

# Carr Fire, Zogg Fire, Salt Fire, and Fawn Fire Disaster Recovery Ordinance

*Shasta County*

## OVERVIEW

### REGION

*Northern California*

### POPULATION

*180,000*

### TOOL TYPES

*Post-Disaster Recovery  
Emergency Ordinance*

### LEAD AGENCIES

*Resource Management  
Department, Fire  
Department*

### CLIMATE IMPACT AREA

*Wildfire Resilience*



# SUMMARY

In 2018, the Carr Fire in Shasta County burned almost 230,000 acres and destroyed more than 1,600 structures in the unincorporated area and in the city of Redding. In subsequent years, the County has experienced several other major wildfires, including the 2020 Zogg Fire and the 2021 Salt and Fawn Fires, which collectively destroyed more than 400 additional structures.

Many of the homes lost in these fires were in rural, unincorporated areas of the County, with property owners struggling to recover and rebuild. Many struggled due to a widespread lack of fire insurance, or easily accessible financial resources that would aid in recovery. In response, the Shasta County Resource Management Department worked with the Board of Supervisors to adopt an urgency ordinance for the Carr Fire that has since been amended to support those impacted by the Zogg, Salt, and Fawn Fires and to extend the effective period for persons displaced by the Carr Fire by approximately 18 months.

Due to the scale of loss of housing units amidst a statewide housing crisis, the Shasta County Carr Fire, Zogg Fire, Salt Fire, and Fawn Fire Disaster Recovery ordinance temporarily suspends several countywide health and safety codes in order to expedite the ability of fire victims to transition to temporary housing while they rebuild or pursue other permanent housing options. The ordinance also adds other flexibility to the recovery process, such as allowing for the replacement, repair, and reconstruction of nonconforming structures damaged by the fires, automatically extending certain land use entitlements, and permitting the use of temporary cargo containers for secure storage of personal items.

*This case study was selected as a Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI) Planning Best Practice because it shows how counties can adopt and modify emergency ordinances to support the short and long-term recovery process following wildfires. This case study also highlights several unique provisions in the ordinance that support local recovery efforts, such as temporary housing and storage needs. In addition, this case study includes several strategies to assist lower-income residents with rebuilding.*

*Post-disaster recovery ordinances are a type of urgency ordinance that provide cities and counties with a means to address temporary housing needs, economic development, and other forms of relief to those affected by disasters or other emergencies. These ordinances can be adopted as standalone chapters or added to a jurisdiction's zoning code, health and safety code, or other chapter of the municipal code.*

## TOOL DESIGN

In 2015, Shasta County approved a robust emergency ordinance (SCC 2015-2) that grants the County supervisors and the Director of Resource Management powers to undertake actions during a declared local emergency that “preserve the public peace, health and safety, and to protect the life and property of those who have suffered damage from such events, by allowing safe temporary occupancy of affected properties, and facilitating the replacement, repair or reconstruction of those dwellings and



structures that have been damaged or destroyed.”

Shortly after the 2018 Carr Fire, it became clear to Shasta County that there was an urgent need to provide safe, legal options for persons displaced by wildfire to live in temporary dwellings on their property, or on other property within the County, beyond the options permissible under the 2015 ordinance. Many of those displaced by the Carr Fire and subsequent fires did not have the resources to quickly find nearby alternative housing that they could afford.

To support those impacted by the fire, the County quickly passed the Shasta County Carr Fire Disaster Recovery ordinance to allow those displaced by wildfires to live in a temporary dwelling—defined as a recreational vehicle, manufactured home, mobile home, or movable tiny house—for up to 60 days from the date the ordinance was adopted (or amended) without first obtaining approval from the County. This allowed people to immediately access temporary housing.

## IMPLEMENTATION

Despite the rapid deployment of the urgency ordinance, safety and environmental health standards were required to protect the community. Temporary dwellings are required to be connected to a public sewer system, functioning on-site sewage disposal system, or a temporary holding tank with a contract for regular pumping, or other method of sewage disposal approved by the County Environmental Health Division.

After the first 60 days, displaced persons must obtain a building permit to continue utilizing temporary dwellings. The urgency ordinance includes rules for permitted temporary dwellings that mandate an approved source of water and source of electricity, in addition to the approved method of sewage disposal.



*House lot and car after the Carr Fire in Redding California.  
(Forest Service photo by Cecilio Ricardo)*

# COLLABORATION & ENGAGEMENT

Since the 2018 Carr Fire, only around 25% of destroyed homes in unincorporated County areas have been rebuilt. For houses lost in the subsequent Zogg, Salt, and Fawn Fires, even fewer properties have been redeveloped, as many victims of these fires have struggled to maintain their fire insurance, and as such, have struggled to afford the cost of rebuilding.

The recent wildfires that Shasta County has experienced has allowed the County to improve upon its disaster response and recovery process, including the adoption and amendment(s) of the Disaster Recovery Ordinance. Some of these lessons learned have also resulted in pairing the Disaster Recovery Ordinance with programs for debris removal.

## INNOVATIONS

Shasta County also realized that simply allowing temporary dwellings to be sited on damaged properties would not be sufficient to house all displaced persons in a sustainable manner. To utilize all possible housing options, the urgency ordinance also allows for existing guest houses to be rented to persons displaced by fires, which is otherwise prohibited pursuant to Shasta County Code.

In addition, the County has supported the permitting of accessory dwelling units (ADUs) by suspending associated development impact fees to expand the availability of housing units for fire displaced residents. In addition, the ordinance provides an opportunity for existing mobile home parks to expand to a maximum of 135% of the density established by the adopted zoning map. The innovative solutions related to ADUs and mobile home parks provide more permanent emergency housing options to displaced residents, while the solution related to guest houses provides an additional temporary housing

option to displaced residents.

It also became clear that housing availability was not the only community concern. Displaced residents were struggling to safely store household belongings that either survived the fire or were either donated or purchased shortly after. To help keep this personal property secure, the County included a provision to permit a single cargo storage container per residential parcel within the ordinance. This allows displaced persons to store any surviving or new household belongings in a secure location on their property while they rebuild. Property owners must show a residence was destroyed, damaged, or rendered uninhabitable to receive a permit for a temporary cargo container storage unit.



*The Urgency Ordinance allows each fire damaged residential property to house a single shipping container in order to store household belongings while residents rebuild. Image: DryboxUSA*

## FUNDING SOURCE

The lower socio-economic status of those primarily impacted by the Zogg Fire (versus the Carr Fire, for example), and the widespread lack of fire insurance resulted in a higher amount



of federal disaster aid delivered to the region, including the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and state funding for debris removal. This process was extensive, and even covered the cost of hazard tree removal, which successfully aided residents in preparing their properties for rebuilding. Although no state or federal debris removal assistance was provided for the Salt Fire, California Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES) will provide a fully funded debris removal program for the Fawn Fire.

For the Salt Fire, the County has stepped in to provide financial assistance in the form of no-cost demolition permits and landfill vouchers in the amount of \$2,000 per parcel to property owners for structure demolition and debris removal. County support for debris removal has allowed displaced persons to begin the rebuilding process.

## ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

### REPLICABILITY

For communities considering adopting an emergency post-disaster recovery ordinance, Shasta County's process provides key insights:

1. *Having an approved emergency ordinance that already grants powers to local officials or staff to temporarily house displaced residents can aid in the quick adoption of an ordinance that outlines the implementation in response to a specific disaster event.*
2. *Allowing the flexibility of temporary dwellings to be used without a permit in the immediate aftermath of a wildfire event helps rapidly rehouse vulnerable residents.*



*New projects planned in the City of Redding will bring the first 3D-printed homes to Shasta County to support current and future disaster recovery and affordable housing options for the community. These homes can be built autonomously and with materials that are more fire-resistant, such as concrete. Innovative and rapid rehousing solutions like those included in Shasta County's Urgency Ordinance, paired with emerging technologies that may reduce the time and costs associated with rebuilding, can support those displaced by wildfire events.*

3. *If there are requirements for temporary occupancy of property post-wildfire, including the completion of debris removal or clearance of hazard trees, it may be useful to establish a funding program to help economically disadvantaged residents meet the requirements.*
4. *Considering needs other than housing, like permitting cargo containers to store household belongings, can aid residents in long-term recovery.*

## RESPONDING TO DATA, STATE REGULATIONS, & CLIMATE CHANGE IMPACTS

California's Fourth Climate Change Assessment [Sacramento Valley Regional Report](#) indicates there may be an increase in wildfire activity in the region, which includes Shasta County, in response to cycles of drought followed by extreme precipitation (and vice versa). An increase in rain during the winter and early spring months, followed by an extremely dry summer and fall months may contribute to an excess of dry, dead vegetation that can contribute to extreme fire behavior. The Regional Report also acknowledges that rural areas of the Valley, including Shasta County, house many "historically

underserved populations" including farmworkers, low-income households, and tribal communities. These groups are less resilient to climate impacts, including wildfires.

Any increase in wildfire activity in Shasta County will likely create elevated hazards for communities located in areas of wildfire risk, particularly vulnerable communities in rural areas. To combat climate change, and increasing climate hazards, the state of California has developed the [Integrated Climate Adaptation and Resiliency Program \(ICARP\)](#), established by Senate Bill 246 (Climate Change Adaption, 2015). ICARP works to coordinate climate activities at the state, regional, and local levels in support of building climate resilience for vulnerable communities. Outcomes of Shasta County's Disaster Recovery Ordinance, including providing immediate housing options to displaced residents and associated programs that provide funding for debris removal align well with state priorities for improving the quality of life for present and future generations.

## FURTHER INFORMATION

*For further information on Shasta County's disaster recovery process see the [Department of Resource Management's website](#).*

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*This case study is part of a series of Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI) Planning Best Practices. Each case study focuses on a specific planning tool (or set of tools) that a community is utilizing to reduce risk and build resilience to wildfire across the state of California. This project is part of [California Climate Investments](#), a statewide initiative that puts billions of Cap-and-Trade dollars to work reducing greenhouse gas emissions, strengthening the economy, and improving public health and the environment – particularly in disadvantaged communities.*

