

Homeowners returning to a property after an evacuation may find impacts to their property, either from debris or fire damage to their wells or septic systems. Northern Nevada Public Health (NNPH) has put together the following guidance for homeowners to assist with the potential issues they may need to deal with upon their return.

Wells

- Well owners should be aware of the potential for microbial contamination from wildfire or associated power outages.
- The system, including the well cap (and O-ring), water lines and any pressure tanks should be inspected for damage. Any damage could have opened a pathway for contamination.
- Contamination can also occur any time there is a loss of pressure. Loss of pressure can occur from physical damage such as a line break, or if the pressure tank was drained due to usage while there was no power to the pump.
- If contamination is suspected or a concern, water used for drinking or cooking purposes should be boiled or disinfected. Water should be brought to a rolling boil for 3 minutes for disinfection.
- The Nevada State Health Lab can test samples of the water brought in by the well owner if desired. Contact them – 775-688-1335 – for guidance on sampling procedures.
- Homeowners should contact a licensed well driller for assistance if any damage is discovered.

Septic Systems

- Septic systems may well be fine after a fire, as they are underground; however, possible damage can include melted pipes and compromised lids. If the system includes a pump, there can be electrical issues.
- Homeowners should check to ensure that drains are properly draining, and no water is observable surfacing.
- It is recommended that homeowners seek assistance from a licensed septic system company if they are concerned that their system is not functioning correctly.
- Any surfacing water should be treated as sewage and avoided. Seek professional assistance if needed.
- Any potentially sewage contaminated areas can be disinfected with a 10% bleach solution after any solids are removed.

Solid Waste/Debris

- Waste Management (WM) has contacted residents in the evacuation area via text/outdial/email to notify them that they will be servicing the area as scheduled next week and will collect extra waste put out for pick up at no extra charge. No stickers are necessary.
- WM is considering adding a one-time extra trip for the evacuation next week. More info should be provided to you. Their number is 775-329-8822.