

SEPTEMBER 2025

Moss Landing
Battery Fire
**Community
Involvement Plan**



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	4
Community Involvement	5
EPA Contacts	6
Site History	7
Environmental Monitoring	8
Overseeing Battery Removal and Demolition	9
Battery Removal Process	10
Site Timeline	12
Community Overview	14
Community Involvement Objectives and Action Plan	17
Appendix	19

Introduction

On Jan. 16, 2025, a fire broke out at one battery energy storage system at the Moss Landing Battery Energy Storage Facility in Moss Landing, California. The facility is owned by [Vistra Corp.](#)

- **One building** (“Moss Landing 300”) was destroyed in the fire.
- The building held about **100,000 industrial lithium-ion battery modules**.
 - About **55%** of the batteries were damaged in the fire.
 - Remaining batteries are unusable due to damage from heat, smoke, and/or fire.
 - The batteries contain nickel, manganese, and cobalt. These metals, if present in high concentrations, can be hazardous to human health and the environment.
- The site was used for power generation for 75 years. The immediate surrounding area is used for industrial, commercial, marine, agriculture, conservation, and residential purpose.
- The damaged battery modules in the building may be unstable and pose a risk of secondary fire. If they re-ignite, they pose a threat of releasing toxic gases.

At the request of the State of California, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is overseeing Vistra as it removes the batteries from the site. Any off-site activities to address impacts of the January and February 2025 fires will be directed by state and local regulatory agencies.

We will involve and inform the community throughout this project. This Community Involvement Plan is based on research and input from local government, residents, community organizations, businesses, and other stakeholders we interviewed.

This Community Involvement Plan is intended to meet the requirements of the National Oil and Hazardous Substances Pollution Contingency Plan, Title 40 of the Code of Federal Regulations, Section 300.415(n)(3)(ii).



Community Involvement

EPA’s goal for this project is to promote and strengthen meaningful engagement and communication throughout the battery removal process. This plan is a site-specific roadmap to enable meaningful community involvement during the removal action.

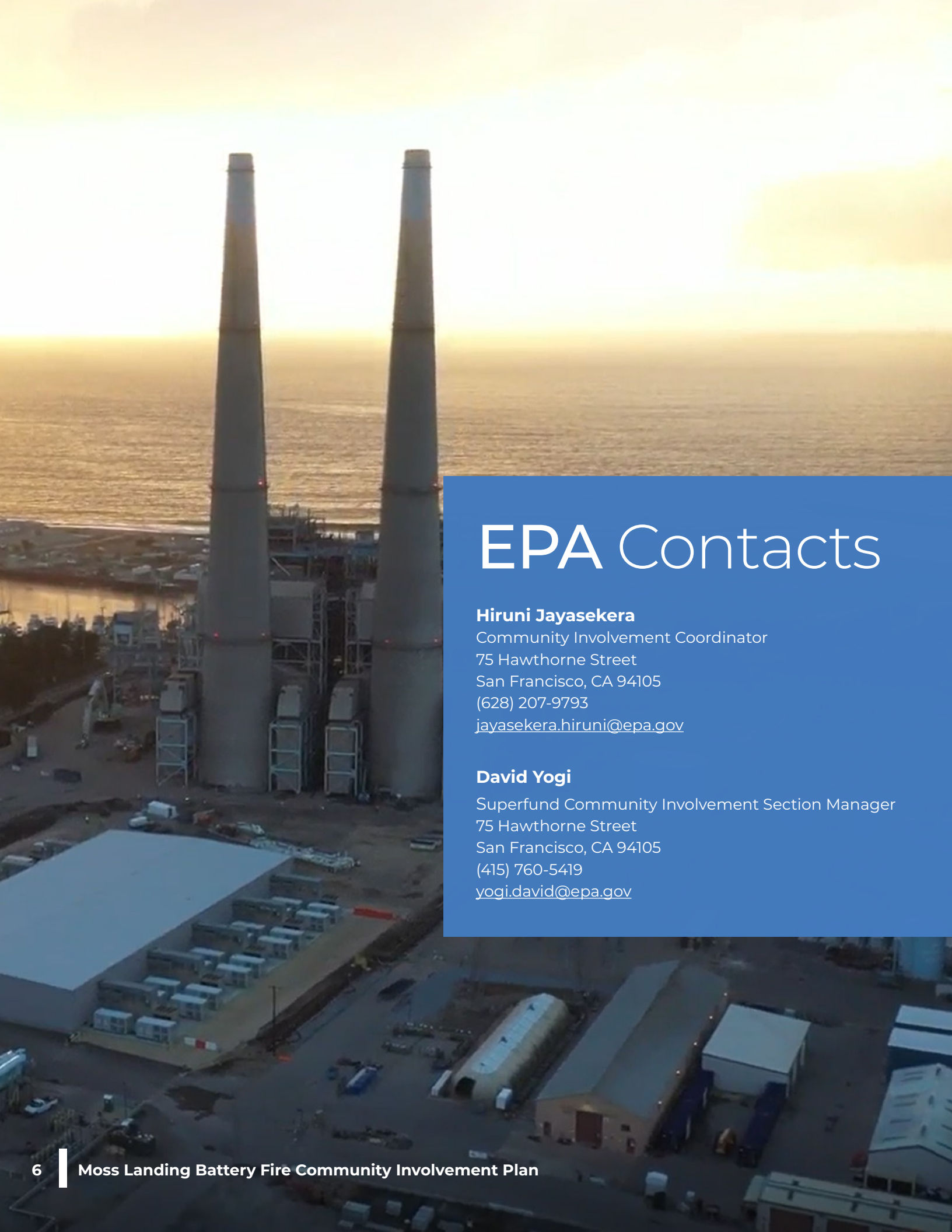
The plan:

- identifies any concerns heard during our interview process,
- includes the tools and activities we will use to inform and engage the community about the battery removal work, and
- outlines the main concerns raised and how EPA shall communicate with the public about the cleanup.

This is a dynamic, living document. It is designed to be updated, as needed, as more community feedback is gathered and work continues to develop.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT GOALS

- ✓ **Deliver accurate, timely, and accessible information about the site.**
- ✓ **Information will be:**
 - Shared in ways that reflect the community’s preference, and
 - Shared in languages identified by the community.
- ✓ **Create opportunities for community members to share their input, ensuring their voices are heard and concerns addressed.**



EPA Contacts

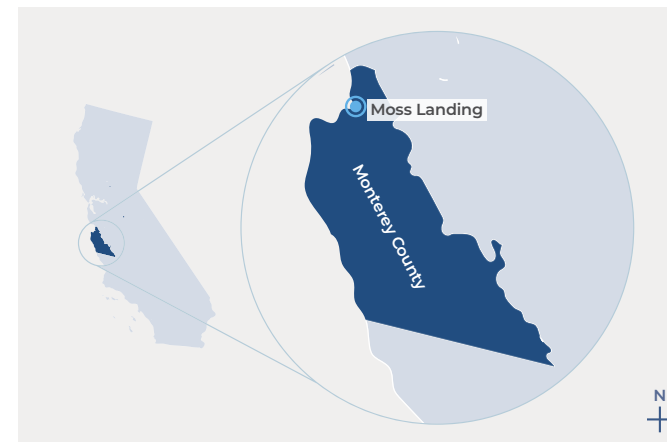
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Site History



Moss Landing is an unincorporated area in northern Monterey County. Founded in the mid-19th century, it grew into a busy fishing and whaling port. It also was a shipping center for local crops, and later added a fish processing and canning plant.

- Following World War II, California saw significant economic and population growth.
- To meet increasing electricity demand, Pacific Gas & Electric (PG&E) built an oil-fueled power plant at the Moss Landing site in 1950. They also built a substation and transmission lines to connect to the California power grid.
- Since then, the site has been used for power generation.

USING MOSS LANDING FOR BATTERY ENERGY STORAGE TO CAPTURE AND STORE EXCESS ENERGY FROM THE CALIFORNIA ELECTRIC GRID.

In 2018, Vistra bought the Moss Landing Power Plant site. In 2020, it began adding utility-scale battery energy storage.

- Three energy storage systems are present on the site:
 - A refurbished turbine building with a 300-megawatt (MW) system,
 - A building holding a 100-MW system, and
 - An area with containers that make up a 350-MW system.

FIRE ON-PROPERTY

On Thursday, Jan. 16, 2025, the 300-MW building (“Building 300”) caught fire.

- Vistra employee immediately contacted the North Monterey County Fire Protection District.
- The fire was contained to Building 300. It did not spread to other energy storage and natural gas facilities on site.

About 1,200 nearby residents were [advised to evacuate](#) for 24 hours. Monterey County reported 37 people checked into the local emergency shelter.





Environmental Monitoring

AIR MONITORING DURING AND AFTER THE FIRE

At the request of Monterey County and the State of California, we set up nine stationary air monitors the morning after the fire started.

- Monitoring during and after the fire showed concentrations of particulate matter were consistent with concentrations in unaffected areas of Monterey Bay and San Francisco Bay. No measurements exceeded the moderate air quality level.
- We also saw no levels of hydrogen fluoride gas above California’s human health standards.

While air data did not exceed health standards, residents reported health symptoms after the fire. No health symptoms were reported by EPA staff, North County Fire, or Vistra personnel at or near the site during the response.

We will oversee Vistra as it continues air monitoring and sampling throughout the entire project. Air will be monitored around the perimeter of the property (see *photo at top*). Vistra continues to do air monitoring and sampling in the nearby community.

ENVIRONMENTAL MONITORING, SAMPLING, AND TESTING AFTER THE FIRE

Additional monitoring, sampling, and testing was done by state and local government agencies after the fire.

For more information on their findings, please see:

- [State of California Department of Toxic Substances Control](#)
- [State of California Department of Public Health](#)
- [Monterey Bay Air Resources District](#)
- [University of California Agriculture and Natural Resources](#)
- [State of California Department of Fish and Wildlife](#)
- [Center for Toxicology and Environmental Health](#)
- [Monterey](#) and [Santa Cruz](#) counties

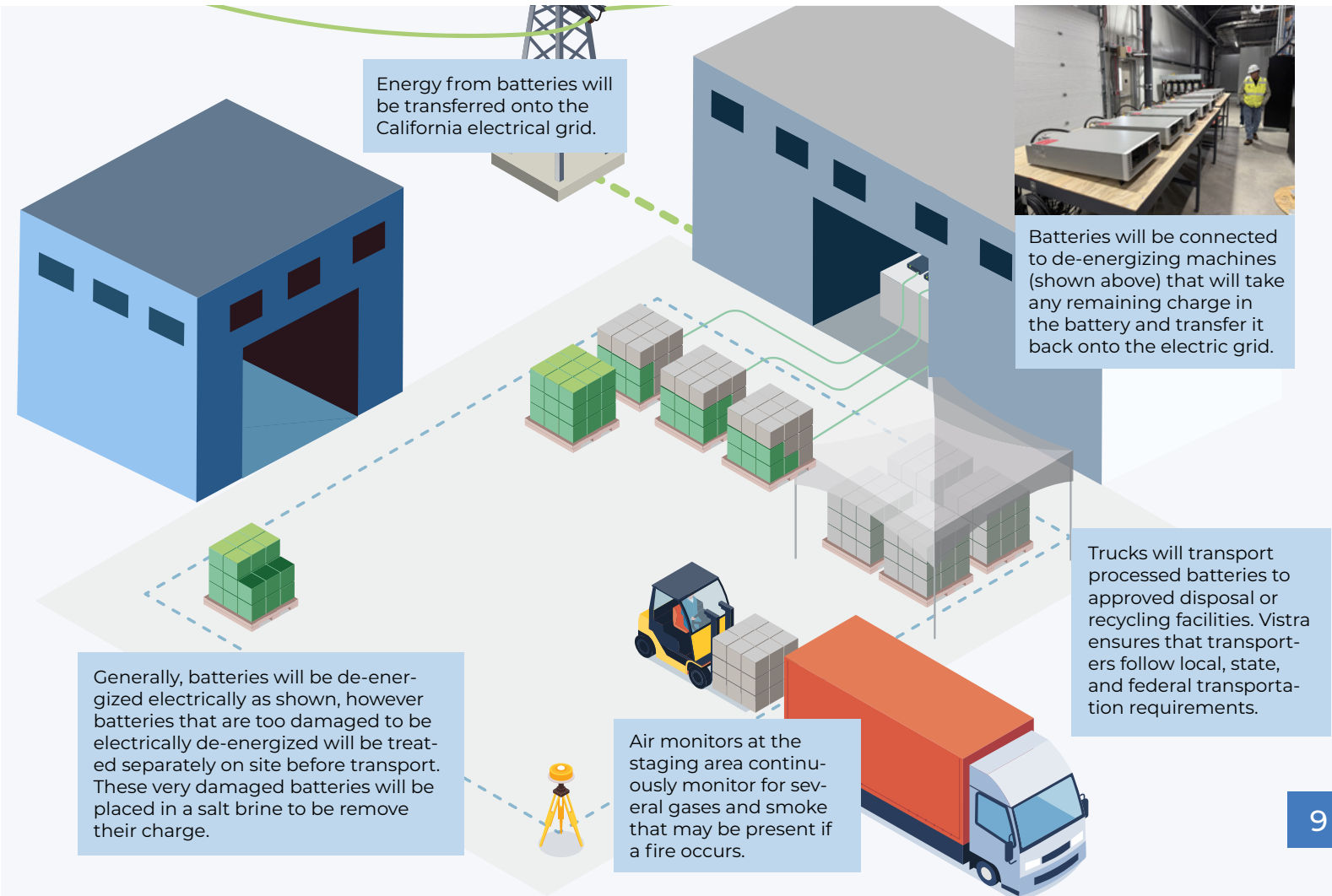
As of September 2025, Monterey County, working in conjunction with California EPA and the Department of Toxic Substances Control, is conducting a two-phase environmental sampling effort. Results from this effort will be shared by the state and are independent of EPA oversight.

Overseeing Battery Removal and Building Demolition

Work removing batteries is anticipated to take more than a year. In July 2025, we signed [an agreement](#) with Vistra. This overarching agreement outlines all the work Vistra will do. As part of the agreement, Vistra will submit workplans on specific elements of project.

- In August 2025, Vistra submitted their plan to safely handle and sort the batteries for treatment and recycling/disposal. We have reviewed and approved this plan.
- Once batteries are removed from the building, they will be placed in the staging area. From there, batteries will be de-energized to a safe level, packaged, and transported off-site for recycling or disposal.

BATTERY STAGING AREA

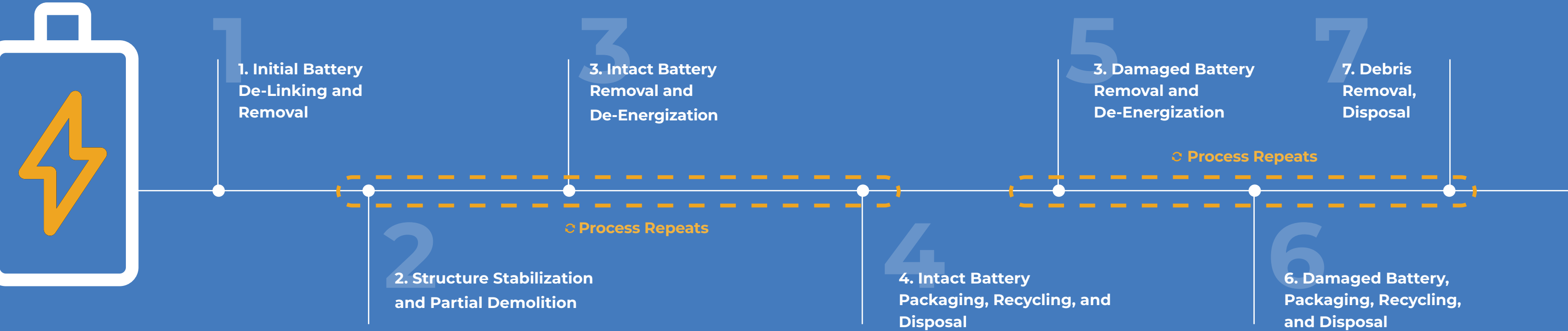


Battery Removal Process

EPA will oversee Vistra during the phases of battery removal shown below. The phases may be modified as the response is implemented.



Due to the nature of batteries in different sections of the building, the battery removal process is split into two stages. With some initial stabilization and demolition, most intact batteries (above left) are accessible to recovery crews. The remaining batteries sit in the damaged portion of the building (above right), which will require additional demolition and debris removal work to access.



1. Initial Battery De-Linking and Removal
Most of the Moss Landing 300 Building was destroyed in the fire. Inside this building, related batteries were linked to each other. Safely removing the batteries first required de-linking them to reduce the risk of re-ignition or thermal runaway. Work to de-link all accessible, undestroyed batteries began in February and finished on March 13.

2. Structure Stabilization and Partial Demolition
The building is partially standing. To reach batteries in structurally unsafe parts of the building, the building will be stabilized and parts of it will be removed.

3. Intact Battery Removal and De-Energization
This initial phase of battery removal prioritizes intact batteries that may remain at higher states of charge in the building. This approach aims to reduce the risk and size of a potential flare-up. Batteries will be inspected, cleaned, removed from the building, then de-energized in the staging area for transport. The electricity removed from the batteries will go back into the electrical grid.

4. Intact Battery Packaging, Recycling, and Disposal*
Battery materials will be recycled as much as possible. Battery materials will be sent to American Battery Technology Company in McCarran, Nevada for recycling. Un-recyclable

battery materials will be disposed of properly at an EPA-approved facility.

5. Damaged Battery Removal and De-Energization
Like Step 3, damaged batteries will be removed from the building and de-energized or treated on-site to prepare them for safe transport.

6. Damaged Battery, Packaging, Recycling, and Disposal*
Like Step 4, damaged battery materials eligible for recycling will be sent to American Battery Technology Company in McCarran, Nevada. Un-recyclable damaged battery materials will be disposed of properly at an EPA-approved facility.

7. Debris Removal, Disposal
Removing and de-energizing damaged batteries requires debris removal. This debris will be separated into hazardous and non-hazardous material and be disposed of at the corresponding EPA approved facilities. Once all batteries have been safely removed, all remaining debris will be removed and disposed of properly.

EPA will continue oversight until all batteries are removed from the building.

**Additional recycling and disposal locations will be identified throughout the process.*

Site Timeline

The timeline below is a best estimate and subject to change. Safety for workers and the community at-large continues to remain our top priority.

For the latest site activities, please see [our website](#) and sign up for email updates.



Battery Activity

Initial battery removal, discharge, and transportation begins for easily accessible, intact batteries

Battery work suspended while limited demolition work is conducted

Battery removal, discharge and transportation resumes for intact batteries

Demolition and debris removal resumes as necessary to access remaining batteries



Demolition Activity

North wall stabilization and partial building exterior removal to allow for safe access to batteries

North wall demolition and debris removal begins

Demolition work suspended to allow workers to safely access the building

Demolition and debris removal resumes as necessary to access remaining batteries

Vistra to conduct full Moss 300 building demolition. (Not overseen by EPA)



Air Quality Monitoring

Air monitoring and sampling at the site and in the surrounding community will remain ongoing throughout clean-up process

If any readings above EPA-approved action levels are detected, work will halt until conditions improve or additional control measures are implemented



Community Involvement

Providing updates and encouraging community engagement

August 2025 October 2025 December 2025 February 2025 April 2026 June 2026 August 2026 October 2026

Community Overview

For this plan, community is defined as all areas included within Monterey County’s advisory area for the January 15 fire. This coastal community is historically rooted in fishing and agriculture. Today, the community is also known for: its marine research facilities, protected nature reserves, and tourism. It is home to the largest commercial fishing harbor in Monterey Bay. It is surrounded by farmland that supports crops such as lettuce, strawberries and artichokes. Food grown in the Monterey areas feeds residents across the country. The community is home to world-renowned marine research facilities and attracts tourists from around the globe due to its unique ecosystems and wildlife population.


DEMOGRAPHICS

The U.S. Census data for Northern Monterey County reports:

 **52.4%** employment rate

 **\$96,311** average household income

 **10.5%** of residents **living below the poverty line** (California average is **12%**)

 **55%** of the population identifies as **Hispanic or Latino**

 **Over 50%** of those who identify as Hispanic or Latino **speak Spanish at home**




FINDINGS FROM COMMUNITY INTERVIEWS

An engaged public brings many benefits to our work. We are committed to provide information and encourage community engagement throughout this project.




To inform the action plan, we conducted interviews with community members to learn about the community’s needs, concerns, and recommendations related to the recovery process.

In June and July 2025, EPA interviewed 17 community members, government officials and representatives of key stakeholder organizations from across the Moss Landing and broader Monterey County community.

We learned the fire raised a range of community concerns, including:

-  potential environmental and health impacts for people and pets,
-  future land use, and
-  impacts on tourism and business, among other items.

FROM THE INTERVIEWS AND RESEARCH, WE IDENTIFIED SEVERAL COMMUNITY INTERESTS AND CONSIDERATIONS THAT ARE CAPTURED BY THE FOLLOWING THEMES:

-  **Information Sharing**
-  **Health and Cleanup**
-  **Community Composition**

INFORMATION SHARING

Multi-Channel Approach

Interviewees emphasized the importance of a multi-channel approach to ensure information reaches all relevant members of the community. Recommendations included:

- updates at Monterey County Board of Supervisors meetings,
- periodic appearances at the Monterey County’s weekly news briefings,
- engaging with English and Spanish local media outlets, and
- coordinating with Monterey County officials to publish updates on social media.

Interviewees also recommended having trusted community members promote EPA’s update through social media and electronic newsletters.

Community members (including agricultural sector representatives) expressed concerns about limited communication during and after the January 2025 fire. Further, members requested more effective and timely emergency notifications from Monterey County.

Information Clarity

Interviewees shared the importance of providing clear and accurate information to the public.

- To achieve that, they recommended EPA direct community members to a specific website where all available recovery and removal information should be posted.
- Community members stated that an initial lack of clear information from public officials following the incident led to the spread of misinformation about potential health and environmental impacts.
- Interviewees expressed hope EPA would work to clarify the extent of those impacts.
- Some voiced frustration with misinformation. Finding trusted information sources has been frustrating for some as well.

Consistent Updates

- Community members specifically asked EPA not to “go dark” at any point during the battery removal process.
- They stressed that consistent communication is key to gaining and maintaining community trust, even if there is no new information to provide.

Bilingual Materials

- Interviewees noted the EPA website and all other materials created for the public should be prepared in both English and Spanish.

Potential Health, Environmental, and Economic Impacts

The community's primary concerns center around potential impacts if the cleanup activities are not done properly. These concerns include potential:

- health impacts,
- environmental contamination, and
- economic impacts to businesses in Moss Landing, businesses that operate out of the harbor, and nearby agricultural production.

Logistical Concerns

Several interviewees, specifically agricultural stakeholders with operations in the area, are interested in the battery removal logistics. Especially, whether traffic would increase on California Route 1 and Dolan Road.



EPA officials visit the Moss Landing facility to review damage and receive progress updates.

Segmented Community Groups

Most interviewees stressed the importance of understanding that the northern Monterey County community is socially and economically diverse.

- Interviewees noted most community members can be reached through presentations at county meetings and through traditional media.
- However, multiple interviewees noted many in Moss Landing and the surrounding area do not have the privilege to follow the cleanup process closely. For this segment, more direct and easily-accessible outreach was suggested.

Agricultural Workers

Northern Monterey County is home to one of the largest immigrant communities in the state. Many community members work in agriculture across the region, including at a handful of sites within a few miles of the facility.

- Members of this community may be distrustful of federal authorities and will require specific outreach from trusted members of their community.

Community Involvement Objectives and Action Plan

Our goal is to maintain a consistent community presence and build relationships with the community, local stakeholders, and local and state agencies.

As work progresses, there may be a need to adjust activities. The plan will be updated as needed.

Community Involvement Objectives	Related Activities
Establish locations for the community to access key site information	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Establish Information Repository at Castroville library to view materials in-person.• Update Information Repository regularly with new documents, when available.<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ <i>An Information Repository holds paper copies of key documents and materials about the battery removal process. The repository will be updated regularly with new documents, when available. Said documents and materials will be posted online as well.</i>◦ The Information Repository is anticipated to be active by the end of September 2025.◦ Provide regular updates as work progresses at epa.gov/ca/moss-landing-vistra-battery-fire.
Maintain a consistent community presence to build and maintain relationships with community members and local government representatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Present at the Monterey County Board of Supervisor meetings when key updates are available.• As available, participate in new and existing local community meetings, as needed/invited, to share updates on work progress.• Consider hosting in-person or virtual community open house(s) at key moments during the battery removal work to share information and allow community members to ask questions.• Consider providing paper mailers to segments of the community closest to battery removal work.
Ensure public-facing information is accessible to non-technical audiences	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Apply principles of the federal Plain Writing Act to public-facing material to reach audiences with varying levels of familiarity with subject material and technical background. <p>Clear communication will also be beneficial when translating materials into other languages.</p>

Community Involvement Objectives

Related Activities

Ensure segments of the community with limited English proficiency can easily access materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Translate written documents into Spanish and, if presenting in-person, provide oral translations in Spanish and Mixteco to reach residents, as appropriate.
Explain site activities in a format that all can understand	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use graphics, charts, images, photos, videos to convey information through a variety of formats.<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ Post and share work photos and (as available) develop videos (like EPA’s short, one-minute “In-the-Moment” videos) to share information.• Develop fact sheets to do “deeper dives” into issues of significant community interest.• Establish an email distribution list to send out updates, as appropriate.
Ensure wide dissemination of project updates	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Write and distribute news releases to announce key work milestones and other information, as needed.• Participate in Monterey County’s weekly news briefings (as appropriate) to disseminate information about key updates to the local media..• Provide a regular post in Supervisor Glenn Church’s monthly newsletter with announcements and work updates.• Post paper fliers (with key information and QR code to EPA’s website) at locations in the community central to residents.• Develop social media posts at key moments throughout the project to share information.
Evaluate community involvement and outreach efforts and adjust as needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Update Community Involvement Plan on a quarterly basis, or as needed, throughout the duration of the project.

Appendix

APPENDIX: ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

CERCLA | Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act

CIC | Community Involvement Coordinator

CIP | Community Involvement Plan

EPA | Environmental Protection Agency

PG&E | Pacific Gas & Electric

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Appendix

APPENDIX: MEDIA

Newspapers

Monterey Herald - montereyherald.com

Monterey County Weekly - montereycountynow.com

The Carmel Pine Cone - carmelpinecone.com

Television Stations

KSBW Action News 8 - ksbw.com

KION-TV - <https://kion546.com>

KSMS Univision - noticiasmonterey.com

Radio Stations

KAZU 90.3 - kazu.org

KPRC 100.7 - salinaslapreciosa.iheart.com

APPENDIX: INFORMATION REPOSITORIES

An Information Repository stores project information in a central public location. The repository provides easy access for community members to our project information. We are required by law to create an Information Repository for the Moss Landing battery removal.

A subset of these technical documents is called an Administrative Record. A copy of the Administrative Record is available on [our website](#) and in-person at:

Castroville Branch Library
11160 Speegle St
Castroville, CA 95012
(831) 769-8724

The Information Repository is anticipated to be active at the Castroville library by the end of September 2025.

APPENDIX: ADDITIONAL RESOURCES



EPA Response Website
epa.gov/ca/moss-landing-vistra-battery-fire



Vistra Response Website
mosslandingresponse.com

