

NEWS

From the County of San Bernardino
www.sbcounty.gov



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Flash Flood Watch in effect Tuesday into Thursday

The National Weather Service has issued a Flash Flood Watch for San Bernardino County to go into effect 2 p.m. Tuesday and expire 2 a.m. Thursday. The Flash Flood Watch was issued in response to forecasts calling for a storm very similar to the storm that visited the Inland Empire last week.

The storm is expected to begin dropping rain on the region tomorrow afternoon. The rain is not expected to be as severe as last week's storm. However, because the ground is saturated with moisture from last week's storm, this week's storm could produce as much if not more runoff and flooding.

The County of San Bernardino is warning residents of flood-prone regions – particularly those below the areas burned by last year's wildfires – to take appropriate precautions. Residents living in communities that could be cut off by road wash-outs and closures – especially Lytle Creek and Forest Falls – are urged to gather food and water to last several days.

- The county will use the Telephone Emergency Notification System at 6:30 p.m. today to warn all telephone users in Lytle Creek, Devore, Old Waterman Canyon, Forest Falls, and Wrightwood of the coming storm. The message will be: "The National Weather Service has issued a flood watch for your area. The heaviest rain is expected late Tuesday and early Wednesday. Main access roads may be closed for several days. Monitor local media for further information or call the county hotline at 355-8800 for recorded information. That is 355-8800."
- Emergency crews will go door-to-door in the areas of highest risk – Lytle Creek, Devore, and Forest Falls – to warn residents of the danger.

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- The County Department of Public Works has placed electronic message boards at the entrances to those three communities to advise residents and motorists of conditions.
- Some roads may be closed as needed.
- The county will dispatch storm patrol units to monitor the county's flood control basins and channels.
- Public safety officials will remain in contact with the National Weather Service and monitor weather information around the clock and, if necessary, order and carry out emergency notifications to the public.
- The Department of Public Works has also made additional sandbags and sand available free to residents at county fire stations in Devore and Lytle Creek, two other locations in Lytle Creek (Scotland Store and Tally's Corner), and a San Bernardino City fire station at Sterling and Foothill.

Because of last year's wildfires, foothill and canyon areas from the Los Angeles County line to Highland are susceptible to flash floods, mudflows, and debris flows.

Authorities will make every effort to warn the public when a disaster is expected; however, storms can develop quickly. Residents in vulnerable areas are advised to use good judgment and find a safe location during rainy weather.

Officials advise citizens to take precautions to protect their family and property from the dangers this and future rainstorms may bring:

- Protect homes with sandbags and/or other flood control devices.
- Develop a family disaster plan, including evacuation routes and a meeting place.
- Stock homes with emergency food and medical supplies.
- Keep emergency kits in cars.
- Monitor and heed storm and flash flood warnings.

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Residents are also advised to stay clear of flood control debris basins and channels. Persons can be swept away by a surge of water run off, mudflow, or debris flow. These areas are also dangerous when it is not raining as persons may become trapped in mud and debris by venturing onto what may appear to be stable soil.

County officials will update the public as more information becomes available. Citizens should stay tuned to local media outlets or:

- Listen to NOAA Weather Radio.
- Monitor the National Weather Service Web Site at www.wrh.noaa.gov/sandiego.
- Call the National Weather Service at (858) 675-8700.
- Call the San Bernardino County Fire/Flood Information Hotline at (909) 355-8800 for recorded information.

The County of San Bernardino has taken a number of steps, starting while the wildfires were still burning, to protect county residents from the increased risk of flooding that occurs after fires:

- The county has established a Telephone Emergency Notification System that can instantaneously place warning telephone calls to county residents in selected areas.
- The county mailed warning letters to every household and business in areas susceptible to debris flows and flash flooding.
- The county has made hundreds of thousands of sandbags and sand available free of charge to county residents, including instructions on how to use them.
- The county has placed extensive flood preparation information on its website at www.sbcounty.gov.
- The county has worked closely with the news media to warn residents of impending storms and advise residents of precautions to be taken.
- The county has participated in door-to-door warning campaigns in high-risk areas.
- The county has participated in community meetings to discuss flood risk, precautions, and assistance.