



Sept. 28, 2018

SUBJECT: Property Threatened by Winter Storms

Dear Resident or Property Owner:

Your property is in danger after the Holy Fire.

The Holy Fire left the ground along the hillsides scorched with little ability to absorb water. For the next few years, scattered thunderstorms or other intense rain can cause more runoff than usual, leading to flooding, mud and debris flows with little or no warning.

Debris flows are fast-moving, deadly landslides. They are powerful mixtures of mud, rocks, boulders, trees - and sometimes homes and vehicles - that move faster than a person can run or drive. There is also a threat of falling rocks on steep, burned slopes.

A team of experts identified that the property you reside on or own is at-risk of flash floods, debris flows, mud flows and/or other landslides during storms. Anyone who stays on the property risks death or injury. At a minimum, this danger includes the risk of being cut off from services and/or utilities for days or weeks.

Some schools within the Lake Elsinore Unified School District and one school (Todd Academy) within the Corona-Norco Unified School District are within the at-risk areas. Parents of school age children, check with your school district or visit their official websites for information regarding safety updates.

With the winter storm season approaching, the threat of flash flooding, mud or debris flows is now up to seven times greater than before the fire. This threat will continue throughout the 2018-2019 winter storm season and beyond.

It is critical that you understand the seriousness of the danger and take safety steps now to get ready. Weather changes rapidly and public safety officials may not always be able to alert you. Do not delay in taking action to protect you, your family and your property.

Take the following safety steps now:

**BEFORE A STORM:**

1. Determine if your home, business, schools or necessary travel routes are in the at-risk areas by referring to our risk map at [RivCoReady.org/StormReady](http://RivCoReady.org/StormReady). If you do not have access to the internet, call (951) 358-7100.
2. Learn the plan for your local school. Parents of school age children should contact their school district or visit their official websites to learn what steps the district will take to ensure student safety. This may include school closures and evacuations.
3. Know all 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/trans](http://rctlma.org/trans) and Caltrans' website at [quickmap.dot.ca.gov](http://quickmap.dot.ca.gov).
4. Learn about debris flows at [RivCoReady.org/StormReady](http://RivCoReady.org/StormReady). Their dangers are different than the water and mud of typical storms.
5. Flood insurance: Most homeowners insurance does not cover floods or flows from natural disasters. Make sure your home is protected. Refer to the National Flood Insurance Program website at [FEMA.gov/national-flood-insurance-program](http://FEMA.gov/national-flood-insurance-program). Act now. Most flood insurance policies take up to 30 days to go into effect.
6. Have an emergency plan and a disaster kit ready to go. For more information, visit [RivCoReady.org](http://RivCoReady.org).

AS A STORM APPROACHES:

- 7. Follow all evacuation orders by public safety officials. Sign up for evacuation alerts at [RivCoReady.org/AlertRivCo](http://RivCoReady.org/AlertRivCo).
- 8. Leave before any flows begin, during eEvacuation Warnings (Voluntary). This is the only safe time to leave. If debris flows, mud or water are already flowing, get higher than the flow, such as going to the highest floor in your home.
- 9. Heed all evacuations. Evacuation Warnings (Voluntary) will be issued for at-risk areas 24-48 hours before an expected storm. As stated above, 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.
- 10. Monitor official weather reports and heed weather alerts. Understand that the weather where you are can be different than back in the mountains where the flows start.
- 11. Never drive or walk into flood waters, mud or debris, and never go around barricades. It is impossible to know how deep the water or mud is just by looking at it and the depth can change quickly.
- 12. 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 sandbags and sand are available at select local fire stations (see list attached).

Stay informed with timely, accurate information before, during and after rain events by following these trusted information sources on social media:

Twitter:

County of Riverside Emergency Management Dept.



@RivCoReady

CALFIRE/Riverside County Fire Department



@CALFIRERRU

Riverside County Sheriff's Department



@RSOPIOWest

County of Riverside Transportation Department



@RivCoTrans

City of Lake Elsinore



@CtyLakeElsinore

Lake Elsinore Unified School District



@LakeElsinoreUSD

Corona Norco Unified school District



@CNUSD

Caltrans, District 8



@Caltrans8

Facebook:

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@RiversideCountySheriff

County of Riverside Transportation Department



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City of Lake Elsinore



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During evacuation orders, the County of Riverside Emergency Operations Center will be activated and a hotline will be available for the public to call with questions regarding flooding and debris flows at (951) 358-5134. During active incidents, call the CALFIRE/Riverside County Fire Department Incident Information Line at (951) 940-6985.