First Steps After a Wildfire

This checklist will help keep you on track during this stressful time. We’re rooting for you...

- Take care of your family’s immediate needs first.
- Finding temporary housing is a priority. Your insurance company should help you find a place of similar size.
- Start a recovery diary. Any notebook will do. Take notes on who you talked to, the number you called, date and time, what was said. Keep your paperwork organized.
- Ask your insurance company for cash advances for:
  - Living expenses
  - Replacing personal property
- Keep all receipts while you are displaced. Hotel bills, clothes, and pet boarding may be reimbursed but require receipts.
- Take photos of your property before any cleanup or debris removal happens.
- Do not rush into signing contracts. Get copies of ALL paperwork you do sign.
- An insurance adjuster will eventually come and inspect your home. If they make you a settlement offer on the spot, get a 2nd opinion on what you’re entitled to.
- Inventorying your damaged and destroyed property is time-consuming and unpleasant. UP offers tips and tools for getting this done.
- Give your insurer a chance to do the right thing, but be prepared to stand up for your rights and get help if you’re not being treated fairly.
- Register with a “Case Manager” – they can help make referrals to resources.
- Register with FEMA (federally declared disaster) and the SBA (state disaster declarations needed)
- For more specifics and guidance on the insurance claim process, visit the Claim Guidance Library.