



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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DATE:

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Are You Ready!Set!Go! Flood Prepared?

San Bernardino County Fire reminds residents to download and use the free Ready!Set!Go! Flood Preparation brochure on our website. In it you will find information about what to do before, during and after a flooding event.

Flooding is caused by a number of factors, but the two main concerns are rainfall intensity and duration. Intensity refers to the rate of rainfall, and duration is how long it rains. During periods of intense rain – or extended periods of steady rain – even the smallest streams, creek beds or drains can overflow and cause flooding. Even if you live in a place where flooding is not typical, remember that anywhere it rains, it can flood.

The best preparation for possible flooding is to plan ahead. The Ready!Set!Go! brochure will show you some of the things you can do to protect your home, property and family. There are three simple steps you can take to help protect your home from floodwaters and debris: Ready, Set, and Go!

Be Ready. In the brochure you'll find information about how to prepare your home for wet weather, things like cleaning out rain gutters and storm drains, where you can sign up for emergency alerts, fire stations that have sandbags available, and what you should have in an emergency kit. There is also specific information for areas that have recently been burned by wildfire.

Get Set. When heavy rain has been forecast – or when heavy, steady rain is falling – monitor the news media, websites and social media sites for updated weather conditions. The phrasing meteorologists use is important; a **Flood Watch** means flooding is possible in your area, **Flood Warning** means flooding in your area is already occurring or is imminent, and **Flash Flood** is sudden violent flooding. Flash floods often come up quickly during heavy rain.

Practice “situational awareness.” Know and understand what is going on around you so that if conditions worsen you can take the necessary actions to protect your home and family. Being ready for any sort of flooding is important.

Go when you're told. If flooding occurs, you are safest staying in your home if it is not being affected by floodwaters, mud or debris. If asked to evacuate, do so immediately and proceed to higher ground or an established shelter. If the water rises suddenly and you cannot evacuate, move to the second floor or, if necessary, the roof.

If you're asked to leave, evacuate to higher ground taking your emergency kit and valuables. Don't forget medications and important documents! Pay attention to your surroundings; look for swift moving water, downed power lines, and debris.

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Get your Ready!Set!Go! Flood Preparation brochure and set up a plan now. Having one and practicing it can save you and your family when an emergency comes. Get yours at www.sbcfire.org.

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

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