



Sept. 28, 2018

Contact: Brooke Federico

(951) 476-4852

NEWS RELEASE

STORM BRINGS THREAT OF DEBRIS FLOW TO HOLY FIRE BURN AREA

RIVERSIDE – County of Riverside and City of Lake Elsinore agencies are closely monitoring Hurricane Rosa that threatens to bring scattered thunderstorms to southwestern Riverside County on Monday, Oct. 1 through Wednesday, Oct. 3.

The Holy Fire left the hillslopes and mountains next to homes in Temescal Valley and Lake Elsinore scorched with little ability to absorb water. This means that scattered thunderstorms can result in debris flows – **with little to no warning**. Debris flows are fast-moving, deadly landslides. They are powerful mixtures of mud, rocks, boulders, trees – and sometimes homes or vehicles. Debris flows move faster than a person can run or drive and they do not always stay in waterway or roads.

Riverside County and City officials urge everyone near the Holy Fire burn area to take the following steps:

1. Be prepared to leave before any flows begin, this is the only safe time to leave before roads are closed. If debris flows, mud, or water are already flowing, get higher than the flow, such as going to the highest floor in your home.
2. Follow all evacuation orders by public safety officials. Sign up for Alert RivCo evacuation alerts at RivCoReady.org/AlertRivCo.
3. Monitor official weather reports and heed weather alerts. Even if it's not raining where you are, a debris flow that begins up in the hills could endanger you and your family. A brief downpour miles away can send trees and boulders crashing through your neighborhood like a freight train.
4. Evacuation Warnings (Voluntary) will be issued for at-risk areas 24 - 48 hours before an expected storm. The safest time to leave is during an Evacuation Warning (Voluntary) before any flows begin. Mandatory Evacuation Orders will be issued 6 - 12 hours before the storm.
5. Know your local access roads and understand that some may be blocked by debris or water. Have an alternate route. Stay informed of road and highway conditions by visiting the Riverside County Transportation Department's website at rctlma.org and Caltrans' website at quickmap.dot.ca.gov.
6. Learn about debris flows at RivCoReady.org/StormReady. Their dangers are different than the water and mud of typical storms.
7. Never drive or walk into flood waters, mud or debris, and never go around barricades. It is impossible to know how deep water or mud is just by looking at it and the depth can change quickly.
8. Protect your home with sandbags and other methods to divert water from entering and reduce erosion on your property. They do not protect from debris flows. Limited and unfilled quantities of sandbags and sand are available at select local fire stations. Visit RVCFire.org for a list.
9. Have an emergency plan and a disaster kit ready to go. Details on how to build an emergency kit are available at RivCoReady.org/Make-a-Kit.
10. If you have active flooding occurring inside your home or you feel you're in imminent danger, dial 9-1-1.