



# Returning Home

## Precautions To Protect Your Health (Morris, 2021)

Per Guidance Received from IL Dept of Public Health and IL Environmental Protection Agency

### 4 Key Points:

- Residents may or may not see general dust related to the structure fire or material used to extinguish the fire. It is important to safely clean affected areas to keep soil and water sources safe. **If dust is present, first WIPE OFF with a micro cloth before washing.** After dust is removed, a surfactant soap, such as Dawn, and water is recommended.
- Any potential damage to your home or property should be reported to your homeowner insurance company. BEFORE CLEANING, take photos to document the condition of your property for potential insurance claims.
- Air quality has been evaluated by the US and IL Environmental Protection Agencies, and data results are below established action levels. USEPA and ILEPA will continue to evaluate air quality data as it becomes available.
- Those with respiratory conditions such as asthma, COPD, and heart disease may need to take extra precautions as exposure to particles in the air may trigger breathing issues.

### Water Sources:

- It is believed that there is no concern with drinking water from municipal water sources or private wells.
- Private well users from within the evacuation area may choose to contact the Grundy Health Department at 815-941-3115 for further guidance.

### Indoor Safety:

- Take off your shoes upon entry to your home so that you do not track particles into your home.
- Clean or replace your air conditioner/furnace filter to ensure that it is working efficiently and effectively. When cleaning filters wear a mask and gloves. Turn on your system's "fan" or "recirculate" option to circulate the air through the filter. If you have a window air conditioner, close the outdoor air damper.

[www.epa.gov/indoor-air-quality-iaq/wildfires-and-indoor-air-quality-iaq](http://www.epa.gov/indoor-air-quality-iaq/wildfires-and-indoor-air-quality-iaq)

[www.cdc.gov/disasters/covid-19/wildfire\\_smoke\\_covid-19.html](http://www.cdc.gov/disasters/covid-19/wildfire_smoke_covid-19.html)

### Cleaning-Up:

Portland cement was used in effort to extinguish the fire. While it appears that large quantities of dust are NOT off-site from the structure fire, some dust may be blown through the neighborhood. Outdoor or indoor items may appear dusty. If dust is present, please reference the following cleaning recommendations:

- Residents should wear a disposable N-95 mask (or better), during clean-up to avoid breathing in airborne particles and latex gloves to protect skin of any dust remnants.
- Wash hands or shower regularly with soap and water throughout the day when cleaning areas.
- If applicable, clean interior floors and upholstery with high efficiency particulate air (HEPA-filter) vacuum cleaners. Common household vacuums may not filter out small particles, but rather put back into the air.
- Hard surfaces (tile floors, countertops) can be wiped down with a micro fiber cloth, and then soapy water and rinsed. Uncovered kitchen items (pots, pans, flatware) should be washed with soapy water and rinsed.
- To clean swimming pools, recirculate through the filters, and perform routine pool maintenance.
- Discard food left out that cannot be washed prior to consumption. Empty and clean pet food/water bowls.

### Outdoor Safety:

- While playing or doing yardwork, avoid hand to mouth contact and wash hands upon going indoors.
- When mowing, wear respiratory protection in case mowing stirs up particles that have settled on the grass.
- Use a micro cloth to wipe off dust, then soapy water to clean toys, swing-sets, patio furniture, BBQs, pet toys, etc.
- Produce from gardens is assumed to be safe to consumed after thoroughly washing and rinsing. Leafy vegetables can be soaked in a 10% vinegar solution to lift soil particles from produce. **WHEN IN DOUBT, THROW IT OUT.**  
<https://ucanr.edu/sites/SoCo/files/337032.pdf>.
- Do not let pets drink water from puddles, or drink water or eat food that was outside during the incident.

Additional information about the incident can be found at [www.grundyco.org](http://www.grundyco.org).

July 2, 2021