

RE-ENTRY GUIDE

**East of Highway 97 –
McDougald Road & South**

&

**Trout Creek –
West Side of Highway 97**



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Introduction

Please be sure to read this entire package carefully before entry into your home to minimize the risk of danger to you and your family.

Anticipate What the Area May Be Like

It helps to think ahead about what the environment will look, feel, and smell like when you return. There may be delays in returning home if the area is unsafe. The community may have dramatically changed, including:

- Blackened and burnt trees, shrubs and landscapes
- Smell of smoke and other burning materials
- Areas covered in ash
- Familiar landmarks missing
- Spoiled food in fridges and freezers

When it is safe to re-enter your home and property, check that you have enough fuel, food and water in case of unforeseen damage or issues. Be prepared with a radio, flashlight and emergency supplies.

Be prepared to leave if your area is under an Evacuation Alert and stay informed of wildfire information through the Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) at 250-490-4225 or eocinfo@rdos.bc.ca and signing up for VoyentAlert! notifications (<https://voyent-alert.com/community/#registration>).

Some areas may be fenced for safety and security purposes. Please respect these restricted areas and any directions given to you by first responders or utilities workers. Doing so will keep you and your family and other members of the community safe.

Your neighbourhood is currently under Evacuation Alert.
What does this mean?

- Be prepared to leave your home immediately
- Make an evacuation plan
- Prepare your grab-and-go bag.

Preparing to Return

Leaving your home during an emergency can be stressful. Going back home can also be hard because you may not know what to expect. Even when an evacuation order is over, there may still be dangers. There could be fallen trees, damaged buildings or other hazards. Before moving back in, you should carefully check your home to make sure it is safe.

Important

- **There is still an active wildfire in the area.**
- Emergency workers are still busy helping people and protecting communities.
- Some homes and properties still do not have power. In some areas, no one knows yet when the power will be back on.
- Access to other areas of Summerland are closed because of evacuation orders. Expect delays and plan other routes if needed.
- No Local Businesses are open at this time; please make alternative arrangements to gather essential foods and items you need.

Protect yourself

- Keep a cell phone or radio on for weather and evacuation updates
- Review your evacuation plan and be prepared to leave again, quickly if needed
- Ensure you have a full tank of gas
- Wear a long-sleeve shirt, long pants and sturdy shoes when working in or around your home
- Bring personal protective equipment: gloves, masks or respirators, and safety glasses
- Bring plenty of bottled water and non-perishable food for you and any pets.

**There is
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Preparing to Return

Air Quality

Wildfire smoke is a major contributor to poor air quality in the region. Interior Health recommends the following during smoky conditions:

- Stay indoors and limit outdoor activities.
- Use a well-fitted respirator (e.g., N95 or KN95) if you must go outside.
- Activate medical management plans for chronic conditions and ensure rescue medications are available.
- Create a home clean air shelter using a portable HEPA air cleaner or seek community locations with cleaner air.
- Monitor mental health, as smoke exposure can increase stress and anxiety; use stress-relief techniques and maintain social connections.

Resources

Current and forecasted [Air Quality Health Index \(AQHI\)](https://www.env.gov.bc.ca/epd/bcairquality/data/aqhi.html?id=AQHI-SOUTH_OKANAGAN) data for the South Okanagan is available at:

https://www.env.gov.bc.ca/epd/bcairquality/data/aqhi.html?id=AQHI-SOUTH_OKANAGAN.
For guidance on outdoor physical activity in smoky conditions, refer to:

<https://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/prevention-public-health/wildfire-smoke>.
Visit the **BCCDC wildfire smoke** webpage to learn more about the health effects of wildfire smoke, how to prepare for wildfire season and more (<https://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/prevention-public-health/wildfire-smoke>).

For other steps to create cleaner air space at home, check out Health Canada's online resource [Guidance for Cleaner Air Spaces during Wildfire Smoke Events](https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/publications/healthy-living/guidance-cleaner-air-spaces-during-wildfire-smoke-events.html#a5) (<https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/publications/healthy-living/guidance-cleaner-air-spaces-during-wildfire-smoke-events.html#a5>).

Call **8-1-1** or your primary care provider if you're experiencing more severe symptoms, such as shortness of breath or chest pain, or **9-1-1** if it's a health emergency.

Preparing to Return

Build a basic re-entry kit

- When preparing to access and clean your home, you'll need basic supplies, including:
- Flashlight, gloves and heavy-duty garbage bags
- Cleaning supplies (broom, mop, sponges, bucket, bleach, cleaners)
- Garbage bags – Thick Contractor bags preferred
- Small tools (hammer, screwdriver, shovel, saw, etc.)
- First aid kit
- Camera to record property condition and damages for insurance purposes
- Animals may be excited, disoriented or frightened on returning home. Add items to help calm your pet. Make sure they aren't exposed to any new hazards arising during the evacuation return period.

Hazards

Areas exposed to wildfire and wildfire fighting measures including evacuations may appear normal. The following hazards are common after wildfire. If in doubt, ask a qualified professional rather than handling something yourself.

- **Smell rotten eggs? It could be a gas leak. Stop what you're doing. Go outside and call FortisBC emergency line at 1-800-663-9911 (24 hours) or dial 911**
- Slip, trip and fall hazards from unstable structures, damaged trees, collapsing roofs, etc
- Sharp objects such as nails, broken glass, metal, concrete or wood debris
- Damaged or leaking household hazardous materials
- Residue from smoke, soot, ash and demolition dust
- Hot spots, ash pits
- Pressurized containers or combustible materials

Mental Health Supports

Returning home after an evacuation can bring a wide range of emotions. You may feel relief to be home, while also experiencing anxiety, sadness, anger, or uncertainty about what you will find. You may also find yourself worrying about the possibility of having to evacuate again. Seeing damage to your property or treasured possessions can be especially upsetting, particularly if they have sentimental value or cannot be replaced.

These reactions are a normal response to a stressful event and, for most people, become less intense as you regain a sense of safety, routine, and control. One of the best things you can do is create a support network. This may include family, friends, neighbours, or professionals. If these feelings become overwhelming or do not improve over time, consider reaching out to available support.

Resources

Interior Crisis Line Network – 1-888-353-2273

Suicide Crisis Helpline – 988

KUU-US (Indigenous) Crisis Line – 1-800-588-8717

Métis Crisis Line – 1-833-638-4722

Call 310-MHSU (6478) to reach your local Mental Health and Substance Use (MHSU) Centre

United Way – 2-1-1 (free and confidential phone line service that connects people to resources, including food and shelter, mental health and addictions support, legal & financial support, support for seniors, and more).

Canadian Mental Health Association:
bc.cmha.ca/documents/coping-with-disaster-stress/

First Nations Health Authority:
fnha.ca/services-and-support/access-and-support/climate-emergencies/wildfire-response/

Canadian Red Cross
www.redcross.ca/how-we-help/emergencies-and-disasters-in-canada/get-help-disaster-relief-and-recovery/wildfire-information-and-support

District of Summerland Utilities

Boil Water Notice

Please be reminded that the District of Summerland remains in a **BOIL WATER NOTICE**.

Interior Health and the District of Summerland recommend that **ALL USERS** use water that has been boiled or use a safe alternative. Water should be boiled for one minute and allowed to cool before use.

Residents will be notified when the Boil Water Notice is lifted.

Power Outage Duration

It is estimated that power was out for approximately **82 hours** in the **East of Highway 97 – McDougald Road and South area**.

It is estimated that power was out for approximately **15.5 hours** in the **Trout Creek – West Side of Highway 97 area**.

Pools & Hot Tub

Homeowners will be requested not to drain any pools into the sanitary sewer system or overload any area storm drainage. Drain any pools slowly. Note that water containing any type of disinfection – salt water or chlorine – cannot be drained into a creek or the Okanagan Lake.

Residential Water Restrictions

The District of Summerland remains in Stage 1 Water Restrictions, please be reminded:

Even Numbered – if your house number ends in a 0, 2, 4, 6, or 8 – a person may use their sprinkler to water lawns, trees, and shrubs on Sunday, Tuesday, and Friday only.

Odd Numbered – if your house number ends in a 1, 3, 5, 7, or 9 – a person may use their sprinkler to water lawns, trees, and shrubs on Saturday, Monday and Thursday only.

You may use micro-irrigation, drip irrigation or a hose with a shut-off nozzle to water trees, shrubs or vegetables on any day, at any time.



Food Safety

Refrigerated food

- Refrigerators keep food at 4 degrees C (39 degrees F).
- If the temperature inside the fridge has gone above that level, discard all the food.
- If you are unsure about the temperature, throw the food out.
- If your fridge was exposed to fire suppression water, throw out the entire contents, including all meats, fresh fruit, and vegetables. Thoroughly clean your refrigerator and freezer.

Frozen food

- Frozen food is likely safe unless the freezer was exposed to heat from a fire, fire suppression water or has been without power for an extended period.
- If you are unsure about the exposure, throw the food out.
- It's considered safe to refreeze food that has partially thawed if it still contains visible ice crystals. However, partial thawing and refreezing will reduce the quality of the food.
- Discard any food that has completely thawed, has reached a temperature above 4 degrees C (39degrees F), or has questionable colour or odour.

Canned food

- Canned goods should be good for consumption unless the can has bulged, is badly dented or has rusted. Throw these ones out.
- All undamaged canned goods should be washed and disinfected if they have been exposed to floodwater or smoke.
- Food stored in glass jars that have been exposed to heat should be thrown out as seals may have been broken.

**More info, visit
Interior Health
website:**



Solid Waste

Check your refrigerator and freezer for damage before using them.

Refrigerator and Freezer Safety

If your refrigerator or freezer is still operating:

- Remove and discard any food you suspect may be unsafe. When in doubt, throw it out.
- Discard all perishable food, including opened bottles or jars and any food containers that show signs of heat, smoke, fire, or other damage.
- Double-bag food waste or use heavy-duty contractor bags, where possible, to help prevent leaks.
- Use paper towels or rags to clean up spills and leaks and dispose of them with food waste.
- Wash the interior of the appliance with warm, soapy water.
- Disinfect the interior using a solution of 1 teaspoon of household bleach mixed with 4 cups of water. Wear latex or rubber gloves if your skin is sensitive to bleach, and ensure the area is well ventilated.
- If your refrigerator or freezer has a water dispenser, water line, or built-in ice maker, do not use unless all water quality advisories are lifted. When it is clear to do so, ensure lines are thoroughly flushed and replace any filters.
- To help remove odors, wipe the interior with a mixture of water and baking soda, or place an open box of baking soda inside the appliance.
- If possible, allow the appliance to air out for several days before plugging it back in. Keep the doors secured in an open position to allow air circulation and keep children away from the appliance.
- Before restocking, ensure the refrigerator has returned to 4°C or colder and the freezer has returned to -18°C or colder.
- Even if your appliance continues to operate, take photographs and keep a record of any cleaning, disinfection, repairs, or other work completed. This documentation may be helpful if an issue develops later and an insurance claim is required.

Solid Waste

Disposal of Refrigerators and Freezers

If your refrigerator or freezer has been damaged by the wildfire and is no longer working, contact your insurance company to determine whether the appliance and any related costs are eligible for coverage. Take photographs of any damage and keep notes of your conversations with your insurance provider.

At this time, there is no District's collection program for wildfire-damaged refrigerators or freezers.

Residents are asked to remove all spoiled food and dispose of it as garbage. Once the Summerland Landfill reopens, damaged or broken refrigeration and freezer units can be taken to the landfill at no charge. All food waste must be completely removed from the appliance before it can be accepted.

The **Kiwanis Club** has offered to help people pick up damaged refrigerators if needed. They are also offering cleaning supplies to residents. For further information, please call: **250-710-3260**.

You may also visit marrbc.ca for other drop-off locations.

**The
Summerland
Landfill &
Recycling
Depot are
closed until
further notice.**

Curbside Collection

Temporary Curbside Collection Changes

Waste Connections will be collecting your curbside **garbage cart only plus up to two bags of garbage**, no heavier than 25 kg/bag on **Monday, August 17, 2026**. Please have your garbage cart (**black**) and up to two garbage bags to the curb by 7:00 am.

Regular curbside collection for **East of Highway 97 – McDougald Road & South** will commence on **Thursday, August 20**.

Regular curbside collection for **Trout Creek – West Side of Highway 97** will commence on **Tuesday, August 18**.

Due to damage to the Summerland Compost Site, the District of Summerland is temporarily unable to collect food scraps for composting.

Until further notice:

- **Food scraps** must be placed in your **garbage cart**, not your green compost cart.
- Garbage collection will occur **weekly**.
- Yard waste and recycling will be collected **every two weeks on alternating weeks**.
- Please continue to use the carts provided to your household.

Temporary collection calendars will be available online and at Municipal Hall and Public Works once access to these facilities is permitted.

Residents are encouraged to check the District's website regularly for updates to collection schedules and other post-wildfire services.

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Wildlife Activity

Increased Bear Activity

The loss and disposal of food following the wildfire may result in increased bear activity throughout the Summerland area.

Garbage containing food waste is highly attractive to bears. Residents are reminded to keep all food waste securely contained indoors or in a locked, bear-resistant area until it can be disposed.

Late summer is also a period when bears actively seek out and consume large amounts of food. Bears that become accustomed to finding food in garbage can become food-conditioned and may pose a risk to public safety. Garbage can also be harmful to bears if they consume plastic and other materials that can cause serious health problems.

Please help keep our community and local wildlife safe by securing all food waste.

BC Transit Info

BC Transit will be providing modified services beginning **Monday, August 17**.

For transit information, please:

- visit bctransit.com/south-okanagan-similkameen;
- or call 1-844-442-2212 (press 2 for Summerland).



East of Highway 97 – McDougald Road & South
AND Trout Creek – West Side of Highway 97



DISTRICT OF
SUMMERLAND