



COUNTY OF SANTA CRUZ BROCHURES

PLANNING DEPARTMENT • 701 OCEAN STREET, 4TH FLOOR • SANTA CRUZ, CA 95060
FIRE REBUILD INFO: FireRebuild@santacruzcounty.us • (831) 454-2130

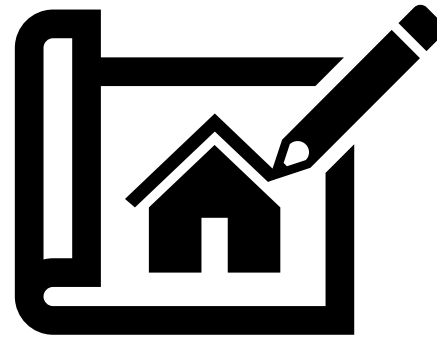
Recovery and Rebuilding: REBUILDING YOUR HOME

Losses from wildfires can be devastating. The County of Santa Cruz is committed to rebuilding our community as quickly as possible. This brochure provides the step-by-step process for replacing your home.

Find additional and updated information online at sccoplanning.com.

The back of this brochure provides additional links and references for professional assistance and information in preparing your building permit application to rebuild.

SANTA CRUZ COUNTY CODES:
SEE CODEPUBLISHING.COM/CA/SANTACRUZCOUNTY



Steps to Rebuilding Your Home

- 1. Damage Assessment.** County teams are working with [Cal Fire](#) to assess damage to structures, land, roads and utilities. The damage assessments may take several weeks to complete. More information will be provided on the Planning Department [website](#) as it becomes available.
- 2. File Insurance Claim.** Contact your private insurance company soon to ensure a timely response. For a guide, visit United Policy Holders, non-profit policy holder advocates, at <https://www.uphelp.org/>. In addition, the CZU August Lightening Fire has qualified for **FEMA** disaster assistance: file online at <https://www.disasterassistance.gov>. If you do not have online access, call 800-621-3362.
- 3. File Assessor's Calamity Application.** The Assessor will send you property records and re-evaluate your property taxes. Applications online at santacruzcounty.us/asr. Assessor's building records are useful in the building permit application process.
- 4. Debris Removal and Clean-up.** Building permits can be issued on fire-damaged sites only after the site has been cleared of debris and hazardous material, and is certified as safe by the County Environmental Health Services agency (EHS). Do not begin debris removal operations before consulting County Environmental Health Services. There is a prescribed process for accomplishing a safe clean-up. A public cleanup option is also being developed. Visit the EHS [website](#) for information. EHS provides access to issued permits online, listed by APN (use dashes), including site plans showing the location of wells and septic systems. Locate and flag utilities in the field before starting work. In some cases, you will need a demolition permit your damaged structure. Apply for demo permits online at [OTC permits](#).

5. Erosion Control. Install erosion control measures to prevent further damage to property and private roads in winter storms. Several agencies provide advice and support for erosion control:

- Natural Resources Conservation Service (<http://www.rcdsantacruz.org/nrcs>) / Resource Conservation District, online at <http://www.rcdsantacruz.org/>. Phone #'s: NRCS: 831-475-1967; RCD: 831-464-2950.
- Certified [Erosion Control Specialists](#) (more information below).
- County Planning home, Environmental Planning tab – Erosion & Stormwater Pollution Control link, at <http://www.sccoplanning.com/PlanningHome/Environmental/ErosionStormwaterPollutionControl.aspx>

6. Building Permit Application. All fire damage recovery permits will be expedited. The simplest and quickest process will be for replacement homes that are substantially the same as the original (or no more than 10% larger) and in the same location. Non-conforming structures, homes in the Coastal Zone and even sites adjacent to waterways can be rebuilt in-place, in-kind with only a building permit. Projects that are not in-kind will also receive priority review but may have more detailed application requirements in some instances, or could trigger discretionary permits in certain locations.

Once the site is cleaned up and Environmental Health clearance received, property owners can follow the steps outlined below to obtain a building permit for reconstruction.

Keys to Obtaining a Building Permit

- Obtain a clearance for debris removal from EHS. In addition to monitoring debris removal, EHS will confirm your well status and septic system.
- Contact a designer or architect to prepare plans for your building permit application. Additional consultants such as geotechnical or structural engineers may be required (see references below).
- Although the County has original construction plans on file for many properties, all plans submitted for reconstruction permits must meet current building codes.
 - For dwellings built in 2007 or later, County Planning has complete plans available by e-file. These plans can be updated to meet current codes.
 - For building permits completed prior to 2007, County records include site plan, floor plan and elevations only.
 - Dwellings built before 1956 did not require plans, but permits may be available from additions / remodels.

To obtain permit records, please contact the Planning Department Records Room at recordsroominquiries@santacruzcounty.us.

Erosion Control Tips:

- Review “do’s and don’ts” here: http://www.rcdsantacruz.org/images/After-Fire-Dos-Donts_NRCS.pdf
- Verify drainage systems are functioning.
- Minimize soil/slope disturbance.
- Properly install barley seed and mulch, erosion “blankets,” straw rolls and other measures to stabilize exposed soils.
- Assess roads and road drainage facilities; clean out culverts and perform required maintenance.

- Do not remove vegetation that is still alive and will grow back or re-sprout. Do not remove vegetation near a watercourse. For assistance, contact NRCS / RCD (see above).
- Do not place slash in gullies.
- Obtain permits for new or replacement permanent structures, such as retaining walls. *Erosion control and clean-up does not require a grading permit.*
- Consider consulting an expert for assistance, especially if the burned slope is steep or close to the house.

Additional Information and Assistance

To find more information about your parcel, including the parcel number, soils and geologic reports, septic history, slope maps and a wealth of parcel-specific data, visit the County Geographic Information System (GIS) at <https://gis.santacruzcounty.us/gisweb/>. You can search by address, APN, owner, street and intersection.

A list of [Erosion Control Specialists](#) is found under Erosion Control on the left side of the Environmental Planning home page. You will find lists of [Geologists](#) and [Soils Engineers](#) under the Geology and Soils / Assistance and Forms link on this page.

For a guide to submitting ePlans, see the detailed “ePlan” user guide under the “ePlan Review” tab on the left frame of the Planning Dept. home page. The ePlan guide link is at <http://sccplanreview.santacruzcounty.us/>. Most inexperienced customers of the ePlan portal are encouraged to have a professional submit plans to the portal.

Find more detailed information about County Codes guiding reconstruction [here](#).

Environmental Planning staff are currently conducting field assessments of the burn area to identify sensitive geologic and erosion prone areas. General questions may be directed to EnvironmentalPlanningInfo@santacruzcounty.us.

The [County Planning Dept. homepage](#) has a link to [Check Application Status and Permit History](#).

Cal Fire is at <https://www.fire.ca.gov/>.

For a fact sheet being developed on occupying an RV, Travel Trailer, or other temporary accommodation while rebuilding, check the Planning Department home page (sccplanning.com/). You will need a certification of completed debris removal, from EHS, an approved water source and sewage disposal, and approved power source. The power source may not be a generator.