

# Gov. Schwarzenegger Directs State Agencies to Prepare for Forecasted Winds, Threat of New Fires in Southern California

## *State Agencies Preposition Staff and Resources in Areas Facing High Fire Risk this Weekend*

Drawing on California's valuable resources from state agencies, Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger directed the California Highway Patrol (CHP), the Department of Transportation (Caltrans), California Department of Public Health (CDPH) and the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) to proactively prepare for the threat of new fires in southern California with the forecasted return of the Santa Ana winds. Earlier this week, the Governor also [directed](#) the California National Guard (CNG), California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) and the Governor's Office of Emergency Services (OES) to proactively prepare for this weekend.

"The southern California fires have already caused great devastation in our state. It is critical that we remain vigilant in containing the remaining fires especially with strong winds forecasted for this weekend," said Governor Schwarzenegger. "All of the state's resources should be solely focused on the containment of these fires and preventing the outbreak of any additional fires."

"I extend my sincere gratitude and appreciation to the firefighters who have been on the front lines battling these blazes since they first broke out. I cannot say enough about the tremendous work they are doing."

Governor Schwarzenegger has directed CHP officers in areas hit by the recent fires to be extra cautious this weekend. The officers will be on a heightened state of readiness while patrolling this weekend to detect and report fires or any suspicious activity. Commanders of the four CHP divisions in the affected areas have plans in place to rapidly deploy additional officers and resources should the need arise to send additional personnel to affected areas.

Emergency Operations Centers in CHP's coastal, southern, inland and border divisions will be staffed from 6 a.m. Friday through 6 p.m. Sunday. The department is also working in conjunction with other public service organizations to better prepare citizens in the event of a natural disaster.

The Governor has directed Caltrans and OES to make their Operational Area Satellite Information System (OASIS) trailers available in southern California over the weekend should a need for the systems arise. Three OASIS trailers are currently in southern California and fully prepared for deployment: one Caltrans OASIS trailer is in San Diego, one OES OASIS trailer is in Los Alamitos and one OES OASIS trailer is in Escondido. An additional Caltrans OASIS trailer is en route to Camarillo from northern California.

OASIS trailers provide communication capabilities to emergency responders in remote parts of fire-damaged areas, where normal telephone and power sources have been disrupted. Better than a simple satellite phone, OASIS is a satellite system that enables communication via voice (telephone), data, video and DSL-speed Internet transmissions between state, local and federal agencies that have OASIS capabilities.

Additionally, OES has positioned four strike teams consisting of five engines and four water tenders at critical staging areas throughout southern California in anticipation of strong winds.

CDPH has developed an action plan that includes a list of available skilled nursing facility beds in possible impacted counties. Medi-Cal and Licensing and Certification staff will be on call throughout the weekend. CDPH also has a reserve of medical supplies and equipment on hand, known as Alternate Care Site caches, which are available to be deployed to affected areas. These supplies include IV fluids, bandages, breathing aids, patient bedding, gowns and cots.

CDCR has positioned 28 inmate firefighting crews in Chino to allow for rapid deployment. Another 22 crews are positioned in San Diego, Riverside, San Bernardino and Ventura counties and in other central California locations. The department currently has a total of 2,148 inmate and juvenile offender firefighters supervised by 192 CDCR custody staff deployed to southern California and other locations fighting fires, positioned for rapid deployment and providing cover statewide. The crews that are already deployed to southern California locations will remain there over the weekend.

CAL FIRE's preparation for the forecasted weather this weekend includes deployment of air tankers, tactical aircraft, helicopters, strike and dispatch teams, and other assets to locations including Ramona, Hemet, Paso, Porterville, Fresno, Victorville, Riverside and San Diego. CAL FIRE will also deploy engine strike teams throughout the state, including San Diego, Riverside, San Bernardino, Los Angeles County, Santa Barbara County and Kern County. In addition, OES will position strike teams in Orange and Ventura counties.

CAL FIRE is also working in coordination with the U.S. Marine Corps in preparation for this weekend. Today, CAL FIRE is conducting joint training with the U.S. Marine Corps including refresher courses and training for additional personnel. The agencies are working together to develop long-term, operating procedures and protocols for the activation and utilization of Marine assets in natural disasters, such as the southern California fires.

The CNG will also maintain a deployed presence of 1,500 guardsmen and six firefighting helicopters to support ongoing response efforts. The CNG will place additional forces on alert to be recalled if necessary to support future missions.

A total of 23 fires began October 21 in Los Angeles, Ventura, Orange, San Bernardino, Santa Barbara, Riverside and San Diego counties. Two fires are still burning, the Santiago Fire in Orange County and the Poomacha Fire in San Diego County.

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OES Office of Public Information