

Polis Administration Providing Unprecedented Relief to Wildfire Victims

LOUISVILLE - Governor Polis signed a new landmark bill into [law](#) this year sponsored by Senate President Steve Fenberg and Representative Judy Amabile to provide unprecedented financial relief to wildfire survivors like the Marshall Fire and responsibly investing funds to give Colorado communities and first responders more tools to fight these fires in the immediate future, helping prevent small flames from becoming destructive wildfires. Today, the Polis-Primavera administration in partnership with the legislature announced that funding will soon be available to wildfire victims and the criteria to apply.

“We are stepping in to provide much-needed support to help Coloradans rebuild stronger and more resiliently. As we face the reality of a year-round fire season, we are taking action to prepare for and prevent wildfires, and making sure that Coloradans know that they are never alone when facing the challenge of rebuilding after a fire,” said Gov Polis. **“This important support, which includes grants for low and middle income residents and low-interest loans for higher income residents, helps to fill the gap left by underinsurance, letting Coloradans know that you can count on our state to help as we continue to build our robust toolkit of resources to prepare for, prevent, and respond to wildfires in our state.”**

“Our climate is changing whether we like it or not, and we’re seeing more frequent and more destructive natural disasters such as wildfires as a result,” said President Fenberg. **“That’s why we’re working to prepare for and mitigate future climate-induced disasters and to improve our response to the destruction left in their wake. The new support we’re offering this year will make the rebuilding and insurance processes less burdensome and help folks who have been hit by natural disasters get back on their feet. These new programs, alongside the new Office of Climate Preparedness, will help us better coordinate our response and ensure we’re as prepared as possible when the next disaster strikes.”**

“Coloradans displaced by the Marshall Fire, East Troublesome Fire and other wildfire disasters are not alone, the state is stepping up to help Coloradans rebuild and protect our communities from destructive wildfires,” said Representative Judy Amabile. **“These resources, along with the insurance reforms we passed this year, will help Coloradans impacted by recent fires rebuild their lives and protect homeowners from unanticipated gaps in their insurance coverage. This significant investment will boost our state’s emergency response efforts, mitigate damage caused by natural disasters, prepare Colorado for our changing climate and a year-round fire season, and connect Coloradans to the services and relief they need after a destructive fire.”**

“With debris removal making significant progress, our residents are now focusing on rebuilding and having these funding opportunities from SB-206 will be a significant help in bridging the underinsurance gap. We sincerely appreciate Governor Polis and the entire team at the state for supporting the rebuilding efforts of our communities,” said Clint Folsom, Mayor of Superior.

“Underinsurance has left so many families in our community without the necessary resources to get back home. This program is critical to closing the gap,” said Ashley Stolzmann, Mayor of Louisville.

“Colorado’s elected officials have shown extraordinary leadership in response to the Marshall Fire and in ensuring our state is better prepared for similar future events. We are grateful for the support and in the state’s work to make the long road ahead easier for our community by aligning available funds through Recovery Navigation,” said Tatiana Hernandez, CEO Community Foundation Boulder County.

The Disaster Resilience Rebuilding Program (DRR) aims to help close gaps from other funds offered for the rebuilding of owner-occupied homes affected by natural disasters across the state. Applicants may apply for grants and loans up to \$50,000 depending on different qualifying factors. DRR hopes to support rebuilding safer, energy efficient structures that can better withstand any future natural disasters. The program will provide funds for fire resistant building materials to better protect communities in the future. Please visit the Boulder County Recovery Navigators [site](#) and the Disaster Resilience Rebuilding [site](#) to find all of the details regarding qualifications, determining factors, applicable fund uses, and required information. Further questions may be submitted [here](#).

Boulder County will host a [town hall](#) today at 6:00pm MT to further support residents navigating the rebuilding process, and residents can attend in-person or online.

This April when the landmark SB22-206 was [introduced](#), Gov. Polis convened local, federal and state officials to discuss this effort and ongoing and new efforts to prepare for and respond to wildfires.

Eligible applicants for the first phase of funding include persons who owned a disaster-damaged home as their primary residence at the time of the state-declared disaster (see list below). Those nine state-declared disasters include:

- 2018 Spring Creek Fire San Juan and La Plata Counties
- 2018 Chateau Fire Teller County
- 2018 Lake Christine Fire Eagle County
- 2019 Avalanche Debris and Flooding Risk Hinsdale County
- 2020 Cameron Peak Fire Larimer County
- 2020 East Troublesome Fire Grand County
- 2020 Calwood Fire Boulder County
- 2021 Muddy Slide Fire Routt County
- 2022 Marshall Fire and Straight-Line Winds Boulder County

The application and list will be available in August or early September. Program staff are developing a single application and a single, comprehensive list of background documents necessary to apply for Disaster Resilience Rebuilding funds as well as other funds that may be available to those impacted by the state-declared disasters. To get started Coloradans may begin compiling the following:

- Government issued identification, proof of ownership of the property current and back to the date of the state declared disaster (e.g., title and/or property tax record)
- Proof of residency in the property on the date of the state declared disaster (e.g., utility bills). Proof of income for adults in the home (e.g., pay stubs, bank statements showing pay deposits, social security/disability/retirement fund statements, or self-owned business account statements)
- Home/hazard Insurance claim/disbursement letter/check (If a federally declared disaster) FEMA award/denial letter and disbursement statement

- (If a federally declared disaster, and applicable) SBA award/denial letter and disbursement statement
- Documentation of any other loans/grants/gifts received as financial assistance for rebuilding of the home
- Documentation of rebuilding or repair cost estimates received from contractors

This new law also establishes the Office of Climate Preparedness, dedicating focused attention and coordination across state government, on the state's climate adaptation and disaster recovery needs. The office will add needed capacity to support recovery efforts from natural disasters and will lead the development of a statewide comprehensive climate preparedness roadmap. It would also implement the recommendation of the Colorado Fire Commission to coordinate year-round resource mobilization and dispatching.

In the aftermath of the Marshall Fire, Gov. Polis [convened](#) philanthropic groups in support of Colorado families and individuals impacted by the devastating Marshall Fire and hosted a virtual benefit [concert](#) in partnership with AEG and Community Foundation of Boulder County to support disaster survivors of wildfire.