

MOTION BY SUPERVISORS LINDSEY P. HORVATH

April 1, 2025

AND KATHRYN BARGER

PROACTIVELY AND URGENTLY REMOVING FIRE DEBRIS FROM NON-RESPONSIVE PROPERTIES

Many of those impacted by the January 2025 Fires have begun or will soon begin the process of rebuilding their homes. The Governor has issued the executive orders necessary to commence that process and we are very thankful for the support from state and federal partners.

A very significant recovery issue that does not get discussed widely is property owner participation. To date, nearly 11,000 property owners have submitted applications for opting in or opting out of the government-run Private Property Debris Removal (PPDR) program, which thanks to federal government support is of no cost to homeowners. We are thankful to these property owners for their quick action amid this tragedy and the County must support their efforts in every way possible. To date, we still have over 1,000 fire-damaged property owners have not submitted applications to determine whether they will opt in or out. The clock is ticking for our federal partners to complete their work and move on to help others in our country with need.

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As of March 28,2025, FEMA and Cal OES have extended the ROE deadline to April 15, 2025.

Given the time constraints we are working with for maximum FEMA reimbursement and to ensure the entire burn area is prepped for the rebuilding phase, we must ensure all lots are cleared and ready to be developed. In particular, leaving debris along the coast and within the community is unacceptable. For coastal properties, the summer high tides are approaching where more debris is at risk of going into the ocean unless we act now to remove the debris. Further, the coastal properties present a unique threat to safety as the structural integrity of the buildings and the retaining walls along Pacific Coast Highway (PCH) must be addressed and access is required through these coastal properties. The coastal properties along PCH are in the City of Malibu. Through an urgency ordinance that may be adopted by the City of Malibu, providing for summary abatement procedures, the County could further assist with expediting recovery and ensure the safety of motorists traveling on PCH and that fire debris on coastal properties is cleared in a timely manner to prevent further polluting our ocean waters.

Furthermore, some property owners may not have the information, and the County must engage in every way possible to ensure property owners are aware of the requirement to fill out an application whether property owners opt in or out. The displacement of the population has made communicating with them at their residences very challenging; therefore, every resource available to us and every list available of fire impacted households should be cross checked with our list of properties with non-responsive owners to proactively reach out. These multi-faceted approaches must be executed expeditiously, and the County must use every tool in its toolbox to ensure

that property owners rebuilding in the fire footprint are not forced to reside next to uncleared fire debris.

WE, THEREFORE, MOVE that the Board of Supervisors delegate authority to the Department of Public Works, in collaboration with the Chief Executive Office, and in consultation with, and the assistance and approval of, County Counsel, to negotiate, draft, and enter into a memorandum of agreement with the City of Malibu, whereby the County would act as the City of Malibu's agent in taking all appropriate and necessary steps to facilitate the removal of debris on coastal properties belonging to non-responsive owners.

WE FURTHER MOVE THAT, the Department of Public Works, in coordination with the Assessor, Treasurer-Tax Collector, Chief Executive Office's Office of Emergency Management, including all other relevant departments, in consultation with County Counsel, take the necessary steps to conduct a targeted outreach campaign to ensure that non-responsive properties in all fire impacted communities across Los Angeles County, apply for opting or out of the PPDR program before the April 15, 2025 deadline and all properties are cleared as expeditiously as possible, including but not limited to:

1. Share data across departments to identify contact information for displaced property owners that have yet to respond to the debris removal program. Departments should use existing lists of people affected by the fires, including, but not limited to:
 - a. Partner agency lists of affected populations seeking relief, including FEMA, US Postal Service, non-profits and others legally able to share their customer data.
 - b. Departmental interest lists for the various relief programs.

2. Outreach campaign shall include multiple strategies, to secure outstanding property owner compliance with the County's debris removal program to maximize FEMA reimbursements and expeditious clearing of affected properties.
3. Report back to the Board, in writing, within 7 days, on a strategy to ensure that property owners that did not opt into the government run debris removal program clear properties expeditiously to ensure the safety of our community members who will begin rebuilding. The report should include:
 - a. A deadline for when debris must be removed from private property.
 - b. A nuisance abatement process for the fire footprints, inclusive of the staffing and resources necessary to implement and effectively enforce.
 - c. An outreach campaign proposal that is inclusive of multiple strategies directed at property owners within the fire footprint that did not sign up for the opt in program, and advise them of the debris removal deadline, including potential enforcement actions should properties not be cleared by the stated deadlines.

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