

## **PRESS RELEASE**

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## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **Community Bridges Brings Relief to Fire Victims**

*Mobile laundry and direct financial assistance available to eligible families*

**Santa Cruz County, CA** — Community Bridges is supporting the recovery of Santa Cruz mountain residents impacted by the CZU Lightning Fires through innovative and useful methods. In addition to providing direct financial assistance and FEMA application assistance, the agency has launched a new mobile laundry service that offers free access to washers and dryers to households that have been impacted by losing their home, been displaced or suffered significant smoke damage. These families are experiencing severe financial and emotional hardships and free access to a vital service, such as laundry, is extremely valuable. The trailer will be located at rotating locations in the Santa Cruz mountains each week.

“We saw the devastating consequences of the CZU Lightning Complex fires in the mountain communities and as the only secular service provider in the valley we knew we needed to assist in community recovery,” states Ray Cancino, CEO of Community Bridges. “We heard from people that lost their homes that the need for laundry was vital both from a financial and practical standpoint. We saw a need and, with the help of community partners, quickly stepped in to fill it.”

Funding from the Pajaro Valley Health Trust assisted in the purchase of the trailers and machines and Pleasure Point Electric donated the electrical work and electrical equipment for the installation of the machines. The trailer opened on September 21, only a month after the disaster, at Mountain Community Resources, a program of Community Bridges, in Felton. In addition, Cancino notes that community volunteers are needed to help sustain the program.

To meet additional immediate financial needs for families impacted by the fires, Community Bridges is also providing direct financial assistance to eligible families. Available due to funding from the Community Foundation of Santa Cruz County and generous donations from the community, the Community Bridges has distributed grocery and visa gift cards to over 75 households.

#### How to Sign-Up to Use the Laundry:

Sign-ups to use the laundry machines are done through an online form located at [communitybridges.org/czu-resources](http://communitybridges.org/czu-resources). People can reserve a two-hour slot and can use up to five machines at once. One household at a time is allowed in the trailer. Drop-in use is available for unreserved time slots on a first-come first-served basis.

#### How to Volunteer at Mobile Laundry:

Volunteers are needed to support this program. Volunteer duties include opening and closing of the trailer, intake of people, sanitizing surfaces between use, refilling generators and turning off/on breakers. To sign-up, volunteers can complete an online form at [communitybridges.org/czu-resources](http://communitybridges.org/czu-resources).

#### How to Apply for Direct Financial Assistance:

Visit Mountain Community Resources Monday-Thursday from 9AM-4PM.  
6134 Highway 9, Felton

### **ABOUT COMMUNITY BRIDGES**

Community Bridges envisions a thriving community where every person has the opportunity to unleash their full potential. Together, our family of programs delivers essential services, provides equitable access to resources, and advocates for health and dignity across every stage of life. To learn more, please visit [www.communitybridges.org](http://www.communitybridges.org).

The Community Bridges family of programs includes the Child & Adult Care Food Program, Child Development Division, Women, Infants and Children (WIC), La Manzana Community Resources, Live Oak Community Resources, Mountain Community Resources, Nueva Vista Community Resources, Elderday Adult Day Health Care, Lift Line and Meals on Wheels for Santa Cruz County.

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