



## **News from the Emergency Management Committee Chair (8/6/21)**

### **Dixie Fire: More Evacuations Ordered After ‘Explosive Fire Growth’**

[KCRA 3 reports](#) fire activity was expected to increase Tuesday for California's largest wildfire after new evacuation orders and road closures were issued this week, officials said.

The Plumas County Sheriff's Office on Tuesday issued new evacuation orders for the Lake Almanor area because of the Dixie Fire.

Some evacuation orders were previously lifted, and some roads were reopened in Butte and Plumas counties. However, crews battling the Dixie Fire this week have been dealing with difficult conditions that led to "explosive fire growth" Monday, [Cal Fire said in its latest incident report](#).

As of Tuesday morning, the Dixie Fire had burned 253,052 acres and was 35% contained, according to Cal Fire. About 5,170 personnel are assigned to the fire.

More than 7,144 structures are now threatened by the blaze, which is down from the more than 10,000 threatened earlier in the week. Sixty-seven structures have been destroyed, according to Cal Fire. It's now the 11th largest fire in California history.

The Dixie Fire sparked July 13 north of the Cresta Dam, which is not far from where the 2018 Camp Fire northeast of Paradise claimed the lives of more than 80 people.

The Dixie Fire had already leveled more than a dozen houses and other structures in Northern California when it combined with the Fly Fire and tore through the tiny community of Indian Falls in late July.

To learn more about the outlook of the Dixie Fire, [visit KCRA 3's full article](#).

### **Thousands Evacuate Fast-Moving California Wildfire; Homes Burn**

[Reuters reports](#) a rapidly spreading wildfire burned homes and forced thousands to evacuate in two heavily wooded counties northeast of Sacramento in Northern California on Wednesday, generating a towering plume of smoke visible from at least 70 miles (110 km) away.

The so-called River Fire scorched 1,400 acres (566 hectares) in Placer and Nevada counties, with 1,000 acres burnt within the first two hours, the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (Cal Fire) said.

The River Fire was less than 100 miles (160 km) south of the enduring Dixie Fire, which according to Cal Fire has consumed 278,000 acres and was only 35% contained three weeks after it started.

Social media images showed the Dixie Fire on Wednesday had destroyed multiple structures in one section of Greenville, a town of about 800 people in Plumas County.

The River Fire was not at all contained, but officials said they expected cooler overnight weather and a reversal of the wind direction to help.

At least four homes were destroyed in Colfax, a Placer County town of 2,000 people about 50 miles (80 km) northeast of Sacramento, according to a Reuters witness. Officials said they would have an estimate of the property damage on Thursday.

At least 2,400 people had evacuated their homes in Placer County, and another 4,200 people were under evacuation orders in Nevada County, fire and law enforcement officials told a news conference.

Evacuation centers were established in both counties, and an animal shelter for pets was set up at a fairground.

Carrie Levine, a fire ecologist from nearby Grass Valley, said her family had evacuated even without an official warning because the fire was moving so fast. Another expert urged people to evacuate because the area was particularly risky.

More than a dozen wildfires were burning around the state, which typically experiences peak fire season later in the year. California was on pace to suffer even more burnt acreage this year than last year, which was the worst fire season on record.

### **WATCH: PG&E, California Public Utilities Commission to Hold Briefing on Power Shutoffs**

[ABC 7 News reports](#) the California Public Utilities Commission held a public briefing Tuesday afternoon alongside PG&E on power shutoffs.

The virtual event begins at 1 p.m. and will feature remarks from CAL FIRE, the California Office of Emergency Services and Office of Energy Infrastructure Safety.

A representative from PG&E will also have a presentation on the company's readiness for Public Safety Power Shutoffs.

To view the briefing, [visit ABC 7's Facebook page](#).

### **New Program Helps Rescue Animals, Livestock During Disasters**

[Chico Enterprise-Record reports](#) a new emergency program designed to help rescue animals and livestock during disasters in California was established as announced by UC Davis on Monday in a press release.

The California Veterinary Emergency Team is a program that will support and train government agencies, individuals and organizations to help domestic animals and livestock during emergencies. The teams will be managed by the UC Davis School of Veterinary Medicine.

UC Davis's Veterinary Emergency Response Team helped over 1,500 animals during the Camp Fire in 2018.

The goal of the new team is to "increase response capacity and help standardize disaster response across counties."

The state-funded program will receive \$3 million a year and was signed by Gov. Gavin Newsom. The legislation was written by Sen. Steve Glazer (D-Contra Costa County).

"Recent wildfires have overwhelmed the state's ability to safely evacuate and care for household animals and livestock," Glazer said in the release. "Twice in the past five years we have had to call on Texas to send an emergency team to assist. That puts not just animals at risk but also increases the danger for residents and first responders if people stay behind fire lines because they fear their animals will not be cared for. We need this new team to help train, coordinate and lead the hundreds of volunteers who are eager to help. Our goal is a team that is ready to respond anywhere in the state with a mobile command center, a clinic if necessary, and the veterinarians, equipment and medicine to get the job done."

Managing evacuation centers and care of animals during emergencies is currently being handled by the California Animal Response Emergency System within the California Department of Food and Agriculture.

The release said between disasters, volunteers will be recruited, and veterinarian students will be trained on practices in shelter and emergency medicine.

The California Veterinary Emergency Team is anticipated to be in an organizational phase during this year's fire season.

### **California Cuts off Thousands of Valley Farmers from River Water as Drought Intensifies**

[\*The Sacramento Bee\*](#) reports California regulators moved to cut off thousands of farmers from their main irrigation supplies Tuesday, voting to ban them from pulling water from the state's main rivers and streams as the drought worsens.

The State Water Resources Control Board, following hours of debate and comment, voted 5-0 to issue "emergency curtailment" orders covering the rivers of the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta watershed — essentially the entire Central Valley.

It's the most dramatic step taken to date by state regulators since the drought was officially declared in most of California's counties — and surpasses any of the moves made during the previous drought.

It is the latest blow to California agriculture and the state's \$50 billion-a-year farm economy. Already, most of the farmers who rely on the State Water Project or the federal government's Central Valley Project have had their allocations slashed to nothing or nearly nothing. The state board's order affects those with direct legal rights to divert water from the rivers.

The board said it needed to curtail farmers' usage to preserve river flows for drinking water as well as endangered fish species. Of particular importance, agency officials said, is the need to maintain flows in the rivers to keep saltwater from the Pacific from rushing into the Delta — the estuary through which much of California's water is pumped to the southern half of the state.

If that water gets too salty, pumping operations could have to stop. “Then we’re in a very different emergency,” said Dorene D’Adamo, vice chair of the board.

The decision is expected to become official in about two weeks, when it’s cleared by the state Office of Administrative Law, and then the board will start issuing the actual curtailment orders.

The state board has been predicting since late March that curtailments were likely, but those warnings haven’t resulted in meaningful reductions in diversions from the rivers. “Depletions have remained high,” said Conny Mitterhofer, a water board engineer.

Some farm groups, while not contesting the decision, said the order underscores the desperate need for more reservoirs and dams to store water. “We can’t ignore our state and federal leaders’ failure to meaningfully prepare for this drought,” the California Farm Water Coalition said in a statement preceding the board’s vote.

### **California Reservoir Falls to Lowest Level on Record**

[\*WHSV 3 reports\*](#) California’s Lake Oroville, the second largest reservoir of the state, has seen its water level fall to the lowest recorded level ever. On Wednesday, the lake dropped to nearly 643 feet above mean sea level which passed the all-time low that was set in 1977.

This comes one day after state water regulators voted in favor of an emergency order that limits water access for thousands of area farmers. Nearly half of California is in exceptional drought, according to the latest information from the US drought monitor.

### **California Echoes CDC Mask Guidance for People Who Are Vaccinated**

[\*SHRM reports\*](#) less than a day after the U.S. Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) issued new masking guidance for fully vaccinated individuals in substantial or high transmission areas, the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) quickly followed suit by updating its Guidance for the Use of Face Coverings. Similar to the CDC, the CDPH's July 28 announcement recommends universal masking indoors statewide regardless of vaccination status. Here is what California employers need to know about this development.

In addition to recommending universal masking in indoor public settings and businesses across California regardless of vaccination status, the CDPH continues to require masks for all individuals in indoor public transit, indoor K-12 schools, childcare settings, emergency shelters, cooling centers, healthcare settings, correctional facilities and detention centers, and homeless shelters. The updated guidance adds long-term care settings and adult and senior care facilities to the list of indoor settings where masks are required by all.

Masks are still required for unvaccinated individuals in indoor public settings and businesses. In describing "indoor public settings and businesses," the CDPH provided a list of examples including retail, restaurants, theatres, family entertainment centers, meetings, and state and local government offices serving the public. However, unlike the recent clarification to the Los Angeles County Mask Order, which expressly states that the mask mandate applies to public and private businesses (including indoor office settings), the CDPH Guidance makes no such specification. Hopefully, this is something that CDPH and/or Cal/OSHA will soon clarify. In the interim, it is prudent to apply the CDPH's masking guidance even to office settings that are not otherwise "open to the public" in the traditional sense.

The CDPH's guidance is just one of a series of recent aggressive approaches by California agencies to decrease new COVID-19 infections. Less than two weeks ago, the CDPH stated that students and staff at California's K-12 schools will be required to wear masks during the next school year, regardless of vaccination status. Earlier this week, California Governor Gavin Newsom announced that the state will soon require all healthcare workers and state employees to show proof of a COVID-19 vaccination or be subjected to weekly testing.

To read more about these updated standards, as well as the impact on Cal/OSHA standards, [visit the full article](#).

### **California Says All Health Care Workers Must be Vaccinated – Scraps COVID Testing Alternative**

[The Sacramento Bee reports](#) Health care workers in California must be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 by the end of September and will no longer be able to test out of the requirement under a new health order from California Public Health Officer Tomás J. Aragón.

The new rule applies to all health care facilities, including hospitals, assisted living facilities, doctors' offices and clinics.

Gov. Gavin Newsom previously announced that health care workers must get vaccinated or submit to weekly testing, but this new order will eliminate the testing option starting Sept. 30 and instead require everyone to be vaccinated unless they have a religious or medical exemption.

California is the first state to impose such a mandate, according to the California Department of Public Health.

Aragón also issued an order Thursday requiring negative tests or [proof of vaccination of visitors to hospitals and nursing homes](#).

### **SF Exploring Potential Mandate Requiring Vaccination Proof for Entry to Indoor Restaurants, Gyms**

[The San Francisco Chronicle reports](#) San Francisco is weighing a mandate that could be similar to one [New York City](#) announced on Tuesday requiring people there to show proof of COVID-19 vaccination to enter indoor restaurants, gyms and concerts.

“We’re exploring that,” San Francisco Health Director Dr. Grant Colfax said Tuesday at a news event highlighting in-home vaccination options. The city is looking into whether there is need to go beyond its encouragement of businesses that have voluntarily instituted their own requirements that customers show proof of vaccination.

San Francisco and other Bay Area health officials have [urged](#) private businesses to require vaccination for workers and patrons, but stopped short of mandating those practices. A growing number of local restaurants and bars are requiring customers to show vaccination cards at the door, which [legal experts say](#) is generally allowable under the law.

New York is the first U.S. city to announce that customers will have to show proof of vaccination to get into indoor dining, gyms and entertainment venues. Its policy, starting Sept. 13, will use a health pass called “Key to NYC Pass” as proof of vaccination. People will not have the option to show proof of a negative test as an alternative to vaccination. France and Italy have announced similar programs in recent weeks.

Several other Bay Area jurisdictions — Contra Costa, Alameda, Marin and San Mateo counties, and the city of Berkeley — said Tuesday they are not considering a vaccination requirement. But San Francisco appeared to be leaving the door open to the idea.

Health experts say requiring vaccination for entry to indoor venues is a sensible next step to increase vaccination among those who still have not gotten shots. A panoply of other incentives — lottery prizes and free beer, marijuana and amusement park tickets — have hit a ceiling in luring more people to seek shots. Enacting such a rule for indoor spaces where people take off their masks to eat and drink will make those settings safer for everyone and could nudge remaining unvaccinated people to get their shots, experts say.

Existing and upcoming vaccination mandates for public and private employees in California — including those who work for the University of California, the state, several counties and cities, and some major tech companies — cover many but not all people. Requiring people to show proof of vaccination to enter restaurants and bars could capture a critical remaining unvaccinated slice of the population who are on the fence by making it inconvenient to participate in public life if unvaccinated.

A recent survey by the Golden Gate Restaurant Association found that 63% of the 231 responding San Francisco restaurants would back an indoor vaccination requirement for both customers and employees.

Throughout the pandemic, San Francisco and New York have adopted many similar virus containment strategies, with San Francisco generally taking the lead. San Francisco and five other Bay Area counties were the first in the nation to enact a [shelter-in-place order](#) in March 2020; New York state followed suit a few days later. San Francisco in June became the first U.S. city to announce a vaccination mandate for city workers; New York City announced a similar mandate about a month later. San Francisco this week [reinstated](#) indoor mask mandates; New York City has not done so.

San Francisco has much higher vaccination rates than most of the country — 68% of the city's population is fully vaccinated, compared to 50% nationwide, according to federal data. Still, that hasn't been enough to keep the highly infectious delta variant from taking hold locally and driving a fourth wave of new cases, mostly among the unvaccinated.

It's not clear what logistical challenges could arise from a potential New York City-style mandate in San Francisco, like how the city might enforce the rule or support businesses lacking personnel to screen customers. The City Attorney's Office on Tuesday did not respond to a question about any possible legal hurdles to such a policy.

For detailed maps and new city-by-city Bay Area data, check out [The Chronicle's Coronavirus Tracker](#). To get regular updates on our coverage, sign up for our [coronavirus newsletter](#).

## **Pushback Challenges Vaccination Requirements at US Colleges**

[US News reports](#) the quickly approaching fall semester has America's colleges under pressure to decide how far they should go to guard their campuses against COVID-19 while navigating legal and political questions and rising infection rates.

Hundreds of colleges nationwide have told students in recent months they must be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 before classes begin.

California State University, the country's largest four-year public university system, joined the list last week, along with Michigan State University and the University of Michigan. Their announcements cited concerns about the highly contagious delta variant and came as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention issued updated mask guidelines based on new research regarding its spread.

Yet many more colleges have held off on vaccine mandates in a reflection of the limits school leaders face in adopting safety requirements for in-person classes.

In many Republican-led states, governments have banned vaccine mandates, or school leaders face political pressure to limit their anti-virus actions even among students who live in packed residence halls. Opponents say the requirements tread on personal freedoms.

Some campuses have sidestepped pushback by instead offering enticements, such as prize drawings for free tuition and computers, as they seek to boost student vaccination rates to 80% or higher.

And a few have gone against the grain of their GOP-led states, such as Nova Southeastern in Florida requiring employees to get the shots and Nebraska Wesleyan mandating vaccinations for its 2,000 students.

Private colleges like these have more legal leeway regarding coronavirus rules, experts say. Prominent private universities mandating student vaccinations include Harvard, Yale, Notre Dame, Northwestern, Duke and Stanford.

Courts will likely allow university leaders to take such steps to protect student health, but many colleges can't avoid the reality of states taking a stance against vaccine mandates, Reiss said.

Among some 4,000 college campuses across the country, more than 600 have imposed a vaccine mandate, according to tracking by the Chronicle of Higher Education. But their requirements vary.

To read more on the various stances on vaccine requirements that colleges across the country are taking, [visit US News' full article](#).

### **Sonoma County to Require Proof of Vaccination for Emergency Personnel, Encourages Employers to do the same**

[Sonoma County issued in a press](#) release a health order calling for all fire, law enforcement and emergency medical service workers and staff at disaster shelters to show proof of vaccination. If proof of vaccination is not available, workers would be required to undergo weekly COVID-19 testing.

This new mandate for all fire, law enforcement, EMS and disaster shelter staff, which will take effect on Sept. 1, expands a California Department of Public Health order requiring health care and congregate facility staff to be vaccinated or tested if unvaccinated.

Meanwhile, on Aug. 17, County staff will be presenting a policy to the Board of Supervisors for consideration that would extend the same requirements to all 4,470 County workers.

In addressing these changes today, Health Officer Dr. Sundari Mase strongly recommended that all employers require workers to provide proof of full vaccination for COVID-19 as a condition

of employment. Workers who are not fully vaccinated or who decline to show proof of vaccination should be required to submit to weekly COVID-19 testing.

To read Dr. Sundari Mase's full comments, [visit Sonoma County's press release](#).

### **O.C. Board of Education to Sue Governor Newsom Over K-12 School Mask Mandate**

[The Los Angeles Times reports](#) the Orange County Board of Education — which last year unsuccessfully sued Gov. Gavin Newsom to reopen schools for in-person instruction — has voted to challenge him again over a state mandate requiring K-12 students to wear masks in classrooms and other indoor campus facilities, saying the rule is a burden on children.

In a 4-0 closed-session vote, the board approved a legal challenge that targets the governor's emergency rule-making powers, which includes the recent school mask mandate issued as California schools are fully reopening for in-person learning against a troubling coronavirus uptick fueled by the highly contagious Delta variant.

Reading from an approved press release, the board's counsel called the governor's and executive agencies' use of emergency decrees a violation of "constitutional and statutory law," calling the latest student mask rule a burden that "compounds the harm to California's children previously caused by prior school closures and unwarranted masking requirements..."

The board did not present any data as evidence of any adverse effects of masking on children or acknowledge public health studies that have shown masking reduces the spread of the virus. Orange County officials disputed that there is a scientific basis for masking schoolchildren.

"...Putting aside for the moment, the lack of sound, medical or scientific basis of the governor's requirement to mask school children — who in general are neither at risk from COVID-19 nor likely to spread it — and putting aside the lack of any thoughtful well-considered transparent balancing of substantial harms of forced masking of juveniles against the reported benefits, the governor and the state level administrative agencies do not have the power to continue the state of emergency indefinitely," the counsel continued.

While children have largely escaped COVID-19 infections, it's still possible for a child to contract and spread the virus. And while cases of a multisystem inflammatory syndrome — known as MIS-C — that has infected some children exposed to the coronavirus are rare, they can be serious.

Board members Mari Barke, Tim Shaw, Lisa Sparks and Ken Williams were present for the vote. Board member Beckie Gomez had departed prior to the vote.

The California Dept. of Public Health called the lawsuit a "distraction" from COVID-19 mitigation efforts.

"California's COVID-19 prevention strategies are the best way to fully open our schools while protecting students and staff, and the state's guidance fully aligns with the CDC and the American Academy of Pediatrics," CDPH told The Times. "Our top priority and singular focus remains ensuring that the return to in-person learning for all students is successful this fall. These lawsuits are a disappointing distraction from a common goal — getting kids back into schools safely and limiting the spread of COVID-19."

Last August, the board sued Newsom to reopen schools that had been closed due to COVID-19. A petition went to the state Supreme Court asking it to review the case but was ultimately denied.

The board is an advisory body and does not have the authority to implement rules over the county's 27 school districts.

### **ICYMI: Funding Opportunities Ending Soon**

- **[Proud Parenting Grant Program](#)**; *disadvantaged communities; education; employment, labor, & training; health & human services; law, justice, & legal services*
  - Funded by: Board of State and Community Corrections
  - Deadline: **Friday, August 6, 2021**
  - Total estimated funding: \$835k
  - Full grant guidelines: [linked here](#)
- **[Proposition 1 Grant Program](#)**; *environment & water*
  - Funded by: Coachella Valley Mountains Conservancy
  - Deadline: **Tuesday, August 10, 2021**
  - Total estimated funding: \$1,639,513
  - Full grant guidelines: [linked here](#)
- **[2021-22 Unserved/Underserved Child and Youth Advocacy \(XY\) Program RFP](#)**; *consumer protection; disadvantaged communities; health & human services; law, justice, and legal services*
  - Funded by: Governor's Office of Emergency Services
  - Deadline: **Thursday, August 12, 2021**
  - Total estimated funding: \$2.522 million
  - Full grant guidelines: [linked here](#)
    - Online application: [linked here](#)
- **[2021-22 Sexual Assault Law Enforcement Specialized Units \(ST\) Program RFP](#)**; *consumer protection; disaster prevention & relief; education; health & human services; law, justice, and legal services*
  - Funded by: Governor's Office of Emergency Services
  - Deadline: **Wednesday, August 25, 2021**
  - Total estimated funding: \$759,580
  - Full grant guidelines: [linked here](#)
    - Online application: [linked here](#)

### **Funding Opportunities**

#### **Library Workforce Partnership Initiative**

[The California State Library](#) has created the LWPI, a Library Services and Technology Act funding opportunity, for ten California public libraries to partner with Local Workforce Development Boards (Local Boards). By extending and enhancing their ability to support employment, public libraries can establish a leadership role in their communities as California fights to recover from the effects of the pandemic.

Working with a cohort of ten libraries and Local Workforce Development Boards, successful awardees will build staff skills and knowledge about workforce development and enhance

workforce development in their communities. Local Boards in California will work with public libraries and together they will promote employment, career development, and skill building for job seekers. The California State Library will help libraries connect with local workforce agencies to initiate partnerships.

All participating libraries will:

- Receive \$15k
- Partner with Local Board
- Receive training from the California State Library
- Engage with a cohort of library staff and workforce staff focused on developing skills related to workforce development. The cohort will convene monthly to collaborate and create a community of practice.

Libraries interested in being part of the LWPI will design a local outreach program to meet the specific needs of their local communities.

During the grant period, each library will engage in community asset mapping. Shared conversations will be built into the LWPI so that all libraries and workforce agencies participating in the project will have the opportunity to share ideas, concerns, and solutions to challenges that occur during the grant period. Training on digital tools offered by the State Library will be offered throughout the grant period. Finally, each library will contribute to a document that will offer support to other libraries who pursue workforce development as a core service.

Each library interested in applying for an LWPI grant must partner with their Local Workforce Development Board. A formal written agreement, such as a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), must be part of the application for a grant. The agreement will detail the responsibilities and contributions of each partner. Successful projects will be awarded grants in October 2021. Projects will close on June 30, 2022.

This opportunity is available to all California public libraries that meet the criteria found at [this link](#).

Applicants are expected to contribute a local match to the grant funds in the form of a cash match and/or in-kind contributions. A match is expected, but no minimum amount is required.

The deadline to apply is **Tuesday, September 28, 2021**. Total estimated funding available is \$150k. To view the full grant guidelines, [click here](#). To view the online application, [click here](#).

### **Domestic Violence American Rescue Plan (RP) Program RFP**

[The Governor's Office of Emergency Services](#) has created the RP Program to ensure the continuity of domestic violence services and/or response to COVID-19 by providing funding for non-shelter supportive services and/or prevention activities.

Applicants must be governmental or non-governmental organizations (NGOs) serving domestic violence victims. Priority will be given to NGOs not currently funded through the Domestic Violence Assistance (DV), Equality in Prevention and Services for Domestic Abuse (GL), and Domestic Violence Housing First (XD) Programs.

Applicants that are non-governmental organizations must be registered with the California Department of Justice's Registry of Charitable Trusts with a "current", "exempt", or "pending" status. Check nonprofit status.

The deadline to apply is **Monday, October 4, 2021**. Total estimated funding available is \$2,162,803. To view the full grant guidelines, [click here](#).

### **2021-22 Law Enforcement Specialized Units (LE) Program RFP**

[The Governor's Office of Emergency Services](#) has created the LE Program to create or enhance specialized units to provide a coordinated response to victims of domestic violence and their children. This will be accomplished through investigation of incidents, immediate victim advocacy, training for patrol officers/first responders, and the development of effective protocols and practices that will continue after the Grant Subaward performance cycle has ended.

To be eligible to receive funds:

- The Applicant must be a city or county law enforcement department within the State of California, as defined in California Penal Code § 830.1.
- Receive a minimum of 50% of available points to be eligible for funding; however, a minimum score does not guarantee funding.

Requires a cash or in-kind match equal to 25 percent of the total project cost. Tribes and victim service providers are exempt.

The deadline to apply is **Friday, October 15, 2021**. Total estimated funding available is \$1.422 million. To view the full grant guidelines, [click here](#).