



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 12, 2009

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California Officials Urge Everyone to Prepare for First Significant Storm

SACRAMENTO, Calif. – The first significant storm of the season will bring gusty winds and several inches of rain throughout California. The weather forecast has prompted the California Emergency Management Agency (Cal EMA) to urge Californians to prepare for significant rainfall and high wind as well as an increased likelihood of mudslides and debris flows in and around watersheds that were recently burned.

“The National Weather Service has advised us that over the next few days many areas of the state will experience rainfall and high winds capable of causing urban and small stream flooding, hazardous road conditions and power outages,” said Matthew Bettenhausen, Acting Secretary of Cal EMA. “I urge every Californian to prepare for the coming winter weather. Those living in and around the burn areas may need to take immediate actions that will help ensure their safety and that of their loved ones.”

Cal EMA officials also said it's important that people living in and below the burn areas caused by recent fires keep an eye on their houses and landscape for signs that a landslide or mudflow may be imminent. Sounds such as a faint rumbling that increases in volume, cracking tree limbs and boulders knocking together are examples of imminent danger. Other signs to look for include: slope bases that appear to have new bulges; tilted fences, trees, retaining walls and utility poles; newly jammed doors and windows; newly cracked plaster, tile, bricks and foundations; as well as the appearance of cracks in streets, driveways and other paved areas that are slowly developing or widening.

Officials also recommend everyone develop an emergency plan that includes a place to reunite and an out-of-town contact with which family members can provide their locations and conditions if they are unable to join their loved ones at their predetermined relocation site. Californians should also prepare for all potential disasters by assembling an emergency supply kit that includes enough food and drinking water for 3 days, first aid supplies, a battery operated radio and flashlight.

“Having a battery operated radio is critical because it will ensure you have access to the latest information about the weather and instructions from local officials,” said Bettenhausen. “Having a flashlight will enable you to have light if power goes out.”

In response to the forecast for rain, high winds, mudslides and debris flows, Cal EMA has:

- Been conducting conference calls with the National Weather Service and state agencies to coordinate readiness based on the best available weather forecast information;
- Reached out to and encouraged state and local agencies to ensure their readiness for the impending storm;
- Prepared for potential opening of the State Operations Center at Cal EMA Headquarters and Regional Emergency Operations Centers (REOCs) in Los Alamitos, Oakland and Sacramento; and

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- Worked with Cal FIRE to deploy two hand crews to assist with debris clearance in channels below the Gloria Fire burn area

More information about storm preparedness is available on Cal EMA home page at www.calema.ca.gov

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