



News from the Emergency Management Committee Chair (5/7/21)

Upcoming Oversight Hearing

SUBJECT: Preventing Domestic Terrorism in California – State and Local Strategies

When: Tuesday, May 11, 2021 at 1:30 pm

Where: State Capitol, Room 437

Weber Firefighters Deploy to California in Anticipation of Wildfires

[Fox 13 News reports](#) a group of firefighters with the Weber Fire District in Utah traveled to California Monday to help with the state’s preparations in fighting wildfires.

According to Weber Fire District, the firefighters are being deployed to the San Bernardino area “to assist and prepare for potential wildland fire incidents.”

The Cal Fire shows a handful of wildfires are burning in California as of Monday morning, but none are close to the immediate San Bernardino area.

The decision to send Weber Fire District firefighters to San Bernardino was part of a process called “staging,” in which emergency officials position themselves for anticipated large or complex events.

The Weber Fire District firefighters brought E464, one of the district’s engines, to California.

California Governor Announces First Week of May as ‘Wildfire Preparedness Week’

[ABC 10 News reports](#) Governor Newsom has declared May 2 - 8 to be “[Wildfire Preparedness Week](#)” in California.

Last month, Newsom signed his proposed \$536 million for wildfire mitigation and forest management projects. Earlier this year, he also approved \$80,74 million for 1,399 additional firefighters to help bolster fuels management and wildfire response efforts. That number breaks down to 1,256 seasonal firefighters, 119 firefighters to staff Cal Fire’s helicopter attack crews, and 24 seasonal firefighters for California National Guard hand crews, according to a press release.

According to Cal Fire, 2020 was one of the most severe fire seasons on record as 9,917 wildfires burned 4.2 million acres. Over 9,000 structures were destroyed, and 31 people (civilians and firefighters) were killed.

California also experienced its first "Gigafire" because of the August Complex Fire, burning more than 1 million acres by itself. Four of California's top five largest wildfires in state history happened in 2020.

If you live in a wildfire-prone zone, Cal Fire suggests creating a defensible space around your home. Defensible space is an area around a building in which vegetation and other debris are completely cleared. At least 100 feet is recommended.

The Department of Homeland Security suggests assembling an emergency kit that has important documents, N95 respirator masks, supplies to grab with you if you're forced to leave at a moment's notice. The agency also suggests signing up for local warning system notifications and know your community's evacuation plans to best prepare yourself and your family in cases of wildfires.

Some counties use Nixle alerts to update residents on severe weather, wildfires, and other news. To sign up, visit www.nixle.com or text your zip code to 888777 to start receiving alerts.

PG&E customers can also subscribe to alerts via text, email, or phone call. If you're a PG&E customer, visit the Profile & Alerts section of your account to register.

Red Flag Warning in May? Fire Season Arrives Early in Northern California

[Mercury News reports](#) the National Weather Service issued a surprisingly early-in-the-year fire alert for the area from Shasta Dam to just north of Los Banos, touching on the eastern fringes of the Bay Area.

By Sunday afternoon, an eerie reminder of the potential danger could be found inside Big Basin Redwoods State Park, where crews battled a small blaze. Big Basin remains closed after 97% of California's oldest state park was charred last August during the CZU Lightning Complex fire.

The state's persistent drought, combined with low humidity and strong northeasterly winds Sunday, signaled an early start to the fire season even without the triple-digit temperatures of late summer.

Experts said Sunday that a confluence of weather phenomena have created a looming hazard the year after a record 4.1 million acres in California were scorched in 2020.

The lack of precipitation has accelerated curing, the annual drying process of brush, trees and grasses. This condition leads to a low fuel-moisture content, which is a measure of the amount of water in vegetation available to a fire.

The last time the National Weather Service issued a red flag warning as early as May for Northern California's interior was in 2014.

In many ways, the fire season is year-round now: Firefighters have responded to more than 1,300 blazes since Jan. 1, CalFire officials said. On Saturday, wind-whipped flames of the Southern Fire began burning in eastern San Diego County; by Sunday afternoon, the blaze had consumed some 2,900 acres and led to the destruction of three structures and the evacuation of about 500 residents.

In the Bay Area on Sunday, crews also battled small fires in Pittsburg and Solano County. Cal Fire crews responded to a blaze that burned about three-quarters of an acre on Hihn Hammond Truck Trail in the Santa Cruz Mountains, officials reported.

Hours before the Basin Fire ignited, Cal Fire officials had announced an immediate halt to backyard burns in Santa Cruz County. The Santa Cruz-San Mateo unit plans to staff nine or 10 engines by Monday, spokeswoman Cecile Juliette. The unit has 13 engines on duty during peak fire season.

Fire experts are particularly concerned about the lack of recovery for the area's vegetation. Juliette said recent samples indicate San Mateo County fuels have reached historic lows.

Warmer spring temperatures, reduced snowpack and earlier snowmelt have colluded to make forests more susceptible to wildfire.

The National Weather Service's Diaz said the situation should not come as a surprise to anyone monitoring the winter's measly precipitation levels. San Francisco International Airport is 37% of normal rainfall for the year, Diaz said. Oakland is 40%, San Jose 43% and Santa Rosa 37%.

Last month, the state Department of Water Resources announced that it expects to deliver just 5 percent of requested supplies this year. Bay Area regional water districts have taken different approaches to encourage customers to reduce their usage.

Los Angeles County Reports No New COVID-19 Deaths

[The Los Angeles Times reports](#) Los Angeles County public health authorities on Sunday reported no new deaths related to COVID-19.

Although officials cautioned that the figure was probably an undercount because of reporting delays on weekends, it still marked a bright spot, capping several months of progress in the fight against the coronavirus.

The county also reported 313 new cases of the virus. There were 390 COVID-19 patients in county hospitals as of Saturday, a drop of about 16% from two weeks before.

L.A. County has recorded more than 1.2 million confirmed coronavirus cases, and 23,915 residents have died of COVID-19-related causes, according to [The Times' independent tally](#).

Meanwhile, 46.8% of L.A. County residents have received at least one dose of vaccine, and 31.5% are fully vaccinated. Experts have credited a relative lack of vaccine hesitancy in California with helping to hold off another surge of infections, as has been seen in some other states.

Public health officials said Saturday that infections in L.A. County remained at their lowest levels since the start of the pandemic. The average daily rate of positive cases among those tested was 0.7% over the last week, according to county data, and just 0.6% of the tests performed Saturday came back positive.

The sustained declines come as L.A. County appears poised to move into the yellow tier, the most lenient of the state's COVID-19 reopening system, which will permit most businesses to operate indoors, with modifications. To qualify for the wider reopenings, the county must have an adjusted daily new case rate of fewer than 2 per 100,000 people.

According to state data released last week, the county's rate of new coronavirus cases — adjusted based on the number of tests performed — had dropped to 1.9 per day per 100,000 people. Officials are expected to announce Tuesday whether the county has been able to maintain or drop below that rate for a second week, as required to move forward with a wider relaxation of rules.

California's Coronavirus Hospitalizations Hit All-time Low

[Mercury News reports](#) Coronavirus hospitalizations in California have dropped to their lowest levels since the start of the pandemic more than a year ago, fueled by a surge in vaccinations and one of the lowest case rates in the country.

Across the Golden State, the scenes of crowded emergency rooms and cadres of traveling nurses have given way to quieter hallways and, finally, hope.

“Things are shockingly positive in ways that we expected,” said Kristina Kramer, medical director of critical care for John Muir Health in Contra Costa County. “But to be living and seeing it in real time is so incredibly gratifying.”

During the winter surge, the county's health system had around 120 people hospitalized with COVID-19. As of Friday, John Muir was down to just four. The decline is mirrored at hospitals across the state. UCSF was down to eight patients from its January peak of 101.

Statewide as of Thursday, coronavirus patients were down from a January peak of nearly 23,000 to 2,029.

Across the 10-county Bay Area, there were just 360 people hospitalized with COVID-19, fewer than at any time of the pandemic except for a few days last June when hospitalizations briefly dropped to the low 350s.

One day last week, not a single person with the coronavirus came through the Stanford Hospital emergency department.

And unlike in the past, when dips in hospitalizations came with the real threat of a surge just around the corner, this decline feels more stable. Across the state, about 40% of residents are fully vaccinated, and another 20% are partially vaccinated. The figures are much higher in parts of the Bay Area. In San Francisco, for instance, more than 70% of residents have had at least one dose, and about half are completely vaccinated.

[In a study](#) released this week by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, fully vaccinated seniors, those most at risk for severe illness, were 94% less likely to be hospitalized with COVID-19 than unvaccinated people in the same age range — 65 and over. The data is particularly encouraging because it was collected even as more deadly variants of the virus are circulating.

Last year, elderly people flooded hospitals. But since the vaccine rollout prioritized older residents, things are different now. Hospitals are seeing younger patients, and those who do show up often aren't as sick.

As more people get vaccinated, some sense of normalcy is returning to hospital corridors. More people are coming in for routine medical care that they've put off. Some are less nervous about visiting the emergency room when they experience serious symptoms such as chest pain that

could signal a heart attack — a stark contrast from alarming reports earlier in the pandemic when emergency room doctors said they saw a steep drop in such patients despite the fact that such emergencies continued to occur.

Just across the border in Oregon, the state shut down indoor dining and renewed other restrictions this week as hospitalizations soared in recent weeks.

Kaiser, which said it has also seen significant declines in hospitalizations related to COVID-19, also called for continued vigilance.

“The virus has not disappeared in our communities,” Michelle Gaskill-Hames, senior vice president of health plan and hospital operations for Kaiser Permanente Northern California, said in a statement. “We are optimistic about the growing vaccination rates and about one day achieving widespread vaccination — something that is vital to ending this pandemic. Until then, public health measures remain essential to slowing the spread of COVID-19.”

Patients by county as of Thursday

- San Francisco — 23
- San Mateo — 28
- Contra Costa — 31
- Santa Clara — 88
- Alameda — 121

OHSA ETS Coming; New Chief Named

[EHS Today reports](#) the Occupational Safety and Health Administration’s (OSHA) has changed its mind and has decided to issue Emergency Temporary Standards (ETS) that employers will be expected to adhere to regarding COVID-19 in the workplace.

The agency reported on April 26 that it had submitted the draft regulations to the White House Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs (OIRA), which is responsible for reviewing federal agency rules prior to their publication. It is estimated that the ETS will be published no later than June.

Secretary of Labor Marty Walsh was believed to have held up the OSHA standards because the “emergency” they were designed to address no longer exists. Walsh said he suspended the rules’ issuance because the proposed standard did not “reflect the latest scientific analysis of the state of the disease.” It is not known why the change of mind occurred.

On Jan. 21, just one day after President Biden was inaugurated, he ordered OSHA to produce new COVID guidance by the end of January, which it did on Jan. 29. He also ordered it to issue the ETS by March 15, which it failed to accomplish.

As the number of COVID-19 vaccinations have grown—and demonstrated high rates of effectiveness, particularly at preventing serious illness and death—the more OSHA delays putting out the ETS, the harder it will be to justify that an “emergency standard is necessary to protect employees from grave danger,” observes A. Scott Hecker, an attorney with the law firm of Seyfarth Shaw.

According to U.S. government figures, as of April 26, more than 232 million vaccine doses have been administered in this country. More than 54% of the U.S. population who are 18 and older have received at least one dose, over 81% of those who are 65 and older also have received at least one dose, and almost 30% of the entire U.S. population is fully vaccinated.

Beyond being forced to deal with the passage of time and increasing vaccination numbers, OSHA will need to justify its change in position regarding the need for an ETS, Hecker says.

National labor unions, which have been demanding an OSHA ETS, may have unintentionally erected a barrier to the legal standing of any ETS that will be eventually adopted. They already had sued DOL seeking to get the court to order but then lost in federal appeals court because they failed to make the case that the standards were needed.

Another problem is that the new ETS will apply only in states that follow federal OSHA regulations, including Texas and Florida, which are among the states on the forefront of rolling back COVID-related risk mitigation protocols, including reduction of mask requirements. It also could cause confusion in states that have their own OSHA plans, such as California, which issued its own highly detailed ETS last year.

OSHA also chose to recently unleash a National Emphasis Program regarding stepped-up enforcement efforts nationwide, initially targeting the hospital and healthcare industry. Reports show that OSHA and the FTA campaign in Georgia and Texas have already generated employer citations.

If all proceeds to plan and President Biden's nominee to head OSHA is confirmed by the U.S. Senate, he should be thoroughly versed in California's workplace safety regulatory scheme. Doug Parker, the current chief occupational safety and health regulator in California, was nominated to serve as the DOL Assistant Secretary for Occupational Safety and Health—the official title of the head of OSHA.

If confirmed he will serve under Labor Secretary Marty Walsh, who in addition to having been mayor of Boston when he was named by President Biden also had served in senior positions in labor unions.

To view the full article and learn more about Doug Parker, [please click here](#).

ICYMI: Funding Opportunities Ending Soon

- **[Community Development Block Grant – Coronavirus Rounds 2 and 3 NOFA \(CDBG-CV2 and 3 NOFA\)](#)**; *housing, community, and economic development*
 - Deadline: Friday, May 7, 2021
 - Total estimated funding: \$77 million
 - **Full grant guidelines**: [linked here](#)
- **[Campesino de California Outreach Grant – Complaint System PY 21-22](#)**; *agriculture, disadvantaged communities, employment, labor, and training*
 - Deadline: Friday, May 7, 2021
 - Total estimated funding: \$150,000
 - **Full grant guidelines**: [linked here](#)
- **[California Underserved and Small Producers Program](#)**
 - Deadline: Monday, May 10, 2021

- Total estimated funding: \$2 million
- **Full grant guidelines:** [linked here](#)
- **California Forest Legacy Program;** *environment & water*
 - Deadline: Friday, May 14, 2021
 - Total estimated funding: \$14 million
 - **Full grant guidelines:** [linked here](#)

Funding Opportunities

2021-22 Minor’s Counsel (MC) Program RFP

[The Governor’s Office of Emergency Services](#) has created this funding to support the courts by appointing a minor’s counsel in child custody cases involving child abuse, neglect, or exploitation, and to determine if the appointment of minor’s counsel improves the criminal justice system’s response to these cases.

1. To be eligible to receive funds, the Applicant must be a California Superior Court with a Family Court Services Program with no more than three to four judges. The Applicant must submit a letter, signed by the Court Executive Officer, certifying the number of judges working in the Family Court Services Program and confirming the judges will complete a survey, post resolution of the case, for all cases in which a minor’s counsel is appointed.
2. The Applicant must receive a minimum of 50% of available points on the Rating Sheet.
3. Applicants applying for federal funds must be registered in the federal System for Award Management (SAM) and have an expiration date that is at least eight weeks after the Application due date. Check SAM status.
4. Applicants that are non-governmental organizations must be registered with the California Department of Justice’s Registry of Charitable Trusts with a “current” or “pending” status. Check nonprofit status.

Only one proposal per Applicant will be eligible to receive funding. If an Applicant submits more than one proposal, only the highest scoring proposal, meeting the criteria above, will be considered for funding.

To be eligible to receive funds, the Applicant must be a California Superior Court with a Family Court Services Program with no more than three to four judges. The Applicant must submit a letter, signed by the Court Executive Officer, certifying the number of judges working in the Family Court Services Program and confirming the judges will complete a survey, post resolution of the case, for all cases in which a minor’s counsel is appointed.

The deadline to apply is **Friday, May 28, 2021**. Total estimated funding available is \$600,000. To view the full grant guidelines, [please click here](#).

GFO-20-607 – Second Block Grant for Light-Duty Electric Vehicle Charger Incentive Projects

[The California Energy Commission](#) has created this competitive grant solicitation. The CEC’s Clean Transportation Program (formerly known as the Alternative and Renewable Fuel and Vehicle Technology Program) is seeking block grant implementer(s) to design and implement up

to \$500 million or more in grant funds for various light-duty electric vehicle (EV) charger incentive projects throughout California.

This is a competitive grant solicitation. The CEC's Clean Transportation Program (formerly known as the Alternative and Renewable Fuel and Vehicle Technology Program) is seeking block grant implementer(s) to design and implement up to \$500 million or more in grant funds for various light-duty electric vehicle (EV) charger incentive projects throughout California.

References to the budget for this solicitation should be considered an estimate. Additional funds may become available based on state or federal actions or budget allocations.

This solicitation is open to all not-for-profit technology entities with a physical office in California. The Applicant does not need to have its company headquarters in California, but it must have at least one existing physical office within the State of California.

There is no match share requirement.

The deadline to apply is **Friday, June 11, 2021**. Total estimated funding available is \$500 million. To view the full grant guidelines, [please click here](#). To view the online application, [please click here](#).

2021 Local Housing Trust Fund Program Notice of Funding Availability

[The Department of Housing and Community Development](#) has created this program to provide matching grants to Local Housing Trust Funds so that they can fund affordable housing.

An applicant must be:

1. A city, county, or city and county that has created, funded, and operated an existing Local Housing Trust Fund or that has created and funded a new Local Housing Trust Fund in compliance with Guidelines Sections 102(a)(1), 102(a)(2), and 102(a)(3).

A Local Housing Trust Fund or Regional Housing Trust Fund that was created, funded, and operated by a combination of two or more cities or counties must agree in its application to utilize program funds only for Eligible Projects located in cities or counties that at the time of application have met the requirements outlined in Guidelines Section 102(a)(4).

2. An existing or new Local Housing Trust Fund that is a charitable nonprofit organization as defined by Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code and which complies with Guidelines Section 102(b)(1), 102(b)(2) and 102(b)(3).

3. A Native American Tribe or Tribes that has created, funded, and operated an existing Local Housing Trust Fund, or that has created and funded a new Local Housing Trust Fund in compliance with Guidelines Section 102(c)(1), 102(c)(2), and 102(c)(3).

Pursuant to Guidelines Section 105, the LHTF funds shall be allocated in compliance with all of the following:

1. To provide construction loans and/or permanent financing loans at simple interest rates of no higher than three percent per annum, for payment of predevelopment costs, acquisition, construction, or rehabilitation.

2. Administrative expenses may not exceed five percent of Program Funds and Matching Funds.

3. A minimum of 30 percent of Program Funds and Matching Funds, after deducting administrative expense, shall be expended on assistance to Extremely Low-Income Households. To comply with this requirement, dwelling units or shelter beds must be Affordable to and restricted for Extremely Low-Income Households with household income of no more than 30 percent of Area Median Income (AMI).

4. No more than 20 percent of the Program Funds and Matching Funds, after deducting administrative expense, shall be expended on assistance to Moderate-Income Households. To comply with this requirement, dwelling units must be Affordable to and restricted for Moderate-Income Households with household income of no more than 120 percent of AMI.

5. The remaining Program Funds and Matching Funds shall be expended on assistance to Lower Income Households. To comply with this requirement, dwelling units must be Affordable to and restricted for Lower Income Households with household income of no more than 80 percent AMI.

The deadline to apply is **Friday, July 30, 2021**. Total estimated funding available is \$56.7 million. To view the full grant guidelines, [please click here](#).

Veterans Housing and Homeless Prevention/HCD

[The Department of Housing and Community Development](#) has created the VHHP program which finances the development of affordable rental and Transitional Housing for Veterans, with an emphasis on housing Extremely Low-Income Veterans experiencing Homelessness. The VHHP program is administered by the Department, in collaboration with the California Department of Veterans Affairs (CalVet) and the California Housing Finance Agency (CalHFA).

The Veterans Housing and Homelessness Prevention loan provides post-construction residual receipts permanent loans to fund the development of affordable multifamily rental housing that contains permanent supportive housing units and affordable housing units for veterans and their families. Funds are used for the acquisition and/or construction or rehabilitation of an affordable rental housing development or transitional housing, or the conversion of an existing structure. Funds shall be used for approved development costs and to refinance loans used to cover such costs. The maximum loan amount is \$15 million per project. Base amount/assisted unit is \$95,000 for 9% tax credit projects and \$175,000 for non-9% tax credit projects. Manager's units will receive a loan amount based on 60% AMI.

Funding is available statewide with geographic targeting to encourage the development of Veteran housing in regions with high concentrations of California's most vulnerable Veterans. Awards may be adjusted to meet these targets, if necessary.

Eligible applicants include businesses, individuals, nonprofits, public agencies, and tribal governments.

The deadline to apply is **Saturday, July 31, 2021**. Total estimated funding available is \$75 million. To view the full grant guidelines, [please click here](#).