

**DECLARATION OF A LOCAL HEALTH EMERGENCY AND ORDER
PROHIBITING THE ENDANGERMENT OF THE COMMUNITY THROUGH THE
UNSAFE REMOVAL, TRANSPORT, AND DISPOSAL OF FIRE DEBRIS**

WHEREAS, California Health and Safety Code section 101040 authorizes the local health officer to take any preventive measures that may be necessary to protect and preserve public health from any public hazard during an emergency;

WHEREAS, Section 101080 of the California Health and Safety Code provides that the local health officer may declare a local emergency in the jurisdiction or areas thereof affected by release or escape of hazardous waste which is an imminent threat to the public health or imminent and proximate threat of the introduction of any contagious, infectious, or communicable disease, chemical agent, non-communicable biologic agent, toxin, or radioactive agent;

WHEREAS, the potential for widespread 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;

WHEREAS, exposure to hazardous substances 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;

WHEREAS, Section 101080 of the California Health and Safety Code empowers the Local Health Officer to proclaim the existence or threatened existence of a local health emergency when the Local Health Officer reasonably determines that the waste is a hazardous waste or medical waste, or that it may become a hazardous waste or medical, subject to ratification by the Board of Supervisors within seven days and reaffirmation every fourteen days thereafter until such health emergency is terminated; and

WHEREAS, the Health Officer of Lake County finds that the wildfire (known as the Mendocino Complex Fire) that started in Mendocino County on July 27, 2018, and spread to Lake County on July 28, 2018. Concurrent fire events have created an imminent threat to public health in Lake 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.

WHEREAS, approximately a third of the county has been evacuated due to fire threat, and many areas that have been closed to reentry by residents and the public for safety reasons.

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

WHEREAS, the Mendocino Complex Fire has led to the closure of one local hospital, two Skilled Nursing Facilities, and 1 dialysis center. These evacuations and further displacement of medically vulnerable

people, including those with special needs, will increase the surge in the use of healthcare for the one other small hospital which has not been evacuated, and make increased need for transport and continuity of care.

WHEREAS, hazardous air quality from smoke, disruption of serpentine soils, and mercury mines create exposure to harmful toxins and particulates;

WHEREAS, this hazardous waste debris poses a substantial present or potential hazard to human health and the environment unless its removal and disposal is performed in a manner that will protect the public health and safety;

WHEREAS, on July 28, 2018, the Governor of the State of California proclaimed a State of Emergency existed in Lake County; and

NOW, THEREFORE, A LOCAL HEALTH EMERGENCY IS HEREBY DECLARED in Lake County in those areas of the county affected by the Pawnee Fire and concurrent fires.

Gary Pace, M.D.
Lake County Interim Health Officer

Dated: _____

Confirmed this _____ day of _____ 2018 by the Lake County Board of Supervisors:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT OR NOT VOTING:

ATTEST : CAROL J. HUCHINGSON

COUNTY OF LAKE

Clerk of the Board of Supervisors

By: _____
Deputy

Chair Board of Supervisors

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

ANITA L. GRANT
County Counsel

By: _____
Deputy