



October 9, 2025

Ricardo Lara, California Insurance Commissioner  
Tony Cignarale, California Deputy Insurance Commissioner  
c/o: Smoke Claims and Remediation Task Force

Dear Smoke Claims and Remediation Task Force,

On behalf of the Institute of Inspection, Cleaning, and Restoration Certification (IICRC), the Restoration Industry Association (RIA), and the Cleaning Industry Research Institute (CIRI), we appreciate the opportunity to provide input as the Task Force develops statewide wildfire smoke remediation standards. Our organizations represent thousands of restoration companies and professionals who have returned families to their homes safely and effectively for decades, using proven, science-based methodologies in accordance with peer reviewed industry standards. It has come to the attention of our organizations that a growing unfounded sentiment is emerging, suggesting that homes affected by wildfire smoke and its byproducts are categorically uncleanable and unrestorable. According to this viewpoint, wildfire damaged homes should be stripped down to the studs and rebuilt. We want to make the Task Force aware this unsupported belief is not grounded in science, established work standards, or recognized and proven restoration practices.

The idea that the disposal of porous materials and soft items, as opposed to the prioritization of cleaning a structure post-wildfire, appears to lack support from any authoritative industry guideline document. The California Air Resources Board, the United States Environmental Protection Agency, the South Coast Air Quality Management District, the California Department of Public Health, nor any other public health agency make recommendations that occupants of wildfire smoke infiltrated residences should dispose of all of their furnishings and personal items nor demolish and rebuild their homes.

Wildfire smoke, together with its volatile and semi-volatile compounds and metals, adsorbs or condenses on the surfaces of particles that infiltrate structures and settle on the surfaces of interior materials. This is a superficial occurrence that can generally be cleansed. Specialized cleaning methodologies have been successfully used to remove infiltrated and deposited wildfire smoke residues and other potentially hazardous contaminants to typical background levels for decades by the thousands of professional cleaners and restorers our organizations represent.

While disposal may be considered where cleaning costs surpass the item's value or where heavily impacted porous materials such as apparel, bedding, infant items, and toys exhibit hand to mouth contact risks, the presumption that all materials and structures are unrestorable is inconsistent with science, successful restoration projects and accredited industry standards.

Professional restoration provides significant consumer and public benefits:

- It preserves property and reduces unnecessary demolition.
- It minimizes loss and replacement of contents and personal items.
- It mitigates environmental waste by restoring salvageable materials.
- It provides a science-based pathway to safe reoccupation.

For these reasons, we urge the Task Force to continue to ground its recommendations in science-based, consensus driven methods and to recognize that the professional restoration of fire and smoke damaged homes is not only possible but is an established and proven practice. The organizations represented in this

letter will forward practical and industry proven methods for effective restoration practices for the Smoke Claims and Remediation Task Force to consider in two phases. This statement is the first phase of this communication. The second phase will be published to the Task Force no later than December 1<sup>st</sup>, 2025 to include industry supported procedures based on proximity to the event burn zone. The third and final phase, a more detailed statement of restoration procedures, will be published to the Task Force no later than January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2026.

Thank you for your leadership on this critical issue.

Sincerely,



Leslie Anderson  
Chair, IICRC Board of Directors



Kristy Cohen  
Chief Executive Officer, RIA



Kevin Pearson  
Chairman, CIRI Board of Directors