

# How Can FEMA Inspect My Destroyed Home?

---

Release Date: Jan 28, 2025

Release Number: FS 007

To prioritize the health and safety of home inspectors and survivors, FEMA is providing remote home inspections for Los Angeles County residents whose homes were destroyed by the wildfires.

If you applied with FEMA and you cannot live in your home because of damage caused by the wildfires, a FEMA inspector will contact you to conduct a remote inspection or set up an in-person home inspection.

## Arranging the Inspection

Within 10 days of applying, an inspector will call you to make an appointment, even if you stated that your home was destroyed. The inspector will use the telephone number you provided when you applied. Assistance could be delayed if the inspector can't reach you at that number. Tell FEMA immediately if there is a change in your contact information. The inspector will attempt contact multiple times by phone or text if allowed. If you do not hear from an inspector within 10 days, please call the FEMA helpline **(800-621-3362)** to check the status of your case.

To confirm identity, the inspector may ask for the last four digits of the 9-digit registration number but will not ask for all nine numbers, if requested they can provide the first 5 confirming they are legitimate and have your inspection information. A FEMA inspector will never ask for your social security number to confirm your identity.

## If FEMA has determined your home is destroyed via GIS:

The Los Angeles County wildfires destroyed many homes. By using FEMA's Geographic Information System (**GIS**) FEMA can adjust the inspection process for



those whose homes are known to be destroyed. In these cases, a traditional in-person inspection may not be necessary because FEMA has the information to prove a total loss. Despite this, an inspector will still reach out to the applicant to collect information.

- If your home was determined to be destroyed via FEMA GIS, then the inspection will consist of the inspector calling you to verify identity, occupancy, and ownership requirements. This will be done by either:
  - Video call (such as Apple's Facetime or Zoom)
  - Meeting at a neutral location to show documentation.
- It is important to note that the inspector will not perform a traditional inspection unless you request an onsite inspection but will not enter the secured areas.
- The call should take **30** minutes, and afterwards the inspector will record the damage.

### **If FEMA has not determined via GIS that your home is destroyed:**

- The inspector will call to set up a time for a traditional in-person inspection.
  - If the site is safe and accessible, the inspector will physically travel to the site to assess the home's interior and exterior structural soundness; whether the electrical, gas, heat, plumbing and sewer or septic systems are functional; and whether the home is livable and can be entered and exited safely. During the inspection the inspector should identify themselves clearly and provide you with their credentials.
  - If the site is inaccessible, the inspector may have to reschedule for a later time when the home is accessible.
    - During this time, you will be given an "inaccessible" determination which allows your case to move forward for possible temporary assistance. Once it is safe to access the dwelling the applicant needs to inform FEMA they are ready for an inspector to come out and complete their onsite inspection.
- Onsite inspectors record damage. They do not determine your eligibility for assistance or the amount or type of assistance that FEMA can offer you.
- Within **10 days** following an inspection, you will receive a letter or electronic correspondence explaining FEMA's decision. Please read your letter carefully. Your letter may have information about next steps you need to take to further your request for federal assistance.

