

ABOUT THE ALISA ANN RUCH BURN FOUNDATION

The Alisa Ann Ruch Burn Foundation (AARBF) was founded in 1971 out of the tragic death of an 8-year-old girl, Alisa Ann Ruch. Alisa Ann's parents and the Southern California Fire Service created AARBF to provide burn survivor services and fire prevention education so accidents like this would never happen again. The Ruch's grassroots response to this avoidable tragedy has since grown into a \$1.1 million agency with offices in the Bay Area, Fresno, and Pasadena. Our mission is to significantly reduce the number of burn injuries through prevention education, and to enhance the quality of life of those affected by burn injuries in California. We work side-by-side with 110 fire departments and are in contact with the burn units of eight hospitals statewide.



CALIFORNIA WILDFIRES: THE NEW NORMAL 2017-2020



In October 2017 a series of 17 separate wildfires started burning across the state of California, including the Tubbs, Nuns, Atlas, Oakmont, among several others. They broke out throughout Napa, Lake, Sonoma, Mendocino, Butte and Solano counties. The fires burned more than 210,000 acres and destroyed an estimated 8,400 structures while forcing 100,000 people to evacuate from their homes. These wildfires killed at least 42 people and hospitalized at least 185.

The destruction did not end in October. Multiple wildfires ignited in December 2017 across Los Angeles, San Bernardino, Ventura, San Diego, Riverside, Santa Barbara Counties. These fires burned over 307,900 acres. California Governor Jerry Brown declared a state of emergency in Ventura and Los Angeles Counties and Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti declared a state of emergency for the city.

2018: MASS DESTRUCTION IN CALIFORNIA

In 2018, California suffered the worst wildfire devastation in the country. Wildfires burned throughout the state killing 100 people, burning 1.8 million acres and destroying 17,133 residences, 703 commercial/mixed residential structures and 5,811 minor structures. Thousands of firefighters battled against 17 wildfires throughout California simultaneously, including the Mendocino Complex Fire, the largest fire in the history of California burning 459,000 acres. The Carr Fire in Redding, CA burned 167,113 acres, killed seven people and destroyed more than 1,500 structures. The Camp Fire was the deadliest fire and decimated the town of Paradise, CA, taking 85 lives and destroying 14,000 residences. The Woolsey Fire caused mass destruction in Los Angeles and Ventura counties, burning 96,949 acres, destroying 1,643 structures, killing three people, and prompting the evacuation of more than 295,000 people.



2019: THE DEVASTATION CONTINUES

In 2019, California saw 259,823 acres burn in wildfires and 3 fatalities, including the Kincaid Fire in Northern California's Wine County that had burned 30,000 acres, destroyed 79 structures and caused the evacuation of 180,000 people; and the Tick Fire in Los Angeles County, which destroyed at least 22 structures.

2020: CALIFORNIA CONTINUES TO BURN

As of August 2020, California has suffered the loss of more than 1.6 million acres, 7 lives and 2,262 structures due to wildfires, already making it the second-largest wildfire season in California history, with four more months left in the year. What Californians formerly knew as "fire season" has now become a year-round risk.

AARBF SUPPORTS THOSE AFFECTED BY BURN INJURIES

Since 1971, AARBF has provided support to those affected by burn injuries including:

- ❖ Hospital visits to provide initial information about and resources for burn injuries;
- ❖ Peer support through monthly support groups, peer mentoring, and volunteer efforts;
- ❖ Emergency financial assistance during hospitalization, including financial assistance, lodging assistance, and food assistance;
- ❖ Medical supplies, including pressure garments to reduce scarring and infection;
- ❖ Image enhancement services, including cosmetics consultations, wigs, and make-up;
- ❖ Educational scholarships for burn survivors seeking a higher education;
- ❖ Burn Camps for all ages including Champ Camp, the largest burn camp in the nation for burn survivors ages 5-17; Young Adult Summit, a weekend retreat for burn survivors ages 16-21; The Getaway, a family camp weekend for adult burn survivors and their families; The Retreat for adult burn survivors 21+;
- ❖ Regional trips, including the Central California ski and surf trips, for children ages 5 to 17; and
- ❖ Training for professional service providers, including nurses and firefighters, about resources and services available for burn survivors.



AARBF SUPPORT FOR WILDFIRE VICTIMS AND SURVIVORS



In addition to the supportive services that AARBF provides to burn survivors, the Alisa Ann Ruch Burn Foundation developed the “**Children & Recovery from Wildfires**” resource guide to help children and families respond to the psychological impact of wildfires. Also a **Psychological Impact of Wildfires for Burn and Trauma Survivors** tip sheet is available. Copies of the resources can be found at: <http://www.aarbf.org> under the Multimedia Resources.

A **Wildfires Victims and Survivors Relief Fund** has been established to provide additional financial assistance for those affected by the wildfires. Call (800) 755-BURN (2876) for more details or visit: www.aarbf.org.

WAYS THAT YOU CAN SUPPORT

For nearly 50 years, the Alisa Ann Ruch Burn Foundation has provided vital supportive services to Californians affected by burn injuries and their loved ones. But we have not seen this magnitude of loss and destruction in the history of our existence in the state of California. Due to the wildfires, the burn units throughout California, with which we work very closely, are seeing an increase in burn-injured patients. These patients are not only dealing with the loss of their homes and belongings, but will be faced with a lifetime of recovery and rehabilitation from their burn injuries. These patients have been financially, physically and emotionally destroyed by the devastating wildfires that decimated their communities and counties.



Donate to our **Burn Survivors Relief Fund** at: <https://www.aarbf.org/usapay/>.

We are also accepting donations of hotels.com gift cards, gas cards, grocery cards and Target cards in denominations of \$10, \$25 and \$50.

For more information about the Alisa Ann Ruch Burn Foundation visit: www.aarbf.org