

NEWS

From the County of San Bernardino
www.sbcounty.gov



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 24, 2007

For more information, contact
Megan Blaney, EOC Public Information Officer
(909) 356-3998

211 phone service available to assist fire victims

Board of Supervisors Chairman Paul Biane today announced that the county's 211 social services phone system will temporarily serve as an information resource for victims of the ongoing wildfires.

"Information on temporary shelter, school closures, animal care, medical needs, various social services, or anything else related to the fires is now as easy as simply dialing 211," Chairman Biane said.

As of this morning, more than 300 homes had been destroyed in the San Bernardino County mountains and more than 2,700 county residents had checked in to the main Red Cross evacuation center at the National Orange Show in San Bernardino.

Thanks to a partnership established quickly between the San Bernardino County Fire Department/Office of Emergency Services and the Inland Empire United Way, which operates the 211 system with assistance from the county, helpful information for fire victims is easier than ever before.

The County of San Bernardino is providing staff to the 211 system to assist with fire-related calls. Callers will be greeted by a live operator armed with information on services available to fire victims.

Callers from phones internal to a business system that requires dialing an internal digit for an outside line can access 211 toll-free by calling 1 (888) 435-7565.

The County of San Bernardino has also established a County Donations Center phone line, (909) 386-9797, staffed with operators daily from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m.

-MORE-

211 Phone System

October 24, 2007

Page 2

The County Donations Center supports emergency donations management, which is also provided by the American Red Cross. The American Red Cross can manage monetary and large vendor donations, but is not equipped to accept other items from individual donors. The County Donations Center will fill that gap and accept donations from individuals and will also provide additional overlap assistance to accept and route donations from any vendors.

Live operators at the County Donations Center will assess the donation and refer the donor to the most expeditious point of donation - this will assist in getting the items in the hands of those who need it most at that moment.

Assistance numbers and websites available to residents include:

- www.sbcounty.gov
- 211
- County Donations Center (909) 386-9797
- U.S. Forest Service, (909) 383-5688 (Fire Activity Information)
- San Bernardino County Fire Department Information Line: (909) 355-8800
- www.inciweb.org

"The county will continue to develop ways to help the public through this difficult time," Chairman Biane said.