



STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL AND HEALTH SERVICES
Aging and Long-Term Support Administration
Residential Care Services
PO Box 45600, Olympia, WA 98504-5600

August 13, 2014

AL TSA: ALF #2014-008

**HANDLING OF EASTERN WASHINGTON WILDFIRES COMMENDATION AND
EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS PLANNING REMINDER**

Dear Assisted Living Facility Administrators and Interested Parties:

Our state's ability to protect vulnerable adults was tested over the last several weeks by the unprecedented wildfires in twenty Eastern Washington counties. I would like to take this time to thank each and every one of you impacted by this emergency for your timely responses and coordinated efforts to:

- Actively monitor the spread of wildfires and maintain a continuous state of readiness;
- Shelter residents in their existing setting to the extent possible;
- Ensure individuals in your care were removed from areas threatened by the devastation as necessary; and
- Maintain effective communication with RCS Field Offices during this emergency.

This communication also serves as a reminder to all providers to review components of existing disaster plans, including partnership with first responders, operational continuity, supplies, and recovery. You can find more information on our website under the heading ***Emergency Preparedness*** at <http://www.altsa.dshs.wa.gov/professional/bh.htm>

Please take a moment to watch this short video for personal stories about some of those affected: [Harmony House: A Nursing Home Under Fire](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vqdlhsqaf1Y) (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vqdlhsqaf1Y>).

I am proud of how all of our partners in care responded to this incident and I have every confidence in the support systems in our state based on this recent experience.

Sincerely,

Carl I. Walters II., Director
Residential Care Services