



RDCO Recovery
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2021/22 Debris Management And/Or Hazard Tree Removal Reimbursement Program

The fire season in 2021 created health and safety concerns and environmental pollution from burnt structures. Buildings can contain asbestos, lead and other hazards. Contaminated ash can escape into the environment and migrate to other properties. Property owners without adequate insurance may not be able to clean up debris on their property.

The Regional District of Central Okanagan (RDCO) is implementing a Debris Management And/Or Hazard Tree Removal Reimbursement Program with funding provided by the Canadian Red Cross and Emergency Management BC. Property owners impacted from the 2021 White Rock Lake Wildfire needing assistance with debris removal will be contacted by the RDCO to let them know how to apply to the program. The process is outlined below:

STEP 1: RDCO Case Workers will reach out to those impacted property owners who may qualify for this program.

RDCO Case Workers will contact property owners who may qualify to confirm if they are interested in participating in this program.

STEP 2: RDCO Case Worker Referral to Canadian Red Cross

The RDCO Case Workers will refer interested property owners to the Canadian Red Cross (CRC). The CRC will review and confirm insurance status and provide information to the RDCO for Step 3.

STEP 3: RDCO Approval and Debris Removal Program Site Work

RDCO will confirm reimbursement for costs incurred by owner selected contractor. The owner submits documentation for reimbursement or invoices for payment of the approved works.

Property owners can direct any questions regarding this program to the RDCO at:

1. **through a Recovery Email:** recovery@rdco.com
 - **Phone: 250-469-6111**

Frequently Asked Questions:

[Who is eligible for this program?](#)

Property owners who lost a structure(s) and may be inadequately insured are eligible for this program.

[When is the clean up process expected to occur?](#)

The RDCO Case Workers will be contacting property owners as soon as possible who need support to under debris cleanup. The on site clean up work is planned to start in the spring of 2022 when sites are snow free.

[Can I clean up my own property, and/or be reimbursed for clean up work that has already been done on the property?](#)

Yes, there is a process to apply for reimbursement for clean-up work you wish to do or have already completed. Please note some restrictions apply including proof of payment (receipt) from a third-party contract is required.

[Can I choose to keep my existing building foundation?](#)

Yes, but it is not recommended for several reasons:

1. Concrete can lose its strength when exposed to extreme heat from wildfires.
2. Metal and plastic vapour barriers can also be compromised.
3. Where water and sewer pipes are brought through an existing foundation they will need to be replaced, which can be difficult and expensive with an existing foundation.
4. Older foundations may no longer meet current requirements and may be close to reaching their service life.
5. An existing foundation may not meet the necessary specifications of a new building.
6. Often it is cheaper to have the foundation removed and install a new one.

To use an existing foundation to build a new structure, a structural engineer must sign off, to ensure that it will meet the requirements of the new construction. Foundations kept are not eligible for the program. If foundation is left, funding may not be available through the Debris program.

[Will the RDCO be cleaning up other debris that was not impacted by the wildfire?](#)

The RDCO will only be reimbursing for owner expense relating to concrete, and contaminated surface soil, and/or hazard trees from properties damaged in the 2021 wildfire season.

[What is included in the scope of the program?](#)

The RDCO will approve reimbursement based on the scope of the program. Please ensure that you have obtained approval before beginning work. If you have already completed your debris removal, please provide an invoice to the RDCO and a review will be done to determine eligible reimbursement.