



## Paris shuts down streets around Notre Dame to remove lead contamination left by fire

<https://www.usatoday.com/story/travel/news/2019/08/14/notre-dame-cathedral-paris-shuts-down-streets-nearby-to-remove-lead/2006148001/>

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Paris is closing streets around the Notre Dame cathedral for the rest of August in order to remove lead contamination caused by the April 15 fire.

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The painstaking cleanup work inside Notre Dame itself was suspended last month for safety reasons, as activists and residents accused authorities of underestimating the threat of lead poisoning. Hundreds of tons of lead melted in the fire, which destroyed the cathedral's metal and wood roof.

Authorities have launched multiple lead prevention operations: cleaning up neighborhood schools, de-toxifying surrounding streets, and setting up a stricter new decontamination zone for experts working inside the cathedral.

Experts plan to use two decontamination techniques for the surrounding neighborhoods, according to the culture ministry. One method will feature high pressure water jets with chemical agents. Another involves spreading a gel on public benches, street lights and other fixtures to absorb the lead, letting it dry for several days before removing it. The overall operation is expected to take about three weeks.

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Last week, French environmental campaigners Robin des Bois said about 300 tonnes of lead from the cathedral's roof and steeple had melted in the blaze, which officials said had reached 800 degrees Celsius (1,470F) at its peak.