



THE FLASH

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An update from City Administration, Planning, Public Works and Police Departments

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State Offers No-Cost Wildfire Debris Cleanup for all Oregon Homes and Businesses

The State of Oregon will provide no-cost wildfire ash and debris cleanup for all homes and businesses in the eight counties affected by the September wildfires, the Oregon Debris Management Task Force announced November 16. This cleanup includes mobile home parks, second homes, businesses, and other structures.

Home and business owners that opt into this government-led wildfire cleanup program will pay no upfront costs for any cleanup work. Additionally, no government agency – state, federal or contractor - will seek payment from any insurance policy unless it is specifically designated for debris removal or left over after the home or business is completely rebuilt.

“Our mission is to safely clear the ash and debris as quickly as possible, and leave Oregonians with a clean site so they can rebuild,” said Kris Strickler, director of the Oregon Department of Transportation. “This will take time, strong partnerships and a lot of hard work, but we’re already well on our way. I encourage every Oregonian who lost a home or business in the wildfires to sign a Right of Entry form with their county, if they haven’t already, to help keep this important work moving forward.”

Property owners need to sign a Right of Entry form to allow cleanup crews onto their property. Cleanup crews will remove ash and structural debris, hazard trees, concrete foundations, and burned vehicles. To submit your Right of Entry form and for more information, visit wildfire.oregon.gov/cleanup or call the wildfire debris cleanup hotline: 503-934-1700.

Wildfire cleanup is a two-step process. Step 1 is removal of household hazardous waste, which is dangerous to people, communities and the environment. This work is nearly completed in all fire-impacted counties.

Step 2 is removal of ash and debris. The state is currently hiring contractors to carry out this work, scheduled to begin in December, 2020. The task force is working closely with local governments to determine cleanup priorities for each area. Given factors such as weather impacts, property access limitations and the large area to be covered, Step 2 is estimated to take approximately 6 to 18 months to complete statewide.

FEMA will reimburse the state for a portion of eligible costs. The State of Oregon will fund the remaining costs, regardless of FEMA reimbursement. Initial estimates put the debris cleanup tally at over \$600 million, including \$326 million for ash and debris removal and \$295 million to remove damaged trees. This estimate is preliminary and is likely to change.

Energy News: Despite 2020, The City Still Saves Big on Energy

The City is just completing its third year in the Energy Trust of Oregon’s Strategic Energy Management (SEM) Program. This program focuses on improving energy efficiency through low- to no-cost operation and maintenance improvements allowing energy to be used more efficiently in our buildings.

The City started the year off strong as many projects we implemented last year continue to save us on energy costs. With the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the City was able to use its resources from the SEM program to adapt to the changing times and allowed the City to save even more throughout the year.

Our biggest savings this year came from our Public Works Department, reducing their natural gas usage by 70.2%! This reduction will save the City over \$1,122 in energy costs this year. Another note-worthy mention is our Police Department which implemented projects over the last two years allowing them to reduce their electricity usage by 13.4%. Overall, the City reduced its usage of natural gas by 24.8% and electricity usage by 12.1% this year.

These savings will help the City achieve its energy reduction goals set for 2020 as outlined in the Energy Element of our Comprehensive Plan. More on this to come when final energy reports are released. If anyone would like more information about this program or the City efforts in this program, please contact me.

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More Grants to Help Oregon Small Businesses are on the Way

The Emergency Board of the Oregon Legislature has approved \$20 million more to Business Oregon's Emergency Business Assistance Grant Fund. The application form and additional details can be found on Business Oregon's website www.oregon4biz.com. Grants will be reviewed on a first-come first-served basis and will be allocated so that there is an equitable geographic distribution of funds.

The application portal will close once applications totaling \$25 million in requested grants are received. Business Oregon will reopen the portal if any funds remain after reviewing those initial applications for eligibility.

This round makes some changes to previous rounds of grant funding under the program, so that more businesses can access the funds. Businesses with up to 100 employees can apply, whereas previous funding was limited to those with up to 25 employees, to ensure smaller businesses could access the funds first.

Most previous rounds also targeted businesses that did not already receive assistance through the CARES Act. This round will now consider applications from businesses with 1 to 25 employees that have already received anywhere from \$100,000 to \$1 million in funding from these federal resources. Businesses with 26 to 100 employees are eligible regardless of the amount of federal resources they received (up to \$1,000,000), if they meet other program requirements.

Businesses are eligible to receive up to \$200,000 in grant funding as detailed in the grant application. To be eligible, a business must show it was prohibited from operations by the Governor's Executive Order 20-12, or demonstrate a 25% reduction in sales over a 30-day period in 2020 compared to a comparable period in 2019.

