

NEWS

From the County of San Bernardino
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

December 28, 2010

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County assesses rain damage; prepares for next storm

San Bernardino County officials are assessing property damage to homes and businesses caused by the recent winter storms. The County Emergency Operations Center upgraded its activation level today to aid with response efforts and emergency protection measures in preparation for the next storm event.

Collaboration with state and federal agencies is underway to determine if individual local assistance funds will be available to residents who suffered property damage from the floods. The public will be notified if aid is approved for homeowners and businesses. The federal government has not yet declared a disaster, so at this time government assistance is not available to businesses and homeowners.

Property owners are encouraged to photograph and document any damage to their property and any repairs that are made in the event assistance becomes available. Property owners may report flood damage to their homes and businesses to the County Office of the Assessor toll-free at 1-877-885-7654, or visit the Assessor's website at www.sbcounty.gov/assessor.

The County proclaimed a local emergency in response to the heavy rainfall on December 21. Public safety officials continue to monitor weather conditions around the clock, and emergency crews are checking flood control debris basins and channels to ensure they are operational.

Residents are advised to avoid crossing areas of running water so they are not swept away by a surge of water runoff, mudflow or debris flow. These areas are dangerous even when it is not raining, since people may become trapped in mud and debris by venturing onto what may appear to be stable soil. Do not drive where water is over the road, as floodwaters can rise rapidly and carry a car and its occupants away.

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Sand bags and sand can be obtained at local fire stations to use for protective measures around homes. For fire station locations and other winter safety tips, visit the County Fire Department website at www.sbcfire.org, or contact your city fire department. The San Bernardino County website also has winter storm information at www.sbcounty.gov. Individuals may contact the Inland Empire United Way's resource referral center for storm-related assistance by calling 2-1-1, or visiting the website at www.211sb.org.

The public is advised to monitor weather reports and take extra precautions if driving to mountain communities and resort areas this winter. Expect traffic delays due to local storm conditions. Take tire chains in case roads are covered with snow, and adhere to all road blocks and road closures to make sure you safely get to your destination.