

NEWS

From the County of San Bernardino
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County sets up toll-free information number for fire victims *Residents are also warned to make preparations for possible flash floods*

The County of San Bernardino has created a toll-free 800 number to provide service information to victims of the Sawtooth Complex and Millard fires and all residents of the fire-affected areas.

"The dedicated number, 1-800-398-9931, has been established to link victims with the various services available from the County and other relief agencies" said County Administrative Officer Mark Uffer. "We will keep the number active seven days a week from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. until the current crisis is under control".

This number connects callers with a live operator able to give them referral numbers to the services specific to their needs as related to the Sawtooth Complex and Millard fires.

The toll-free number is the latest of many innovative services the County of San Bernardino has provided to those affected by the Sawtooth Complex and Millard fires. In addition to the County firefighters and Sheriff's deputies who have responded to the emergency, the County of San Bernardino:

- Established a one-day Local Assistance Center in Yucca Valley to provide fire victims direct access to a variety of services, including Transitional Assistance, Aging & Adult Services, Building & Safety, Auditor/Controller-Recorder, Assessor, Behavioral Health, Public Health, Solid Waste, State DMV, American Red Cross, United Way, and Southern California Edison.
- Distributed flood warning flyers (see attached) door-to-door and in public gathering places in the affected area.
- Placed fire and flood information on the County website at www.sbcounty.gov.

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- Activated the County's Telephone Emergency Notification System (TENS) to place calls to all land-line telephone numbers in the disaster area with recorded flood warning information.
- Public Works Department placed three electronic signboards along highways 62 and 247 to display flash flood warnings.

The County is also renewing its warning to residents in and below the burn areas to be aware of and prepare for the possibility of flash floods. Heavy thunderstorms can develop quickly and County crews may not have time to organize a formal emergency evacuation. This will be especially critical during the next 7 to 10 days.

Residents are urged to be aware of their surroundings and approaching weather systems. They are also urged to review and update their family emergency and evacuation plans, and if roads leading away from their property are in danger of being washed out, identify the nearest high ground.

In the meantime, the County will remain on constant watch and do everything possible to warn residents of approaching danger, including use of the TENS telephone warning system.

-- WARNING --

POTENTIAL FLOOD DANGER DOWNSTREAM OF BURN AREAS IN MORONGO BASIN

The recent fires have increased the chance of flash floods, and mud and debris flows from thunderstorms. The National Weather Service announced there could be thunderstorms in San Bernardino County starting within the next 24 hours. With these thunderstorms, areas downstream of the lands burned by the Sawtooth Complex and Millard Complex Fires may have large storm flows carrying mud and fire debris, clogging streambeds, bridges and culverts. Flooding can occur far from the burned areas. With no vegetation left to hold water, streams will fill quickly and increase the risk of flooding in regions below the burned areas.

If you live in a low-lying region, protect your property by using sandbags or other measures. You can get a limited number of sandbags free-of-charge at most local fire stations. You can also find out where to get sandbags, and how to use them, on the County's web site at <http://www.co.san-bernardino.ca.us/flood/>. Review your family emergency plans and prepare for possible power outages and disruption to roads and services. You should tell your children to avoid flooded areas and washes. Use extreme caution when crossing washes and arroyos, since flash flooding can occur in these natural drain areas. Motorists should never drive through running water.

County agencies are preparing to meet this potential flood emergency.

During an emergency, you should tune to your local Emergency Alert System (EAS) radio broadcast station for current emergency information.

95.1	FM	KFRG	Valley and High Desert
93.3	FM	KBHR	Big Bear Valley
98.9	FM	KHWY	High Desert
102.3	FM	KZXY	Victor Valley

For current weather information, check the National Weather Service site at <http://www.wrh.noaa.gov/vef/>, or listen to your local radio station.



If You Are Ordered to Evacuate:

Never ignore an evacuation order. If a flood warning is issued for your area or you are directed to evacuate the area:

- Move immediately to higher ground. Do not wait for instructions to move.
- Take your family disaster supply kit.
- Wear protective clothing and sturdy shoes.
- Turn off the gas, electricity, and water if told to do so. Disconnect electrical appliances. Do not touch electrical equipment if you are wet or standing in water.
- Open curtains and window coverings. Lock your home.
- Follow the planned evacuation routes and expect heavy traffic.
- Do not walk through moving water. Six inches of moving water can make you fall. If you have to walk in water, walk where the water is not moving. Use a stick to check the firmness of the ground in front of you.

Driving Flood Facts:

Remember these important points when driving in flood conditions:

- Do not try to drive across creeks or flooded roads.
- Six inches of water will reach the bottom of most passenger cars, causing loss of control and possible stalling.
- A foot of water will float many vehicles.
- Two feet of rushing water can carry away most vehicles, including sport utility vehicles (SUV's) and pick-ups.