

NEWS

From the County of San Bernardino
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Storm-related evacuations & road closures in effect

The overnight rainstorm did not produce as much rain as expected. No injuries or significant property damage had been reported as of 5:30 a.m. today. However, the rain did prompt evacuations and road closures that were still in effect early this morning.

On Tuesday evening the county called for a voluntary evacuation of approximately 50 homes on Greenwood and Woodlawn avenues north of Kenwood Avenue in the community of Devore. Six residences at the north end of Greenwood Avenue were placed under a mandatory evacuation. Four of those six residences complied with the order. Two of the six residences refused to evacuate. The evacuation was conducted by the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department. Deputies went door-to-door in the evacuation area and distributed informational literature.

The American Red Cross has established an evacuation center at the LDS Church at 1475 Northpark Ave. in San Bernardino across from Cal State San Bernardino. However, as of early this morning, no one had checked into the center.

The evacuations were prompted by a report late Tuesday from the U.S. Geological Survey questioning the stability of the land above Greenwood Avenue.

San Bernardino County Supervisor Paul Biane, whose Second District includes Devore, surveyed the area Tuesday night prior to the evacuations.

The following roads and freeways were closed as of early this morning due to the effects of the rain:

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- The Grove Avenue onramp to the westbound 60 freeway in Ontario
- Southbound Grove Avenue at Philadelphia in Ontario
- Francis Street between Bon View and Grove in Ontario
- 4th Street between Vineyard and Hellman in Ontario
- Lytle Creek Road at Glen Helen Parkway
- Interstate 15 between Kenwood and Woodland and between Glen Helen Parkway and Cajon Blvd
- The intersection of Whittram and Ilex in Fontana
- Etiwanda Avenue at Foothill Blvd and Napa Avenue in the Fontana area

The Rim of the World and Snowline Joint Unified school districts have announced that they will close for the day.

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 during rainstorms.

- Emergency crews have gone door-to-door in the areas of highest risk to warn residents of the danger.
- The County Department of Public Works has placed electronic message boards at the entrances to high-risk communities to advise residents and motorists of conditions.
- The county dispatched 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.

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.

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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.

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.
- Recorded information is available on the county's Fire & Flood Information Hotline, (909) 355-8800.

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.

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- 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.