



PRESS RELEASE

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THOMAS FIRE: Tips Offered About When to Clean and How to Clean All That Ash

(SANTA BARBARA, Calif.) – Evacuated residents are anxious to return to their homes and begin to assess for themselves their properties.

Along with evacuees, all Santa Barbara County residents are thinking about how to clean the ash in a way that is safe for people and the environment.

To clean ash, wear an N-95 mask and remember the three Cs, advise the experts: Control, Contain and Capture.

Control: Try to control the amount of ash particles that get re-suspended into the air. Avoid using any equipment that blows ash into the air such as standard shop vacuums or leaf blowers. Instead, use household vacuums or shop vacuums with HEPA filters.

Contain: Contain ash by gently sweeping indoor and outdoor hard surfaces followed by wet mopping with a damp cloth. Ash may be disposed of in regular trash receptacles or in plastic bags. You may also allow water from cleaning to drain into landscaping as ash will not hurt plants or grass.

Capture: Protect storm drains from ash and any cleaning chemicals used while cleaning by diverting away from storm drains or recapturing. Ash is highly acidic, which in large amounts can be harmful for people, the environment and aquatic life.

Home heating, air conditioning and ventilation systems. Officials suggest cleaning and servicing air conditioning systems and having heating and ventilation system filters changed by professionals once the fire and smoke has subsided.

Please see the attached document and link for more information: <http://countyofsb.org/asset.c/3472>

Emergency Alert System: It is critical that people in Santa Barbara County register to receive emergency alerts. Sign up at www.AwareAndPrepare.org. If we can't reach you, we can't alert you.

Stay Connected: For ongoing updates, go to www.CountyofSB.org, follow @countyofsb on [Twitter](https://twitter.com/countyofsb) and [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/countyofsb), or call 2-1-1 from 805 area code, or 800-400-1572 outside of 805.