



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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DATE:

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County Agencies Ready for Storm

San Bernardino County agencies are preparing for El Niño, are you? The Board of Supervisors heard a special presentation recently from County staff about what is being done throughout the county to prepare for potentially destructive weather event.

“The County is doing everything possible to be prepared for heavy rains,” said Board of Supervisors Chairman James Ramos. “Protecting the public is our highest priority. But we are urging the public to do everything they can to protect themselves, their families and their homes. Surviving El Niño will be a team effort.”

The County Office of Emergency Services is working in conjunction with the Department of Public Works, the Sheriff’s Department, County Fire, and Special Districts – along with local, regional and state partners – to make sure all safety issues throughout the county are being addressed. Risks of flooding and mudslides are higher in areas that have recently experienced wildfires.

Flood control channels and culvert crossings are being cleared in anticipation of heavy rains and advance teams are advising homeless encampments to relocate. More than 200,000 sandbags are being stockpiled and inmate hand crews have been trained in sandbagging, flood fight techniques and debris removal. Additional weather stations were added throughout the county and the real-time rain gauge alert system is being updated. San Bernardino County Fire and Sheriff deputies are training and practicing procedures for swift water rescue.

Public outreach meetings have been held in Lake Arrowhead, Yucaipa, Victorville, Yucca Valley, Rancho Cucamonga and Upland to update residents on the latest El Niño forecast and what County departments are doing to prepare. Residents were also offered flood preparation materials.

County officials are strongly encouraging residents to get flood insurance. Flood insurance is available on almost any enclosed building and farms. The contents of insurable buildings, including rental units, are also insurable. Flood insurance can be purchased through the National Flood Insurance Program at www.floodsmart.gov. It must be purchased at least 30 days before a flooding event, so don’t wait until the first rain! Prepare your home now!

Some other helpful resources:

- An El Niño resources web page for residents to obtain information on storm preparation is available at www.sbcounty.gov/main/elnino.asp
- To find your closest sandbag location, check SBCoFire’s website at www.sbcfire.org
- Check the National Weather Service at www.weather.gov to see current and upcoming weather events
- National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration’s El Niño Portal has regular El Niño forecast updates, www.elnino.noaa.gov