



**AIA California Council The American  
Institute of Architects**

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**For Immediate Release**

**STATE AND LOCAL ARCHITECT GROUPS SUPPORT CALIFORNIA FIRE  
SURVIVORS WITH IMPORTANT REBUILDING RESOURCES AND WARN AGAINST  
FRAUD AND RE-ENTERING HOMES PREMATURELY**  
*Architects Help Fire Survivors Rebuild Communities*

SACRAMENTO, Calif. (May 12, 2009) –The American Institute of Architects, California Council (AIACC) and the local AIA Santa Barbara chapter will again be working in conjunction with city and county building officials in the process of rebuilding communities devastated by the wildfires. With more than 70 homes destroyed from this recent wildfire, (now 80 percent contained). The AIACC recommends homeowners who have experienced damage to stay alert and proceed with prudence and caution.

John Grounds, AIA, president of The AIACC states, “As we’ve learned from post-fire recovery in the past, this is not the time to make hasty decisions. We understand that the residents affected by the wildfires are dealing with so many issues on many levels. We encourage them to educate themselves about the rebuilding process and their options. It can take two to three months for fire survivors to make informed decisions about the long-term impact of rebuilding their communities, and it is incumbent upon architects to help them make the best choice for themselves and the environment.”

San Diego Architect Kirk O’Brien, AIA, has provided inspection assistance following multiple fire disasters and encourages residents to pay close attention to specific safety notices posted by certified inspectors in cases where homes may be partially damaged and are still standing.

Architects are concerned with the sustainability of all buildings, as well as the use of materials in making the rebuilt structures as environmentally responsible and energy efficient as possible. Sustainable design also means that homes can be designed and

rebuilt to enhance their capacity for survivability in disasters. Architects' expertise is key in defining what the best rebuilding approach is for each respective area in California.

The AIACC warns residents to watch out for potential fraudulent activity regarding damage assessment, debris removal, demolition, the process of financing, and rebuilding. The AIACC and local California chapters help advise victims regarding rebuilding options, what to look for in deciding what kinds of professionals are needed, and how to select the professional who is right for them.

To speak with a local architect regarding post disaster activity in your area, please contact AIA Santa Barbara at (805) 966-4198, or visit [www.aiasb.com](http://www.aiasb.com). For information about disaster recovery and links to important rebuilding resources contact The AIACC at (916) 448-9083, or visit [www.aiacc.org](http://www.aiacc.org).

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The AIACC represents the interests of 11,000 architects and allied professionals in California. Founded in 1944, The AIACC's mission supports architects in their endeavor to improve the quality of life for all Californians by creating more livable communities, sustainable designs and quality work environments. Today the AIACC is the largest component of the national AIA organization. For more information, visit [www.aiacc.org](http://www.aiacc.org)