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Disaster News

FEMA TEAMS ON FOOT IN ALL DISASTER AREAS Walking dawn to dusk to deliver vital information to residents

PASADENA, Calif. —More than 150 Community Relations (CR) specialists of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) are on the ground throughout Southern California, reaching out to help California residents affected by the ongoing fires.

These energetic workers in dark blue FEMA shirts deliver vital disaster recovery information to residents and business owners affected by the wildfires. They also coordinate with county emergency managers and other local officials to send help where it is needed.

“We have the most rewarding job in disaster recovery,” said Veronica Verde, FEMA Community Relations Officer in California. “We go door-to-door, neighborhood-by-neighborhood, dawn to dusk, to offer help and answer questions face to face.” Because of their close relationship with residents, CR workers can recognize special needs and help to arrange appropriate services.

CR workers were in place at the shelter at Qualcomm stadium even before the disaster was declared. Today, thirteen teams are canvassing neighborhoods near the subsiding wildfires in Southern California. They spread the word that federal disaster aid is available, explain how to get it, and handle questions and concerns. Their first advice is for disaster-affected residents and business owners to register with FEMA for possible assistance.

“Our goal is to empower those affected by the fires by offering them every opportunity to maximize the state and federal disaster assistance they are eligible for under the law,” said State Coordinating Officer Henry Renteria of the Governor’s Office of Emergency Services (OES).

It’s easy to sign up. Call **1-800-621-FEMA (3362)** or **TTY 1-800-462-7585**. The toll-free registration lines are open around the clock seven days a week. Disaster-affected residents and business owners may also register online at www.fema.gov.

FEMA coordinates the federal government’s role in preparing for, preventing, mitigating the effects of, responding to, and recovering from all domestic disasters, whether natural or man-made, including acts of terror.

The California Governor’s Office of Emergency Services (OES) coordinates overall state-agency response to major disasters in support of local government. OES is also responsible for maintaining the State Emergency Plan and coordinating the California’s preparedness, mitigation and recovery efforts.

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