

Clean-up of bushfire-affected materials

FAQ

The State and Federal governments are covering the costs of cleaning up material affected by bushfires in South Australia in the 2019-20 summer.

What has been done to clean up bushfire waste so far?

The priority to date has been the safe management and removal of hazardous materials, particularly asbestos, CCA ('permapine') timber and ash, and other chemicals.

Asbestos waste has been contained, and contractors have been engaged to start the clean-up of hazardous materials.

Detailed assessments of bushfire waste by Green Industries SA are underway and will inform coordinated clean-up efforts.

I have bushfire waste on my property—what should I do?

Property owners in fire-affected areas, who have not already registered, should register their needs through the Green Industries SA website: greenindustries.sa.gov.au/register-your-waste-needs

If you have already registered online or in person with Green Industries SA, you do not need to register again.

What properties are eligible?

Government is covering the clean-up cost of SA properties used for residential, small business or primary production purposes that were destroyed by bushfire after 1 July 2019. This includes insured and uninsured property owners.

This clean-up assistance is in addition to the Bushfire Recovery Grants for Small Business and Primary Producers.

Definitions of small business and primary producer used for bushfire grant applications also apply for this program. For these definitions visit www.business.sa.gov.au/bushfires and www.pir.sa.gov.au/recoverygrants

Clean-up costs for all large and corporate businesses will be met by owners or their insurer.



What will be covered in this clean-up?

Fire-affected materials including:

- bricks
- rubble and demolition waste
- e-waste
- metal sheeting
- metal tanks
- plastic rain water tanks
- fencing materials
- polypipe and irrigation materials
- vehicles

NB: Metal that may still be recyclable will be assessed on a case-by-case basis on your property. In many cases, even if fire-affected, metals can be recovered and recycled for cash—you are encouraged to contact a local metal recycler to organise this kind of collection from your property. Where it's not possible to separate it from other waste, it will be collected as part of the clean-up.

What is not covered by this clean-up and what do I do about it?

Green waste is not covered in this clean-up.

Contact your local council for details of green waste drop-off or collection options.

What if my property was damaged, but not destroyed?

What about destroyed or damaged outbuildings?

Government will pay the clean-up costs for outbuildings that are uninhabitable or unusable and located within the vicinity of primary residences or business operations.

Individual site assessments will be required to be by trained and licensed contractors to determine safety requirements and eligibility.

This program focuses on safety hazards and issues that could impede people rebuilding their homes and running their businesses.

How will the clean-up process work?

To opt-in, bushfire-impacted property owners must register with Green Industries SA:

greenindustries.sa.gov.au/register-your-waste-needs

Once this is completed:

- A local contractor will contact registered property owners to discuss damage and assess eligibility.
- The contractor will meet the property owner on site once the area is declared safe.
- Property owners will be informed of scope of works government will pay for.
- The property owner will be contacted to confirm a date.
- Clean-up of the property will commence.

When will clean-up work start?

Clean-up started in early February 2020.

Safety is the number one priority and before any clearing work begins we need to make sure that hazardous materials, such as asbestos, are identified, contained and properly disposed of.

Clearing work begins after properties have been made safe, and in certain situations this could mean ensuring all impacted properties in close proximity are made safe, to minimise the risk of clearing work accidentally spreading contamination from nearby locations.

Can I access my property prior to demolition?

Due to occupational health and safety concerns, if your property has been assessed as containing asbestos, you will not be able to access the property during the clean-up process to remove items yourself. If your property does not contain asbestos, you can undertake salvage and recovery up until the demolition and removal commences. A contractor will contact you to confirm the date this will happen.

I registered ages ago, why hasn't my property been cleared yet?

The waste clean-up process after a bushfire is complex, and we are working hard to make sure the best solutions are in place. Properties with bushfire waste are being grouped together, so that local contractors can efficiently roll out the clean-up process. Please be patient and be sure that if you have registered with Green Industries SA, your property is in line for clean-up.

I organised clean-up on my own already. Can I be reimbursed?

Anyone affected by the bushfires who has incurred costs for clean-up as outlined in this FAQ under "What will be covered in this clean-up?" can discuss potential reimbursement with their Local Recovery Coordinator.

This includes property owners who have organised clean-up through their private insurance.

For reimbursement of clean-up costs to be considered, property owners will need to:

- Have sustained damage to physical building structures or vehicles on their property (not green waste)
- Demonstrate the materials were bushfire-affected
- Provide evidence of the costs and payment associated with the clean-up
- Have not received other government assistance for clean-up.

I am going ahead with my own clean-up. Can I be reimbursed?

The public announcement that State and Federal government would cover the costs of clean-up was made on 12 February 2020, with promotion through South Australian media, local recovery community newsletters, Recovery Centres, and social media.

If you can demonstrate a private arrangement was already in place—and paid for—before midnight Sunday 23 February 2020, reimbursement will be considered subject to the conditions noted above under "I organised clean-up on my own already".

If you intend to initiate private clean-up after midnight Sunday 23 February 2020, you will not be able to access any reimbursement.

Have insurance companies been informed of the arrangements?

The Insurance Council of Australia has committed that insurers will maximise the funds available in their customers' policies for rebuilding.

How will the waste get collected?

A mix of services is being coordinated to best address the complexities of waste clean-up. These include collection from properties and central drop-off points. Make sure you have registered with Green Industries SA so you can be contacted.

Who is doing the clean-up?

Qualified contractors and suppliers are being engaged to deliver clean-up services to ensure the clean-up operation maximises local knowledge and expertise and assists local economic recovery. Suppliers must be appropriately licensed.

Where and how will the materials, including asbestos, be disposed?

Debris will be disposed of in licensed tipping sites across the state. All waste disposal will be overseen by the SA Environment Protection Authority. We will maximise the amount of materials being recycled.

Licensed contractors engaged in clean-up activities are subject to a compliance code for removing asbestos, which includes strict measures to control dust that may contain asbestos.

How do local contractors register interest?

If you're a contractor, register your interest with greenindustries@sa.gov.au

Who can I contact with questions about the clean-up?

Visit the Green Industries website greenindustries.sa.gov.au/bushfires

If your questions are still not answered, contact your Local Waste Management Coordinators:

Kangaroo Island—Marina Wagner 0400 179 598

Cudlee Creek—Mike Haywood 0407 400 071