



November/December 2020 Wildfire Recovery Progress Update

The Ventura County Long Term Disaster Recovery Group (VC LTDRG) is a collaborative of more than fifty organizations that have helped more than 1,200 households in Ventura County over the last three years as they the work through the many aspects of rebuilding their lives and homes after the Thomas Fire in 2017 or the Woolsey and Hill Fires in 2018.

Committed to assist over the long haul

The VC LTDRG recognizes that recovery is a multi-year process that may require support not only to help kick start progress, but also during the “last mile” when survivors and other avenues of assistance have been exhausted. This has been particularly true in 2020 with the COVID pandemic adding an additional strain to many. Partner organizations marshal money, materials, and services to aid the recovery of individuals and families – cooperatively working to identify unmet needs and provide:

- disaster case management focused on developing recovery plans, accessing/appealing federal aid programs (FEMA), and insurance policies
- emotional recovery/mental health & wellness support
- guidance/advising on the rebuild process from a neutral licensed contractor
- support for rebuilding and repairs needed to ensure safe, stable housing
- identifying & promoting resources or assistance opportunities for survivors

Advocate for survivors

Working with local, regional and national partners identify any and all possible resources or opportunities for assistance. This has included securing a grant from Lowe’s corporate for assistance with landscaping materials; regular checkins with City and County planning departments support communications with homeowners rebuilding regarding permit questions; and the promoting the Ventura County Resource Conservation District erosion mitigation project grants for burn areas. We have also worked to connect survivors to federal and state programs that are just ramping up in late 2020 and early 2021 including mortgage financing (California Home program) and owner-occupied rebuild assistance ([ReCover California](#) program).





Financial

Assistance

Local funders including The Salvation Army, Red Cross of California, United Way of Ventura County and Ventura County Community Foundation pooled dollars designated for individual long-term recovery as participants in the VC LTDRG's Unmet Needs Allocation Table. VC LTDRG financial assistance is intended as a last stop - to fill gaps after federal, insurance and other recovery sources have provided support. Disaster case managers present requests for clients based on their recovery plan and unmet needs. Funders contribute to collectively respond to the client needs. Priority consideration is given to vulnerable populations who do not have adequate personal resources to support unmet disaster caused needs. More than \$1.5 million in financial assistance has been provided to 500 households since 2018. As of November 2020, case managers are continuing to work with 45 households. It is anticipated that by mid-2021 all cases will be closed.

Streamlined coordination of helping organizations for a more prepared and resilient Ventura County

The collaboration not only assists individuals impacted, value is also generated for organizations that are able to more quickly identify needs and gaps in our community, reduce duplication and provide a more comprehensive picture of recovery. Lessons learned are being used to develop better plans for future responses, greater preparedness and increase community resiliency. Working with VOAD a whole community disaster response practice exercise (tabletop) brought organizations and individuals from around the County together for a discussion of how we can be ready to respond in the event of an earthquake.

Contact us: (English or Espanol)

2-1-1 Ventura is serving as the hub connecting residents to local recovery resources and information – including registration with the VC LTDRG. Email is the best way to reach us. Email drie@icfs.org and provide your name, pre-disaster address, phone number and an outreach specialist can be in touch.

The Ventura County Long Term Disaster Recovery Group (VC LTDRG) was created in early 2018 out of the catalytic efforts of FEMA, Ventura County Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (VC VOAD), and California Office of Emergency Services as a coordinating body for a collaboration of non-profit organizations, government agencies, faith-based and community-led groups as well as local businesses and philanthropy. More information on the continuing efforts and community partners can be found at: www.VCDisasterRecoveryGroup.org

