



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Be Prepared! Recently Burned Areas at Higher Flood Risk

Flooding is possible anywhere in San Bernardino County. While the county is prepared and residents have been given instructions on what they should do to get ready, recent rainfall is a reminder to residents living in burn scar areas to prepare for potential flooding.

Normally, vegetation absorbs rain, but after a wildfire, the charred ground where that vegetation has been burned away cannot easily absorb rainwater, increasing the risk of flooding and mudflows for several years. Properties directly affected by fires and/or located downstream of burn areas are most at risk.

Post-fire landslide hazards include fast-moving, highly destructive debris flows. Post-fire debris flows are particularly hazardous because they can occur with little warning, can exert great impulsive loads on objects in their paths, can strip vegetation, block drainage ways, damage structures, and endanger human life.

The best preparation for possible flooding is to plan ahead. San Bernardino County Fire's Ready! Set! Go! flood preparation web page shows you some things you can do to protect your home, property and family. You'll learn how to prepare for wet weather, where you can sign up for emergency alerts, locations that have sand and sandbags available, and what you should have in an emergency kit.

Sandbags can best be used to help protect doorways if a waterproof layer like heavy plastic or waterproof canvas is placed behind them. If possible, tape it to the door frame. Stack the sandbags in a pyramid formation and wrap the plastic up and over the top. Keep in mind, sandbags DO NOT guarantee a water-tight seal, but properly placed sandbags can help redirect water, mud and debris away from your home.

County officials are strongly encouraging residents to get flood insurance. Flood insurance is available on almost any enclosed building and farm. The contents of insurable buildings, including rental units, are also insurable. Flood insurance can be purchased through the National Flood Insurance Program at www.floodsmart.gov. It must be purchased at least 30 days before a flooding event, so don't wait until the first rain! Prepare your home now!

Some other helpful resources:

- Find SBCoFD's Ready! Set! Go! Flood web page at www.sbcfire.org/ReadySetGoFlood.aspx.
- Download the Ready SB County app from the Google Play or Apple Store for flood safety information.
- Check the National Weather Service at www.weather.gov to see current and upcoming weather events.

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