>
- Updated: Where fire victims can apply for tax relief and FEMA grants and loans – SFGate <http://www.sfgate.com/business/networth/article/Where-fire-victims-can-apply-for-tax-relief-and-12276770.php>
- Here are resources for Sonoma, Napa, Mendocino, Lake fire-affected businesses and employees | The North Bay Business Journal <http://www.northbaybusinessjournal.com/northbay/sonomacounty/7531821-181/sonoma-fire-business-employee-resources>
- Napa, Sonoma 'insurance villages' help with fire claims | The North Bay Business Journal <http://www.northbaybusinessjournal.com/northbay/sonomacounty/7539028-181/insurance-companies-napa-sonoma-wildfires?ref=tsm&artslide=1>
- Andrea Barte, San Pablo Police Department, San Pablo, CA



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CONNECTING WITH OTHERS

SEEKING SOCIAL SUPPORT

- Making contact with others can help reduce feelings of distress
- Children and adolescents can benefit from spending some time with other similar-age peers
- Connections can be with family, friends, or others who are coping with the same traumatic event

Social Support Options

- Spouse or partner
- Trusted family member
- Close friend
- Priest, Rabbi, or other clergy
- Doctor or nurse
- Crisis counselor or other
- Support group
- Co-worker
- Pet

Do . . .

- Decide carefully whom to talk to
- Decide ahead of time what you want to discuss
- Choose the right time and place
- Start by talking about practical things
- Let others know you need to talk or just to be with them
- Talk about painful thoughts and feelings when you're ready
- Ask others if it's a good time to talk
- Tell others you appreciate them listening
- Tell others what you need or how they could help—one main thing that would help

Don't . . .

- Keep quiet because you don't want to upset others
- Keep quiet because you're worried about being a burden
- Assume that others don't want to listen
- Wait until you're so stressed or exhausted that you can't fully benefit from help

Ways to Get Connected

- Calling friends or family on the phone
- Increasing contact with existing acquaintances and friends
- Renewing or beginning involvement in church, synagogue, or other religious group
- Getting involved with a support group
- Getting involved in community recovery activities

Source: Psychological First Aid Field Operations Guide, 2nd Edition



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WHEN TERRIBLE THINGS HAPPEN WHAT YOU MAY EXPERIENCE

Immediate Reactions

There are a wide variety of positive and negative reactions that survivors can experience during and immediately after a disaster. These include:

Domain	Negative Responses	Positive Responses
Cognitive	Confusion, disorientation, worry, intrusive thoughts and images, self-blame	Determination and resolve, sharper perception, courage, optimism, faith
Emotional	Shock, sorrow, grief, sadness, fear, anger, numb, irritability, guilt and shame	Feeling involved, challenged, mobilized
Social	Extreme withdrawal, interpersonal conflict	Social connectedness, altruistic helping behaviors
Physiological	Fatigue, headache, muscle tension, stomachache, increased heart rate, exaggerated startle response, difficulties sleeping	Alertness, readiness to respond, increased energy

Common negative reactions that may continue include:

Intrusive reactions

- Distressing thoughts or images of the event while awake or dreaming
- Upsetting emotional or physical reactions to reminders of the experience
- Feeling like the experience is happening all over again (“flashback”)

Avoidance and withdrawal reactions

- Avoid talking, thinking, and having feelings about the traumatic event
- Avoid reminders of the event (places and people connected to what happened)
- Restricted emotions; feeling numb
- Feelings of detachment and estrangement from others; social withdrawal
- Loss of interest in usually pleasurable activities

Physical arousal reactions

- Constantly being "on the lookout" for danger, startling easily, or being jumpy
- Irritability or outbursts of anger, feeling "on edge"
- Difficulty falling or staying asleep, problems concentrating or paying attention

Reactions to trauma and loss reminders

- Reactions to places, people, sights, sounds, smells, and feelings that are reminders of the disaster
- Reminders can bring on distressing mental images, thoughts, and emotional/physical reactions
- Common examples include: sudden loud noises, sirens, locations where the disaster occurred, seeing people with disabilities, funerals, anniversaries of the disaster, and television/radio news about the disaster



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Positive changes in priorities, worldview, and expectations

- Enhanced appreciation that family and friends are precious and important
- Meeting the challenge of addressing difficulties (by taking positive action steps, changing the focus of thoughts, using humor, acceptance)
- Shifting expectations about what to expect from day to day and about what is considered a “good day”
- Shifting priorities to focus more on quality time with family or friends
- Increased commitment to self, family, friends, and spiritual/religious faith

When a Loved One Dies, Common Reactions Include:

- Feeling confused, numb, disbelief, bewildered, or lost
- Feeling angry at the person who died or at people considered responsible for the death
- Strong physical reactions such as nausea, fatigue, shakiness, and muscle weakness
- Feeling guilty for still being alive
- Intense emotions such as extreme sadness, anger, or fear
- Increased risk for physical illness and injury
- Decreased productivity or difficulties making decisions
- Having thoughts about the person who died, even when you don’t want to
- Longing, missing, and wanting to search for the person who died
- Children and adolescents are particularly likely to worry that they or a parent might die
- Children and adolescents may become anxious when separated from caregivers or other loved ones

WHAT HELPS

- Talking to another person for support or spending time with others
- Engaging in positive distracting activities (sports, hobbies, reading)
- Getting adequate rest and eating healthy meals
- Trying to maintain a normal schedule
- Scheduling pleasant activities
- Taking breaks
- Reminiscing about a loved one who has died
- Focusing on something practical that you can do right now to manage the situation better
- Using relaxation methods (breathing exercises, meditation, calming self-talk, soothing music)
- Participating in a support group
- Exercising in moderation
- Keeping a journal
- Seeking counseling

WHAT DOESN'T HELP

- Using alcohol or drugs to cope
- Extreme withdrawal from family or friends
- Overeating or failing to eat
- Withdrawing from pleasant activities
- Working too much
- Violence or conflict
- Doing risky things (driving recklessly, substance abuse, not taking adequate precautions)
- Blaming others
- Extreme avoidance of thinking or talking about the event or a death of a loved one
- Not taking care of yourself
- Excessive TV or computer games

