

ORANGE COUNTY OPERATIONAL AREA
EMERGENCY OPERATIONS CENTER

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

PRESS RELEASE # 02

Date: November 9, 2023

Time: 1900

**ORANGE COUNTY DECLARES EMERGENCY DUE TO FORMER TUSTIN
MARINE CORPS AIR STATION HANGAR FIRE**

*Tustin Hangar Debris Found to have asbestos, and other heavy Metals. Caution is advised to
reduce asbestos and heavy metal exposure*

The County of Orange has declared a local emergency due to the former Tustin Marine Corps Air Station hangar fire. The local emergency has been declared to assist the County in ensuring the proper resources are provided after the fire to assist with remediation. To see a copy of the proclamation, click [here](#). The Board of Supervisors will hold a special meeting to consider ratification of the emergency proclamation on [Monday, November 13 at 12:00 pm](#).

County of Orange Health Care Agency Update

Following Tuesday's fire at the former Marine Corps Air Station Tustin, the South Coast Air Quality Management District (AQMD) has collected and analyzed air and ash samples which indicate the presence of asbestos as well as heavy metals including lead, arsenic and nickel. Residents are encouraged to exercise caution to reduce exposure during the clean-up of structural fire debris which may contain asbestos and heavy metal particles.

Asbestos is a naturally occurring mineral that has been utilized in construction and was commonly used in buildings built before 1960. When building materials are burned or damaged, any asbestos fibers present in the ash and debris can become airborne and potentially inhaled.

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Residents should use caution in areas where asbestos has been detected or suspected. Exposure to asbestos can cause harmful health effects. If inhaled, asbestos can increase risk of developing lung disease or cancer and if ingested, asbestos can damage the stomach or intestinal lining.

Please follow these guidelines to help minimize your exposure:

- Avoid touching or disturbing the materials unless you have been properly trained to do so
- Avoid touching fire debris/ash
- Wear protective equipment (mask/gloves) if in an area where there is high risk of encountering asbestos
- Remove shoes before entering your home
- Keep windows closed on windy days to keep asbestos out
- Spray your patio with water instead of sweeping it
- Avoid using leaf blowers
- Wash off ash from vehicles or outdoor toys or outdoor furniture
- Wash ash off pets

For more information:

https://www.atsdr.cdc.gov/asbestos/docs/asbestos_factsheet_508.pdf

<https://www.epa.gov/asbestos/learn-about-asbestos>

South Coast Air Quality Management District (AQMD) Update

South Coast AQMD has been providing technical assistance for the former Tustin Marine Corps Air Station Hanger Fire Incident Response. An update on efforts can be found below.

Asbestos Found In Debris

On November 7, three bulk samples of debris were taken at Veterans Sports Park and results of laboratory testing detected asbestos. The three samples showed 25% asbestos, 27% asbestos and 17% asbestos, respectively. The final report for these bulk samples can be [found here](#).

[Air Pollution Discharge Notice](#) was issued on 11/9 notifying the City of Tustin, Orange County Board of Supervisors and the Orange County Health Officer of the discharge of hazardous materials likely to impact public health or safety.

Air sampling

Air samples were taken on November 8 using glass plates, which are used to capture any materials in the air and are being tested for asbestos. Results from those samples will be available

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in the next few days. A fixed air monitor collected samples from the late afternoon on November 8 to the morning of November 9 to monitor for small fibers of asbestos that can be breathed in. Results of the analysis showed no presence of asbestos. That report can be [found here](#).

South Coast AQMD also collected air samples on November 7 near the hangar and in nearby communities which are being analyzed in our laboratory for gaseous air toxics, such as benzene. Results from these samples show all levels to be within common background levels (air quality on a typical day). The laboratory report can be [found here](#).

Mobile Monitoring

On the day of the fire, South Coast AQMD deployed its mobile monitor to take measurements of metals, including lead and arsenic. The majority of results from the mobile monitoring showed no elevated levels of metals. For short periods of time on November 7, the mobile monitor showed elevations of lead and arsenic inside the area of the smoke plume. Mobile monitoring on November 8 did show some elevated levels of lead, but the levels were five times lower than those observed during the fire.

South Coast AQMD took additional glass plate samples on November 9, which are being analyzed in the laboratory. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is providing technical assistance to the county on long term air and ground samples.

The County has created a public information website at <http://www.ocgov.com/tustin> for this incident. The County also has a public information hotline available for residents at 714-628-7085. The public information hotline will be manned with staff until 8 pm this evening.

Follow the County of Orange on social media for more information at:

Twitter: [@OCGovCA](#)

Facebook: [@OCGov](#)

Instagram: [@OCGov](#)

#TustinHangar

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