

Episode 57CB January 20 2025 Ash and Fumes after wildfire remain to sicken residents of Los Angeles

In Episode 57CB 1 California Los Angeles Altadena Their Homes Are Intact but the Fire Damage Inside Is Unbearable Some 2 California Los Angeles Open Houses in Los Angeles Take on an Eerie Feeling

1 California Los Angeles Altadena Their Homes Are Intact but the Fire Damage Inside Is Unbearable Some evacuees from the Eaton fire have been allowed back into their homes only to find that smoke and ash have made living there impossible for now Jack Healy accompanied homeowners from Altadena Calif into their houses for the first time since the fires [RAWSEP View](#) This article goes into detail about the adverse effect on human health of wood smoke and smoke from other solid fuels Wood smoke emissions from wildfires like the Eaton Fire in Altadena California are similar the wood smoke emissions from indoor residential wood burning If someone burns solid fuels in an indoor residential wood burner if those solid fuels could include wood and any other solid fuels available within a home at the discretion of the wood burner The difference between the Eaton Fire solid fuel emissions and ordinary fuels chosen to burn in an ordinary indoor residential wood burning appliance is that outdoors cars and other items found on the street that burned contained more metals that might be found in any choice of solid fuels that an ordinary indoor wood burner chooses to burn to heat his or her home or for recreation [RAWSEP View of remaining air pollution in homes in Altadena California after the Eaton Fire has largely been extinguished](#) The editor of RAWSEP discussed this possibility of remaining air pollution yesterday with a friend before reading this article The friend was concerned about a relative returning to Los Angeles after fleeing to Northern California for the last week but that relative decided to return to Los Angeles by this coming Tuesday The editor of RAWSEP had a knee jerk reaction of optimism that once the wood smoke emissions stopped with the end of the wildfire that the air would clear because air moves and particulates also eventually drop to the ground and are not in the air unless wood burning continues to pump out new PM2.5 emissions However this article describes ongoing air pollution from the remaining ashes of wood and other contaminants such as fumes essentially trapped inside houses until there is a thorough cleaning or perhaps homes cannot be adequately cleaned enough to remove lingering air pollution from contaminants remaining in the form of inhalable ash and fumes [RAWSEP Top excerpts about the health effects of remaining ash from the Eaton Fire in homes](#) on three returning residents A homeowner and two renters [1 A homeowner](#) said the inside of his home was coated in dirt and ash In the Kinneloa Mesa neighborhood which is east of Altadena after the home escaped the flames Mr M P said that the inside of his home was coated in a quarter inch of dirt and ash Mr M P started cleaning up the house and raking leaves until [his breathing grew labored and his head started to feel heavy](#) [I realized I was actually breathing this crap](#) he said Mr M P anticipated replacing insulation in his attic to repaint the walls and to scour his house clean He expected his insurance to cover much of the cleanup costs which could reach \$40000 But he said that he expected his \$12000 home insurance yearly premiums would keep rising or that private insurers might abandon his neighborhood altogether [2 The first renter](#) As soon as an evacuation order was lifted in her neighborhood Ms A P went back to her Altadena California unscathed rented home Then she went inside A stinging haze hung in the living room Her mattresses rugs and couches reeked like a chemical campfire Ms A P aged 55 flung open the windows and doors but she was still choking I have such a headache she said through a mask There is so much smoke Many homeowners policies will cover the cost of replacing contaminated possessions but Ms A P a renter said she was unprotected because she had not yet bought renters insurance Her landlord will clean the house but she said she would have to pay for new bedding and furniture I love this community so much But breathing this air? I do not know We cannot just come in here with a couple of air purifiers She is considering moving in with her mother in Compton 25 miles to the south [3 The second renter](#) It is the invisible threat said Ms A F who returned to her rented home on Friday but did not plan to stay overnight Just because you do not see a bunch of ash does not mean there is nothing there [RAWSEP Top excerpts about insurance coverage for smoke damage that includes no payment for smoke damage removal even if that smoke damage is harmful to human health](#) The fires consumed not only trees brush and timber but also lead acid car batteries plastic pipes synthetic furniture paint and untold other potential

sources of contamination A class-action lawsuit filed in 2024 on behalf of more than 350000 homeowners accused the California State government FAIR home insurance of last resort Plan of wrongfully excluding smoke damage from coverage saying that the damage was being denied if it were not clearly visible such as a singed wall or not detectable through smell A spokesperson for the FAIR Plan said it was not intended to and does not afford coverage for nonpermanent damage including smoke damage **Excerpts edited by RAWSEP for brevity and clarity and relationship to Residents Against Wood Smoke Emission Particulates a 501c3 nonprofit organization** January 20 2025 thousands of displaced people across Los Angeles were allowed back home this weekend for the first time since fleeing the firestorms Their homes had escaped the wildfires that burned 12000 other structures but were still filled with ash and smoke damage Wildfires not only burn down structures but emit smoke ash and heat that suburban homes are rarely built to withstand From the outside their houses looked undamaged but inside the air stung their throats and made their eyes water and heads pound Late Friday January 17 2025 power returned to a section of Altadena for the first time in 10 days One resident instead of celebrating lunged to shut off his HVAC system Some residents with intact structures have already started calling fire-remediation companies to test their homes for contaminants and to plan deep cleans Some residents started cleaning up by themselves Wearing respirators and N-95 masks they wiped away soot from doorways vacuumed up ash and opened every window they could All of the materials in blankets clothes carpeting and insulation tend to soak up a lot of the gases and then over the next month they are going to release it back A particulate sampling device about 20 miles south of the Eaton fire had detected high levels of toxins including lead chlorine and bromine in the air Ninety percent of the homes in the Altadena were built routinely employing lead paint and asbestos Winds pumped smoke and soot through gaps in single-pane windows and into thinly insulated homes Soot blew in through gaps cracks under doors and snowed down from vents powdering carpets closets couches pillows and quilts 2 California Los Angeles Open Houses in Los Angeles Take on an Eerie Feeling Thousands of residents who have lost their homes are desperately searching for somewhere to live Potential home buyers are weighing risks **Excerpts edited by RAWSEP for brevity and clarity and relationship to Residents Against Wood Smoke Emission Particulates a 501c3 nonprofit organization** January 19 2025 A three-bedroom home is listed for \$2.175 million Her nephew bought it last year as an investment and she lent him money to renovate the kitchen and 2.5 bathrooms They were making plans to flip the home but could not predict the Los Angeles wildfires threatening their property and upending the real estate market Pasadena is next to Altadena where at least 16 people were killed and 7000 structures destroyed by the Eaton fire But Pasadena escaped the fires largely unscathed The white stucco house had a new fireproof roof and had fared well in the fire Ash from the Eaton fire covered the deck and driveway of the house The 32 year old potential buyer has been house hunting for a year On January 18 2025 the open house took on an eerie quality as smoke still lingered Buyers opened cabinets surveyed bedrooms and wondered how much homeowners or fire insurance would cost if they could get it given the scale of the disaster At an open house for the \$1.19 million two-bedroom townhouse along the Rose Bowl parade route a man considered the past two weeks For four days he and his wife kept their cars packed with all their valuables as fire raged 7 miles from their home in Los Angeles Now my wife wants out he said Before the fire a 36 year old woman who rents in Pasadena had been looking at homes in Altadena Many of them were likely destroyed in the fire Now she was focusing on neighborhoods south of I-210 the freeway that divides Pasadena and could provide a barrier to flames Last weekend half of the people who toured the townhouse were displaced from the fires according to a listing agent The clothes didn't match they had a pet with them they were shellshocked she said One couple asked if they could buy the house along with all the staging furniture The listing agent thinks buyers may re-evaluate their choices after the fire Miles away another woman swept floors and wiped counters before the open house began reassuring her 32 year old nephew that the house would sell The house went on the market the day the Palisades fire started The house and neighborhood made it through the fire unscathed although an inch of ash that had to be power washed from the deck and driveway The aunt said she was shocked the house hadn't filled with smoke and ash too Relieved that his investment was intact the nephew wondered Is anyone going to want to live here?