

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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OAKRIDGE PARK CLEARED BY CITY AND COUNTY, PARK RESIDENTS WHOSE HOMES ARE STILL STANDING CAN BEGIN RETURNING THIS WEEKEND

Los Angeles, CA – Today, city and county officials certified the completion of the contracted debris-removal process to remove the toxic debris from the Oakridge Mobile Home Park site, which was devastated by the November 2008 Sayre Fire. This certification comes well in advance of the original May 17th deadline and even earlier than the more recent target deadline of this coming Monday, May 4th. By certifying that the health hazard has been abated, park residents whose homes are still standing will be allowed to begin returning to their homes this Saturday, May 2nd during the day, but will not yet be able to spend the night in the home. On Monday, May 4th, the State Housing Department will begin the process of reviewing the homes that are still standing and certifying them “habitable.” It is expected that the majority of the 101 yellow-tagged homes will become “green-tagged,” which means they will be cleared for the residents to begin living in their homes.

“The debris clean-up process has been a tremendous, coordinated effort by all levels of government, and I thank all of the workers who have made it possible for the park to be re-opened,” said Councilmember Richard Alarcón. “My thanks also to the park residents who have waited so patiently for the debris removal process to be concluded. I know that it has been particularly frustrating for the homeowners whose homes were still standing, but could not return because of the health hazard, but today’s actions remove one more hurdle and will allow the homeowners to move to the next steps for rebuilding their lives.”

The process for the certification that the health hazard abatement had been finished satisfactorily included the City of Los Angeles’ Department of Environmental Affairs writing a letter certifying the toxic debris had been removed and the health hazard had been abated, followed by certification from the County Department of Health confirming this assessment. The approval was based upon soil sampling and physical reviews of the park by the Environmental Affairs Department and the County Department of Health. This allows homeowners to return to the park, but not yet stay overnight. On Monday, the California Housing Department will review the individual homes that are still standing to assess whether or not they are deemed habitable and “green tag” those that are.

The Department of Water and Power has confirmed that the water is ready for the standing homes and is working to ensure that electricity will also be available to all the standing homes on Monday, May 4th by 12:00 noon. The Southern California Gas Company reports that the gas is also ready for residents whose homes are still standing, and the City will be working to ensure they have the information on how to connect this service, which occurs through the Gas Company.

Council District Seven staff will be on hand this weekend to help park residents who may have questions about the process of returning to their homes.

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