



Los Angeles Wildfires

Phase 1: Hazardous Material Removal

After fires, floods, and other large-scale disasters, common household chemicals and products can become potentially dangerous. In FEMA-led responses, EPA is assigned to **assess, secure, remove, and dispose** of these chemicals safely. This work requires specialized staff and equipment. The location where the collected materials are sorted and loaded for shipment is called a **staging area**.

Eaton Fire Staging Areas and Steps to Protect Health and the Environment

EPA has two staging areas for the Eaton Fire:

- The driving range at the Altadena Golf Course (1456 East Mendocino St, Altadena)
- Lario Park Staging Area (15701 West Foothill Blvd, Azusa).

An additional area is being used by EPA at Farnsworth Park. The park will not be used to process HHM; it is being used as an additional area of support (parking, supplies etc).

Many **protective measures** are in place to protect the site from risks, such as spills or leaks. EPA uses trained hazardous materials professionals to assess, secure, remove, and dispose of the hazardous materials. Before using the staging areas, EPA sampled the soil to know what it was like before we got there.



The staging areas are **highly controlled**. The areas where we process materials are first:

- triple-lined with plastic, and
- equipped with spill control measures—such as wattles, booms, earthen berms, gravel and other items—to prevent anything leaving the processing area.

Additionally, both staging areas are:

- fenced, secured and lit, with 24-hour security every day;
- limited to EPA staff, EPA contractors, and partner agencies only; and
- closed to the public.

Both staging areas will sort and process HHM for shipment to appropriate disposal facilities. Materials include: paint, paint thinners, pool chemicals, oils, pesticides, cleaners, solvents and other items. Materials arrive at and leave the site in sealed containers.

Materials are packaged, sealed and marked before they are transported out of the burned area. Materials remain sealed throughout this process.



Photo of Lario Staging Area

Trucks are secured and follow routes designed to minimize disturbances. Once at the staging area, materials are unloaded from trucks one package at a time by trained staff directly into a variety of lined containers. These containers are placed on several layers of protective material and not directly on the ground.

Materials are separated when collected to limit risk. Separated materials are sent to different disposal facilities. We require specialized containment methods to prevent any material dispersal during transit.

All transportation is planned by EPA to ensure household hazardous materials are highly contained and that we maximize safety while minimizing environmental risk.

Workers at the staging areas follow all applicable health and safety protocols and use personal protective equipment.

Around the entire staging area, we are:

- Doing continuous perimeter air monitoring for worker safety (24/7), and
- Spraying water throughout the day to suppress dust.

When Phase 1 is complete, we will sample the staging area again to verify the areas will be left as we found them.

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For questions about EPA's Phase 1 Household Hazardous Materials removal work, contact our hotline or email us:

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