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## **Fire Retardant After the Fire (/county/ucce-sonoma-county/fire-retardant-after-fire)**

*Per Sonoma County Dept of Health Services (<https://sonomacounty.ca.gov/EOC-and-PIO/Fires-October-2017/Health-Concerns-and-Resources/>):*

### **Chemicals in Fires:**

Chemicals used to fight fires contain toxic materials and can contaminate food and cookware. The chemicals cannot be washed off the food.

**Foods that are exposed to chemicals should be thrown away.** This includes food stored at room temperature, such as fruits and vegetables, as well as foods stored in permeable containers like those with screw-caps, snap-lids, crimped caps, twist caps, flip tops, and snap-open, and home-canned foods because they cannot be disinfected. Throw away food in cardboard containers, including juice/milk/baby formula boxes.

**Canned goods and cookware exposed to chemicals can be decontaminated:** Wash in a strong detergent solution. Then dip in a bleach solution (1 tablespoon of unscented, liquid chlorine bleach per gallon of water) for 15 minutes.

*From Press Democrat, 11/3/2017 (<http://www.pressdemocrat.com/lifestyle/homeandgarden/7568970-181/how-to-safely-clean-fire?artslide=0>).*

## **DO'S**

### **Fire Chemical Clean-up**

**(/sites/default/files/2017-10/272030.pdf)**pdf, US Forest Service, 7/2007.

## **Studies**

Cascading effects of fire retardant on plant-microbe interactions, community composition, and invasion (<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1890/16-0001.1/full>), A Marshall et al, Ecological Society of America, 6/2016.

Effects of Wildfire Suppression Chemicals on People & the Environment ([/sites/default/files/2017-10/272029.pdf](http://sites/default/files/2017-10/272029.pdf)) - A Review, K.D. Kalabokidis, University of the Aegean, Department of Geography, Greece. 9/2000.

- Phos-Chek is designed to wash off in light rain, which is good news for many property owners this week. If there is any remaining, it can be rinsed off with running water. Wet the retardant down, wash it away, wait 15 minutes and repeat, and it should come off.
- If Phos-Chek sticks to surfaces like a roof, wood or sidewalk, a soft bristle brush, or a biodegradable cleaner can be used to help speed its removal.
- To remove it from your skin, wash with gentle soap and water.

If an animal appears sick from drinking from puddles or standing water, owners should seek immediate medical attention and advise the veterinarian that the animal may have ingested a detergent or fertilizer-based product. Up in the sky, a small band of firefighters fought to slow the wildfires' advance and aid the crews on the ground.

## **DON'TS**

- Don't use a high pressure power-washer, which can push the product further into surfaces like stucco or concrete. If it's deeply embedded, it may not come out.
- Don't use hard brushes or stiff bristles to scrub it off, for the same reason.
- Don't use bleach or harsh chemicals to clean decks, outdoor furniture or homes. Harmful fumes can result.
- Don't leave Phos-Chek standing in puddles or pools, where pets or wildlife might drink it. After the rains, be particularly vigilant. Fill with sand, soil or other absorbent material that can be removed if necessary.

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