

Los Angeles Area Cultural Heritage Fire Response Needs

March 18, 2025

The January 2025 wind and wildfires emergency in LA County caused significant damage to artworks and cherished belongings for local residents. To better understand the needs of the community, [Art Recovery LA](#) launched the **Los Angeles Area Cultural Heritage Fire Response Needs** survey on January 23 with support from the Civic Art Division of the LA County Department of Arts and Culture.

Art Recovery LA is using this information to provide support, including free conservation clinics. This brief summarizes preliminary findings from the survey.

65 respondents completed the survey as of March 18 - 36 individuals with personal or family collections, 25 artists, and four other respondents. All but one were impacted by the Eaton Fire and seventy-one percent were either fully or partially insured.

Survey respondent needs in their own words

"How do we thoroughly clean oil paintings, framed art works, photographs, paper lamps, and books?"

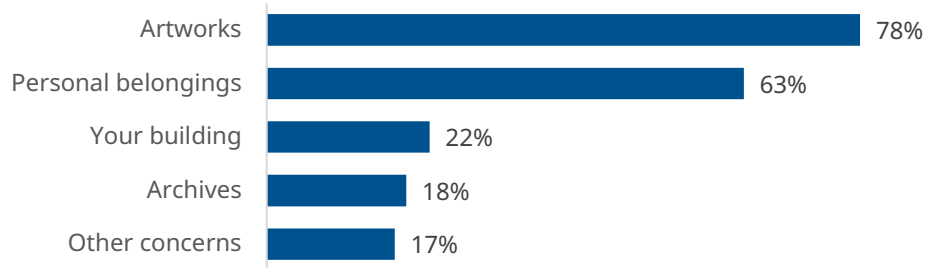
"I am wondering what the best way to remove lead would be."

"My studio was completely burnt to the ground. Much of my damaged artwork in my studio is ceramic sculptures which I have been able to retrieve. There are at least 6 pieces that are stuck to the concrete floor of my studio and I need assistance removing them due to their fragile state."

"Is it safe to keep items made of wood, to keep papers, photographs, special clothing, metal buttons, jewelry, special, large, wooden jewelry box furniture that is lined with velvet like fabric?"

"Upper floors collapsed onto this lower work area. Worried it is dangerous territory to navigate without a big team and heavy tools for lifting and dragging."

Primary concerns (n=65)



Affected materials (n=65)



Primary Conservation Concerns

The majority of respondents were concerned about artworks and personal belongings. Other concerns included respondent buildings and archives. Almost all (91 percent) had been able to view or access their items by the time they completed the survey.

Affected Materials

On average, respondents listed four different types of materials affected. Of the materials affected, more than half of respondents listed paintings, textiles/upholstery, and furniture.

Other affected materials included pianos, jewelry, art supplies, ceramics/pottery, books, film, and antiques.

Damage Assistance and Support

Overwhelmingly, most respondents required help mitigating smoke damage (88 percent).

When asked what kind of supports they needed, most reported that training on cleaning/soot removal would be most helpful.

More than half of respondents needed referrals to conservation professionals as well as consultation and guidance on preservation. On average, respondents cited five areas of support that would help in their recovery efforts.

Help is Available

If you need help with consultations, cleaning, and conservation of artworks or cherished belongings damaged by the wildfires, please contact artrecoveryla@gmail.com.

Top five supports needed (n=65)

