

U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
POLLUTION/SITUATION REPORT
Valley Fire Response - Removal Polrep



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
Region IX

Subject: POLREP #3
Progress
Valley Fire Response

Middletown, CA
Latitude: 38.7526718 Longitude: -122.6265309

To: Bret Moxley, EPA Region 9
Randy Nattis, EPA Region 9

From: Bret Moxley, On Scene Coordinator

Date: 10/13/2015

Reporting Period: October 12, 2015 0730 - October 13, 2015 0730

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

Site Number:	Contract Number:
D.O. Number:	Action Memo Date:
Response Authority: Stafford Act	Response Type: Emergency
Response Lead: FEMA	Incident Category: Removal Action
NPL Status:	Operable Unit:
Mobilization Date:	Start Date:
Demob Date:	Completion Date:
CERCLIS ID:	RCRIS ID:
ERNS No.:	State Notification:
FPN#:	Reimbursable Account #:

1.1.1 Incident Category

Stafford Act

1.1.2 Site Description

On 12 September 2015 at 1324 the Valley Fire began in Lake County CA, primarily impacting the communities of Middletown, Hidden Valley Lake, and Cobb. The fire covered 76067 acres and 1958 structures were destroyed, including 1280 residences, 27 multi-family buildings, 66 commercial buildings, and 585 out buildings. 93 structures sustained damage including 41 residences, 7 commercial buildings, and 45 minor structures.

On 27 September 2015, the Governor of California, Edmund G. Brown Jr., issued Executive Order B-33-15, to initiate cleanup of burnt debris and ash in Lake County as a result of wildfires. The Department of Resources Recycling and Recovery (CalRecycle) has been assigned to manage the removal and proper disposal of the solid waste and debris left over from the fires in Lake and Napa Counties.

On 28 September 2015, using Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA) authority, United States Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) EPA Region 9 On Scene Coordinators (OSCs) with the support of START contractors began clearing properties of household waste (HHW) and perform air and radiation monitoring.

On 3 October 2015, the US Environmental Protection Agency received two Mission Assignments from FEMA under ESF-10:

- 1) For activation and provision of a Debris Management SME for HHW planning (\$50,000);
- 2) Direct Federal Assistance (DFA) to collect, stage and dispose of HHW (\$3,500,000).

United States EPA has been tasked to manage the categorization, removal, and appropriate disposal of HHW and orphaned containers at properties with destroyed residential structures within the Valley Fire boundary in Lake County. EPA will coordinate with State and Local agencies to facilitate all operations supporting the Valley Fire Response.

1.1.2.1 Location

1.1.2.2 Description of Threat

Each day, U.S EPA contractors' Superfund Technical Assessment and Response Team (START) and Emergency and Rapid Response Services (ERRS) crews deploy to 5 Divisions (Divs A-E) in Lake County and assess only those structures where right-of-entry is permitted. Properties are documented and HHW assessment activities are performed, including air and radiation monitoring and asbestos testing for H&S proposes when appropriate. Orphan containers such as pressurized cylinders are evaluated, collected and transported to the staging area. After assessment and documentation, properties are released to CalRecycle for remedial operations.

1.1.3 Preliminary Removal Assessment/Removal Site Inspection Results

On 28 September, at the State's request and under CERCLA authority, EPA Region 9 OSCs (without contractor support) began clearing 33 properties of HHW and orphan containers near public schools to minimize risk to school children and so that California's debris management teams could scrape the structure pads and prepare them for recovery. A total of 47 bulk asbestos samples were collected at 18 properties to identify the presence of respirable asbestos to protect response personnel.

Following the initial HHW recovery efforts, at the State's request and under CERCLA authority, EPA Region 9 OSCs with the support of EPA START Contractors continued the process of clearing properties of HHW and orphan containers from priority locations within the Valley Fire boundary. A total of 1162 parcels with significantly damaged structures were identified using structural damage assessment data from Lake County.

1.1.4 Command Objectives

- Ensure the safety of response personnel and the public.
- Minimize economic impact by ensuring costs commensurate to tactical objectives.
- Operate all activities with respect for residents and the community.
- Maintain situational awareness through a systemic and planned process for tasking, collecting, processing, analyzing, and disseminating information.
- Keep public and stakeholders informed by providing an accurate and timely release of incident information.
- Manage a coordinated inter-agency response effort.
- Identify, characterize, and recover all household hazardous waste to include pressurized containers.
- Ensure disposal of recovered HHW appropriately.
- Identify areas with asbestos and collect samples accordingly for health and safety purposes of field operators.
- Maintain site security and situational awareness at all times.
- Establish an informational transfer process to facilitate communications with stakeholders and organizations.

1.1.5 Command Emphasis

- Ensure proper PPE at all times including respirator.
- Follow work/rest ratio.
- Stay hydrated - highs in the 90's throughout the week.
- Watch for citizens and families as you work since these areas are not closed off to the public.
- Watch for slips trips and falls, nails, and sharp objects that could be buried under ash.
- **Do NOT pick up or take anything that is not characterized as a HHW product. These are peoples belongings!**

2. Current Activities

2.1 Operations Section

2.1.1 Narrative

Lake County, largely affected by the wildfire, is located east of Mendocino County, north of Napa Valley. The areas exhibiting the greatest extent of fire damage to structures include the communities of Cobb, Middletown, and Hidden Valley Lake. Parts of northern Napa County and eastern Sonoma County were also affected, resulting in a total area of 76,067 acres burned. Middletown California marks the location of CalRecycle's Disaster Recovery Operations Center (DROC).

United States EPA (EPA) has been tasked to manage the categorization, removal, and appropriate disposal of HHW and orphaned containers at properties with destroyed residential structures within the Valley Fire boundary in Lake County. EPA will coordinate with State and Local agencies to facilitate all operations supporting the Valley Fire Response.

2.1.2 Response Actions to Date

On 28 September 2015, at the State's request, EPA Region 9 OSCs (without contractor support) cleared 33 properties of household hazardous waste (HHW) and orphan containers near the public schools to minimize risk to school children and so that California's debris management teams could scrape the structure pads and prepare them for recovery.

On 5 October 2015, EPA START and ERRS personnel deployed to the ICP in Middletown, CA and began

field operations including HHW assessment, air monitoring, and radiation monitoring activities. ARCADIS, on behalf of CalRecycle, provided site documentation on properties prior to entry of debris removal teams.

See below for most current HHW item counts and property assessments.

2.1.3 Progress Metrics

Valley Fire HHW Item Counts – Cumulative Totals		
	9 OCT	12 OCT
Non-RCRA Solid	281	281
Paint-Related Material	46	176
Propane	120	133
Aerosols	190	431
Thick-Walled Cylinders	5	5

Valley Fire HHW Property/Parcel Assessments		
	9 OCT	12 October
Accessible (ROE granted)	850	901
HHW Assessment	71	88
Air Monitoring	58	70
Radiation Monitoring	71	83

2.2 Planning Section

2.2.1 Anticipated Activities

1162 total properties are targeted for HHW assessment and removal activities. Crews consisting of ERRS and START contractors deploy daily to areas within the Valley Fire boundary in Lake County which has been subdivided into five divisions; from southeast to northwest - Division A, B, C, D, and E. Targeted areas will be determined in conjunction with CalRecycle and the County of Lake, focusing only on properties where the owner has granted Right-of-Entry. Once a property has progressed through Site Documentation and HHW Assessment activities, including air and radiation monitoring and asbestos testing, CalRecycle proceeds with remedial operations.

2.2.1.1 Planned Response Activities

U.S EPA expects to running 3 HHW task force starting 10/13. Each task force will consist of an EPA OSC, START and ERRS contractors. Each task force will also have a Lake county liaison. These task forces are scheduled to clear residences daily. The three task forces will cover three target areas daily: Hidden Valley Lake, Cobb, and Middletown. USCG Pacific Strike Team members will be coordinating field activities in the ICP.

2.2.1.2 Next Steps

Major operations at The Valley Fire response are scheduled to begin this week.

EPA has identified a need for a high hazard team to address high pressure cylinders. This team will be lead by OSC Reiner and will mobilize on 10/13/15. This specialize team will a hybrid of START and ERRS contractors and potentially State and Local resources as well as potentially additional contract resources. This team will develop a Standard Operation Procedure (SOP) for implementation.

2.2.2 Issues

The OSC may require heavy equipment such as cylinder coffins which may be hard to obtain.

Record high heat

2.3 Logistics Section

1. Possibility of adding additional START contractors to supplement the additional task forces.
2. Possibility of adding additional ERRS resources for extraction of the high hazards - heavy equipment
3. Need placards to transport hazardous waste. An order has been placed and placards should be here by 13 OCT.
4. Obtaining a cylinder coffin.

2.4 Finance Section

No information available at this time.

2.5 Other Command Staff

2.5.1 Safety Officer -

U.S.C.G. Strike team (2)

2.5.2 Liaison Officer

Lake County Public Health

2.5.3 Information Officer

2.5.4 Community Involvement Coordinator

The Community Involvement Coordinator (CIC) continues to work closely with the County, CalRecycle, and CalOES to improve inter-agency communications and better serve the needs of the impacted community. Main issues in the community are focused on misinformation regarding debris cleanup procedures, insurance claims, looting, and fraud. A central concern is the legitimacy of the crews in the field, as property owners are wary of the several different agencies and contractors on site. To address this issue, EPA created a flier ("Who's On My Property?") in collaboration with the County, CalRecycle and CalOES. The flier explains the steps to the cleanup process and provides community members a way to match the agency logo to the crew on their property on the spot. The fliers have been widely distributed; each crew has a stack of them to give out and a laminated version to stay with the crew foreman, and there are poster-sized versions at all the grocery stores in Cobb, Middletown and Hidden Valley as well as at the casino and the Local Assistance Center. The flier will also be distributed on the County OES Facebook page, Twitter page, and information website. There has been a very positive response to the effort so far.

Local tribal officials and concerned property owners have been contacted to improve communication and stifle widespread misinformation. In coordination with CalRecycle and OES, a public meeting about debris cleanup has been arranged, pending confirmation with the local Community Advisory Board. If approved, this meeting will occur on Thursday, October 16th.

3. Participating Entities

3.1 Cooperating Agencies

- United States EPA - Region XI
- United States Coast Guard - Pacific Strike Team
- Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)
- State of California (CalRecycle, CalOES)
- County of Lake
- EPA START
- EPA ERRS
- ARCADIS

4. Personnel On Site

	4 OCT 2015	8 OCT 2015	9 OCT 2015	12 OCT 2015
EPA OSC			2	4
USCG	-	-	3	5
EPA START	4	5	5	12
EPA ERRS (EQM)		16	18	31

5. Definition of Terms

No information available at this time.

6. Additional sources of information

6.1 Internet location of additional information/report:

For more information, refer to www.epaosc.org/ValleyFireResponse

7. Situational Reference Materials

The Incident Action Plans (IAPs) will be posted www.epaosc.org/ValleyFireResponse in the document section for reference