



Oregon Wildfire Recovery

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Oregon's Potable Water Resources Task Force Requests Community Input to Understand Impacts of the 2020 September Wildfires on Private Drinking Water Systems

SALEM, Ore. – May 7, 2021 – The September 2020 wildfires damaged many public and private water systems across Oregon. The Potable Water Resources Task Force, part of Oregon's state-led wildfire recovery efforts, has launched a survey to learn how the 2020 wildfires have impacted private drinking water wells and systems that divert surface water from streams or reservoirs. This information will be used to help the state better support impacted Oregonians while also helping to inform statewide recovery efforts.

"Offering assistance to individuals impacted by the September wildfires to properly restore private water supply systems will help to provide clean drinking water and protect them from potential public health and safety hazards," said Bryn Hudson, water policy analyst for the Oregon Water Resources Department (OWRD).

If you rely on a private well or surface water system for your drinking water, please take five minutes to complete the survey. Your answers will help us understand and assess damages caused by or related to the 2020 wildfires. Access the survey online at <https://wildfire.oregon.gov/Pages/Drinking-Water-Supply.aspx>.

Domestic Water Well and Surface Water Resources

OWRD has developed resources for maintaining private wells after wildfire as well as post-wildfire water right considerations. Visit the Department's wildfire recovery web page for more information regarding post-fire water rights, well maintenance and potential funding assistance. If a water system requiring a water right needs to be rebuilt, coordination with OWRD in advance is recommended.

Free private well testing for well users in wildfire-impacted communities

Well users whose properties were affected by wildfires can receive a voucher for free well water testing. Learn more and apply for a voucher by visiting healthoregon.org/wells. Well users will find guidance about how to first assess damage, then take actions to protect their wells, and finally test their well water to confirm it is safe to drink.

The Oregon Health Authority will continue to provide testing vouchers to well owners through May 15, 2021. Well owners can select from a list of approved environmental laboratories in Oregon that will honor the vouchers for testing services. The tests will look for presence of bacteria, nitrates, arsenic, lead and chemicals that are hazardous byproducts of fire.

For general information and resources for drinking water supply recovery, visit [Oregon's Wildfire Response webpage](#). For information, questions, or concerns contact the Potable Water Resources Task Force at fire.info@state.or.us.

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