



Department of Development Services

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Frequently Asked Questions

GENERAL

Question: Where do I go for immediate help with planning, building, and code enforcement questions?

Answer: The Disaster Recovery Center (DRC) is located in the former Sears store at the Chico Mall on East 20th Street, Chico.

Question: What planning and building standards apply right now?

Answer: Current federal, state, and local regulations continue to apply, as updated by the Governor's Executive Order B-57-18. County staff will provide information and approve permits according to our current zoning until emergency ordinances are adopted by the County.

Question: Where do I apply for a permit?

Answer: Development Services staff at the Disaster Recovery Center (DRC) can provide you with information, application forms, and application guides, and help you to begin to fill them out. Staff are not able to approve any permits in DRC – all building and planning applications must be submitted at 7 County Center Drive until further notice (ph. 530-552-3700).

CLEANUP AND DEMOLITION

Question: When/How can I remove the debris from my property?

Answer: The County is working with state and federal partners who will assess each property for household hazardous waste and asbestos and remove those materials from each property. After the property has been cleared of hazardous waste, the property owner can either sign up for a state debris removal program (recommended) or perform their own cleanup under oversight of the Environmental Health Department. The hazardous waste and debris removal program through the state and federal programs will not have any out-of-pocket costs for the property owner. Cleanup requirements for property owner cleanup are currently being developed. **Ash and debris shall not be moved on or from the property without approval from the Environmental Health Department.**

Question: Do I need a permit for demolition of my structure?

Answer: No. Removal of hazardous waste and debris which will be verified through the approved Clean-up Process will suffice in place of a demo permit.

GENERATORS

Question: Can I use a generator on my property, and what standards apply?

Answer: Noise standards do not apply to the use of any generator associated with an emergency. After the current emergency, properties must reconnect to PG&E service when available, or comply with residential generator noise standards (BCC section 24-171(C) or Allowable Noise Levels for Limited Density Owner-Built Rural Dwellings under Article VI, Chapter 26 of the Butte County Code as applicable. Under building code, if the generator needs to be enclosed or fixed to a foundation, then a building permit is required.

WELLS

Question: Can I get power for my well? When?

Answer: Only after the property has been cleared of hazardous materials and debris in accordance with the approved Clean-up Process.

REBUILDING

Question: Can I rebuild on the same foundation?

Answer: Heat from the fire very likely compromised the structural integrity of the existing concrete. It **may** be possible in some conditions and only with a California licensed engineer's review and approval.

Question: Can I rebuild in the same location?

Answer: You may be able to rebuild in the same footprint as long as your structure was permitted. You may be required to stay within this footprint for areas that encroach into required minimum setbacks.

Question: What will Permit fees be?

Answer: We do not know if any fees will be waived at this time but will have a future conversation about this with the Board of Supervisors.

Question: Can I rebuild a permitted Ag Exempt building?

Answer: Ag Exempt permits are no longer available in the county. You may rebuild an Ag building, but a permit will be required. Fees are to be determined.

Question: Can I rebuild an accessory structure prior to replacing a residence on a property where accessory structures are not allowed prior to residence?

Answer: Accessory structures are permitted only when they are subordinate and incidental to the primary structure or zone to which it is related. Certain accessory structures (e.g. workshops, sheds, storage buildings, barns, greenhouses, well houses, garages, and gazebos) are permitted in rural zones (Agriculture (AG), Timber Mountain, Timber Preserve (TPZ), Foothill Residential (FR), Foothill Country Residential (FCR), Rural Residential (RR) and Rural Country Residential (RCR)) without a residence. Please contact us for the zoning of your property or check <https://tinyurl.com/butte zoning>.

Question: When can I apply for a building permit?

Answer: We may accept applications for reconstruction prior debris removal if there is an approved plan for debris removal in place. The permit will not be issued until a final debris clearance is issued.

CAMPING AND TEMPORARY RESIDENCES

Question: Can I camp or stay in an RV on an unaffected property, and for how long?

Answer: With owner permission, tent or RV camping is ok on unaffected properties in the AG, TM, TPZ, RC, RR, and FR zones for 14 days, for up to 2 families per property. After that, campers need to apply to Environmental Health and the Planning Division for a longer-term camping permit, including a septic hookup and well, which will allow them to stay for 6 months. A Planning fee of \$187.44 and Environmental Health fee of \$187.44 (total \$374.88) apply. (ARTICLE 15 SECTION 24-75 SHORT AND LONG-TERM CAMPING)

Question: Can I camp or stay in an RV on my affected property?

Answer: Upon receipt of a final debris clearance, camping without connection to approved power, an approved sewage disposal system, and an approved domestic water supply is allowed for 14 or fewer days within any 30 day period in rural zones (Agriculture (AG), Timber Mountain, Timber Preserve (TPZ), Foothill Residential (FR), Foothill Country Residential (FCR), Rural Residential (RR) and Rural Country Residential (RCR)). Camping in a currently registered recreational vehicle connected to approved power, including power from a local utility, solar energy system, wind energy system, batteries and/or generator, an approved sewage disposal system and approved domestic water supply is allowed for 180 or fewer days annually with an Administrative Permit.

Question: Can I occupy an accessory structure on the same property if I lost my residence?

Answer: Due to the presence of Hazardous Materials, it is not safe to occupy a fire-damaged property until all hazardous materials and debris are removed.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Question: How can I get further information?

Answer: Our staff is proud to serve our Butte County community, and we are dedicated to assisting you in every way that we can. For further information and questions about permitting, please call our main line at (530) 552-3700; visit our office at 7 County Center Drive, Oroville (Weekdays 8am-4pm except Wednesdays 8am – 3pm); or visit the Development Services website at <https://www.buttecounty.net/dds/>
