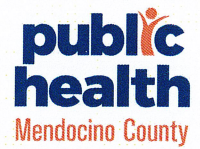




**Public Health Department
Mendocino County**

Healthy People, Healthy Communities



H. Andrew Coren, MD
Public Health Officer

Anne C. Molgaard, JD
Transition Director

DECLARATION OF LOCAL HEALTH EMERGENCY

(Health & Safety Code §101080)

WHEREAS, California Health & and Safety Code section 101080 authorizes a local health officer to declare a local health emergency in the health officer's jurisdiction, or any part thereof, whenever the health officer reasonably determines that there is an imminent and proximate threat of the introduction of any contagious, infectious, or communicable disease, chemical agent, noncommunicable biologic agent, toxin, or radioactive agent; and

WHEREAS, the Hopkins Fire, which includes over 275 acres burned, emerged on September 12, 2021, destroying multiple structures, currently at 90% containment, threatening over 400 residential structures, and leaving over 1,000 residents under mandatory evacuation; and

WHEREAS, the Hopkins Fire has destroyed structures adjacent to Lake Mendocino and its tributaries while exceptional drought conditions persist, which conditions have reduced Lake Mendocino, the primary water supply for the Ukiah Valley Basin and Sonoma County to less than 8,000 acre-feet of water; and

WHEREAS, due to a ground fire that has resulted in structural damage, threats to drinking water quality in a time of exceptional drought conditions, and evacuations of a portion of the County, a condition of extreme peril to life and property now exists in Mendocino County; and

WHEREAS, the potential for toxic exposures and threats to public health and the environment exists in the aftermath of a major wildfire disaster, and debris and ash from residential structure fires contain hazardous substances that can result in adverse health impacts to the public; and

WHEREAS, exposure to hazardous substances through the air or drinking water may lead to acute and chronic health effects and may cause long-term public health and environmental impacts; uncontrolled hazardous substances and debris pose significant threats to public health through inhalation of dust particles and contamination of drinking water supplies; and improper handling can expose workers to toxic materials, and improper transport and disposal of fire debris can spread hazardous substances throughout the community; and

WHEREAS, the Health Officer finds that the Hopkins wildfire is creating an imminent threat to public health in Mendocino County in the form of severely compromised air quality, potential risk to drinking water supply, and potential for contaminated debris from household hazardous waste and materials and structural debris resulting from the potential destruction of structures; and

WHEREAS, fire, smoke, and extreme heat is causing risk to the public's health, especially vulnerable people, who have medical conditions (such as active COVID-19 or in recovery from COVID-19, asthma, COPD, cardiac disease), are elderly/frail, and those who are homeless and do not have indoor shelter; and

WHEREAS, this declaration enables the County to more effectively respond to an imminent outbreak, seek and utilize mutual aid, potentially obtain reimbursement, and ensure that the County's professionals and providers have all necessary personal protective equipment to provide quality care and keep our community safe; and

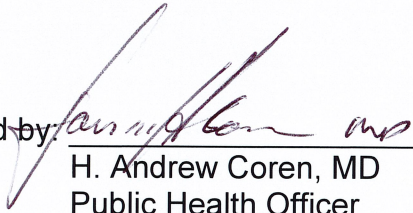
WHEREAS, this declaration must be ratified by the Mendocino County Board of Supervisors within seven (7) days; and

Now, therefore, pursuant to Health & Safety Code section 101080, the Mendocino County Health Officer declares:

- 1) The imminent threat to public health in Mendocino County within the meaning of Health & Safety Code section 101080 in the form of compromised water quality both in Lake Mendocino and the Russian River, potential risk to drinking water supply, and potential for contaminated debris from household hazardous waste and materials and structural debris resulting from the destruction of structures and debris removal; and
- 2) The potential introduction hazardous air quality from smoke and debris removal, disruption of serpentine soils, mercury mines and other soil contaminants create exposure to harmful toxins and particulates in Mendocino County is an imminent threat to the public health within the meaning of Health & Safety Code section 101080.
- 3) A local health emergency is hereby declared in Mendocino County commencing on the 16th day of September 2021 at 1400 hours.

WHEREAS, the local health emergency shall not remain in effect after seven days from the date of this declaration unless it has been ratified by the County of Mendocino's Board of Supervisors.

Date: 9/16/21
Time: 2:35pm

Issued by: 
H. Andrew Coren, MD
Public Health Officer
Mendocino County