

[Insuring the uninsured for wildfire risk](#)

ABC 7 News

OAKLAND, Calif. (KGO) — Beginning on Thursday insurance companies doing business in California cannot cancel a homeowners policy in fire zone areas. The moratorium is good for one year. This action will help residents of more than 800 thousand homes in wildfire areas whose policies were not renewed.

Ten months after Sean Coffey purchased his home in Montclair, he lost his insurance coverage.

“The first year we got dropped it was because of proximity to brush. It’s kind of hard to get it out of them. I think one time they alluded to a high fire score, I’m not totally sure what that is,” explained Sean Coffey, a Montclair resident.

Now he pays \$800 more a year for homeowners insurance because he was forced to get the California Fair Plan insurance policy meant for those unable to get insurance in the regular market.

“It doesn’t give you a lot of coverage and it is expensive,” said Amy Bach founder of the nonprofit “United Policyholders” to help people navigate their way through the insurance process.

Montclair and Orinda both get more non-renewal notifications than other places in the Bay Area.

“People have been dropped by their insurance companies after decades of loyalty, premium payments and loyalty,” announced Ricardo Lara, California’s Insurance Commissioner.

Effective Thursday, the state Insurance Commissioner imposed a moratorium on non-renewals for wildfire risk. He made the announcement in the Oakland Hills surrounded by representatives of counties affected by fires like Sonoma, El Dorado, Placer and Ventura.

This will ensure extended coverage for 800 thousand homes and rentals in California. Take the Kincadee fire in Sonoma County, now nearly 140 thousand fire policies will have to be renewed.

That one-year moratorium will give lawmakers and the governor time to hammer out deals with the insurance companies.

“We’re ready to sit down and negotiate with the insurance companies about what comes next,” said Lara.