



## **News from the Emergency Management Committee Chair (3/3/2023)**

### **Upcoming Joint Oversight Hearing with the Assembly Committee on Emergency Management & the Joint Legislative Committee on Emergency Management**

Topic: California's Preparedness for Catastrophic Earthquake and the Lessons Learned from the Devastating Earthquake in Turkey and Syria

When: Monday, March 13<sup>th</sup> at 2:30 pm

Where: Swing Space, Room 1200

### **Upcoming Policy Hearing**

When: Monday, March 13<sup>th</sup>, Upon Adjournment of the Committee's Joint Oversight Hearing

Where: State Capitol, Room 444

### **Governor Newsom Proclaims State of Emergency in 13 Counties Due to Winter Storms Activates California National Guard**

[Governor Newsom has proclaimed](#) a state of emergency to support disaster response and relief in the counties of Amador, Kern, Los Angeles, Madera, Mariposa, Mono, Nevada, San Bernardino, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, Sierra, Sonoma and Tulare. The text of Wednesday's emergency proclamation can be found [here](#).

The Governor has also activated the State Operations Center to bring state support to county-led emergency response efforts and coordinate mutual aid from neighboring jurisdictions, especially in San Bernardino County. Significant numbers of state personnel are on the ground supporting San Bernardino County, including from the Governor's Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES), Caltrans and the California Highway Patrol, working closely with the county-led Incident Command to rapidly deploy resources and address emergency management needs.

Cal OES is working with Caltrans and San Bernardino County officials to bring in additional snow plows as well as road crews, and personnel from CAL FIRE and the California National Guard are readied to support operations. The state is also contracting with private companies to accelerate snow removal and clear roadways, and is coordinating with investor-owned utilities to rapidly restore power.

Cal OES is coordinating with local officials to open two shelters for residents in San Bernardino County and is coordinating with law enforcement to escort power companies, food and water deliveries and service providers for vulnerable populations.

## **Climate Whiplash is in California's Future**

[Fresno Community Alliance reports](#) in the wake of California being slammed by a series of atmospheric river storms, a special legislative hearing was held in Sacramento to consider California's preparedness and response to future extreme weather events. They heard from climate scientists about what to expect in the future, and from state and county emergency response officials about the challenges they face now.

The Assembly brought together three key committees to learn about the devastation and human misery left in the wake of those ferocious downpours: Emergency Management; Water, Parks and Wildlife; and Utilities and Energy.

Legislators heard from experts about the human and physical impact of the wave atmospheric rivers that swept across California over a four-week period. The damage to private and public infrastructure, according to a federal government report, could exceed a billion dollars.

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They also learned from scientists about the outlook for even more extreme storm events in the state's climate-warming future.

Daniel Swain is a climate scientist at UCLA. Using the latest science and modeling tools, he developed ArkStorm 2.0, which creates physically realistic scenarios for mega-storm and flood events. He told lawmakers that they should expect a future of what he calls "climate whiplash."

"We should be expecting quite large increases in the likelihood of hydro-climate extremes on both ends of the spectrum," said Swain. "So, both very dry conditions and a warming climate, but also very wet conditions.

"And this may come as a surprise to some folks, but the increase in the very wet conditions may well be greater than the increase in the very dry. The reason for this primarily is that we know that a warming climate increases the ceiling on how much water vapor the atmosphere can potentially hold.

The dynamics of atmospheric rivers are being intensively studied by researchers, and their findings are increasingly utilized by statewide and local agencies responsible for emergency response. By measuring the location, intensity and duration of a storm, scientists can better pinpoint where it will land.

Dr. Martin Ralph is a researcher at the Scripps Institute of Oceanography at UC San Diego. He explains that information measured by aircraft flying up close to the atmospheric river (AR) is pooled with ground-based meteorological data to fine-tune predictions about its behavior for the public and first responders. He says the goal is about moving science into action.

"The fundamental message of AR science and impact studies on the west coast is where they hit and how long they stall for. How strong they are is really what determines the impacts.

“It’s not just how strong the AR is at a moment, but it’s how long it lasts over your location. If an AR stalls, that’s how we get floods. So, we really need to pay attention to the antecedent conditions on the ground and the details of where this hits.”

Predicting and preparing for extreme AR events will be even more crucial in the coming years.

For further information, [visit the full article](#).

## **Storms Lift California Out of Extreme Drought but Bring Other Problems**

[Courthouse News Service reports](#) an onslaught of strong winter storms has lifted many parts of California out of severe drought, but they've also led Governor Gavin Newsom to declare states of emergency in many counties.

A new U.S. Drought [Monitor report](#) released Thursday shows that more than half of the state is now out of severe drought, though many of those areas are still labeled "abnormally dry" — the first stage of drought.

Parts of the northern Sacramento Valley and the inland southeast state remain in severe drought, but it is [good news](#) for the Golden State after more than three years of a historic dry spell. Three months ago, 40% of the state was in extreme or exceptional drought.

However, state authorities have cautioned the true effects of the surprisingly wet winter on California's depleted groundwater supplies will not be known until April or after. The state has seen many trees die and thousands of wells reported dry, as aquifers recharge very slowly.

Due to the severe winter storms, Newsom declared a state of emergency even as more cold and wet systems take aim at the Golden State. The [declaration](#) frees up funding to support disaster response and relief in Amador, Kern, Los Angeles, Madera, Mariposa, Mono, Nevada, San Bernardino, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, Sierra, Sonoma and Tulare counties.

He said the recent storms have damaged and forced the closure of federal and state highways and roads, leading to evacuations of residents and motorists while ongoing dangerous conditions threaten critical infrastructure and power outages.

Caltrans District 3 has been releasing constant updates on clearing highways including Interstate 80 between the California side of Lake Tahoe into western Nevada. The agency [wrote on Twitter](#) on Wednesday night "Not sure how those not on the interstate can say the roadway is 'clear' but we are working to get enough space on WB I-80 to reopen soon. As can be seen, it's not clear and there is no shoulder room to pull over in an emergency in several locations. We're close."

Forecasters [say more storms](#) are coming and will threaten counties across California, bringing strong winds, blizzard conditions across the Sierra Nevada mountains, above normal precipitation and unusually cold temperatures. The National Weather Service [said in a tweet](#) that caution is needed when traveling over the weekend, due to dangerous or impassable roads. And forecasters remain fairly confident the first half of March will see more wet weather.

Newsom activated the State Operations Center to help support county-led emergency response efforts and coordinate mutual aid from neighboring jurisdictions.

San Bernardino County is of particular concern and the governor's office reported "significant numbers of state personnel are on the ground" there, including from the Office of Emergency Services, Caltrans and the California Highway Patrol. The county's Incident Command is leading to rapidly deploy resources and address emergency management needs.

The state is also bringing more snow plows and road crews with personnel from Cal Fire and the California National Guard as support. Some private companies have already been contracted to accelerate snow removal and clear roadways, and the state is coordinating with investor-owned utilities to rapidly restore power.

Residents in San Bernardino County will soon have two shelters operating and the state is coordinating with law enforcement to escort power companies, food and water deliveries and service providers to affected areas to help vulnerable populations.

Newsom last declared a state of emergency [during a run](#) of strong atmospheric storms in January that left many cities flooded and stranded thousands of residents. That emergency garnered a federal response from the Biden administration.

### **Two Additional Counties Now Eligible for FEMA Assistance**

[FEMA announced](#) Amador and Alpine counties have been added to the major disaster declaration for California's severe storms and flooding that took place from Dec. 27, 2022 to Jan. 31, 2023.

Homeowners and renters in Amador County are eligible to apply for FEMA's Individual Assistance program. Alpine County has just been added to the declaration for Public Assistance.

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Currently, 14 California counties are eligible for Individual Assistance (IA). FEMA's IA program may provide grants to help pay for temporary housing and essential home repairs as well as other serious disaster-related needs such as medical and dental expenses, transportation, childcare, and moving and storage expenses. Other counties eligible for IA include Alameda, Calaveras, Contra Costa, Merced, Mendocino, Monterey, Sacramento, San Joaquin, San Luis Obispo, San Mateo, Santa Barbara, Santa Cruz and Ventura.

To apply for FEMA IA assistance, visit [DisasterAssistance.gov](https://www.disasterassistance.gov) or download the [FEMA mobile app](#). Applicants can also call the FEMA Helpline at 800-621-3362. Help is available in many languages. If you use video relay service (VRS), captioned telephone service or others, give FEMA your number for that service. Helpline operators speak many languages and lines are open from 7 a.m. to 11 p.m. daily. Press 2 for Spanish. Press 3 for an interpreter who speaks your language. The deadline to apply is March 16, 2023.

## California Braces for Next Big Snowstorm This Weekend

[The Sacramento Bee reports](#) snowfall has paused after an intense winter storm that dumped feet in the Sierra Nevada Mountains and surrounding foothills earlier this week, but more is coming this weekend, with tens of thousands still lacking power as of Thursday morning in Northern California.

Mammoth snow totals fell in the greater Lake Tahoe area between Monday and Wednesday, a period during which the National Weather Service issued a rare blizzard warning for the central Sierra.

In those three days, between 5 and 8 feet of snow was recorded in parts of the mountains, including 92 inches at the Palisades Tahoe ski resort, according to the weather service.

The UC Berkeley Central Sierra Snow Lab, located near Donner Pass, measured 87 inches from Monday through Wednesday and nearly 12 feet of snow for the week ending Wednesday morning; 35 inches were recorded Tuesday.

More than 2 feet of snow fell in parts of the foothills, including 26 inches in the Grass Valley area.

Pacific Gas and Electric Co. as of 2 p.m. Thursday reported more than 50,000 homes and businesses in outages, many of which began Tuesday or earlier.

That total included more than 12,000 customers in Nevada County, over 7,600 in El Dorado County and more than 3,500 in Placer County, according to PG&E's outage map.

An 80-year-old Foresthill woman died Tuesday afternoon after the porch of her home collapsed under the weight of snow, according to the Placer County Sheriff's Office and a bulletin from the weather service.

Placer County sheriff's officials also said an avalanche in Olympic Valley struck a three-story apartment building, burying the bottom two floors of the building, but that no injuries were reported, with all occupants accounted for.

Interstate 80, which had been closed in both directions from Monday through Wednesday morning, reopened to passenger vehicles in the westbound direction Wednesday afternoon and to eastbound passenger traffic Thursday morning. Big rigs were still being held at the Nevada state line and at Applegate, Caltrans said just before 7:30 a.m.

Highway 50, which was closed and reopened for snow removal and avalanche control work numerous times from Monday through Wednesday, was open in both directions as of Thursday morning.

For further updates, [visit the full article](#).

### **It's Time to Check that Emergency Kit and We're Here to Help**

[LAist reports](#) this last set of storms left a huge mess in its wake and a whole lot of snow. Thankfully, those stuck in mountain areas were expected to get some extra assistance as of

yesterday. After Gov. Gavin Newsom declared a [state of emergency](#) for 13 counties, including San Bernardino, the California National Guard arrived to [help snowed-in residents](#) in towns like Big Bear and Lake Arrowhead. More than 6 feet of snow fell in that general area over the last week.

All this talk of weather-related emergencies and getting stuck somewhere got us thinking about preparedness — in your home, even in your car. If a massive storm or a big earthquake hits, do you have what it takes to be comfortable in your home for at least two weeks? Enough food and, more importantly, water for your whole family and your pets? Extra prescriptions? A good first aid kit?

The reason we took another look at our survival kits here at LAist was because of the devastating earthquake in Turkey and Syria. It was a stark reminder that the [Big One](#) is coming...likely sometime in the next [30 years](#).

These wild storms just added an extra layer of urgency. That's why the *How to LA* team went out with science reporter [Jacob Margolis](#) recently to build the most basic of prep kits — with a little help from Smart & Final and REI (although any big box store will do — come this spring Costco should have sleeping bags in stock FYI).

Listen to the episode [here](#) not only for supply tips — 1 gallon of water per person per day — but to get a sense of the real, and very scary, impact of a 7.8 earthquake here in Los Angeles. We've also got a [handy guide](#) on our website of what you need to prepare.

### **California Winter Storm Leaves Over 100k Without Power, County Declares Emergency After People Trapped**

[Fox News reports](#) more than 100,000 California customers were left without power and a southern county declared a local state of emergency as more winter weather swept the state.

According to outage tracker PowerOutage.US, 102,741 customers were impacted by outages on Wednesday morning, with the majority of outages in northern and central California.

Fresh snow fell in the mountains on Wednesday, adding to what had already blocked roadways and stranded visitors for days. Some very cold temperatures were expected in northern California on Wednesday and Thursday, according to the National Weather Service.

The agency's Eureka office said a hard freeze warning was in effect through 9 a.m. PST on Wednesday for Del Norte, Humboldt and Mendocino Counties — also warning about icy road conditions.

The Sierra Nevada range and southern California Mountains were under blizzard warnings and [San Bernardino County](#) declared a state of emergency as crews struggled to plow roads. Mountain residents and non-residents not currently on the mountain are being asked to avoid the area.

Jerrod Carter from Los Alamitos told Fox 11 that he and his family went up to the mountains on Tuesday of last week. Their plan was to leave Thursday, but they're still stuck.

"You would never think that California would see snow like this, this heavy," he said. "We're down to canned soup. We have one bag of top ramen left. We have a couple servings of orange juice."

Yosemite National Park has been closed since Saturday due to heavy, blinding snow – postponing a planned reopening indefinitely.

The U.C. Berkeley Central Sierra Snow Laboratory near Donner Pass reported that almost 41.7 feet of snow has fallen since October.

The Mammoth Mountain ski resort has received 41.5 feet of snow since then and could be on a path to break the [all-time snow season record](#) of 55.7 feet.

### **Governor Newsom Marks End of California's COVID-19 State of Emergency**

[Governor Newsom issued](#) a proclamation on Tuesday [terminating](#) the state's COVID-19 State of Emergency, as previously [announced](#) in October.

The state's [SMARTER Plan](#) will maintain California's operational preparedness to address the next phase of the COVID-19 pandemic and will continue to guide the state's work to support communities across the state. Additionally, COVID-19 vaccines, testing, and treatment continue to be available at sites within local communities across the state.

To review the key numbers for health, economics, and education, [visit the full press release](#).

### **California's COVID Emergency is Ending. How Will It Change Your Life?**

[The Los Angeles Times reports](#) California's 3-year-old COVID-19 state of emergency will lift Tuesday — a development that reflects the dawn of a next, hopeful phase of the pandemic, even as officials and experts say continued vigilance and preparation are necessary to maintain the current promising trajectory.

Though the global pandemic itself is not over, rescinding the health emergencies issued during the outbreak's early days by all levels of government acknowledges the degree to which the overarching COVID threat has ebbed, allowing many residents to largely or entirely return to pre-outbreak normalcy.

With robust community immunity — both through vaccination and natural infection — the availability [of updated boosters](#) and [effective therapeutics](#), as well as a well-worn toolbox of non-pharmaceutical interventions, many events and activities are safer today than they have been in years.

"While the threat of this virus is still real, our preparedness and collective work have helped turn this once crisis emergency into a manageable situation," California Health and Human Services Secretary Dr. Mark Ghaly said.

Since the future is not set in stone, officials and experts say it's important to remain prepared to tackle COVID's continuing impacts, as well as any new tricks the coronavirus may yet have up

its proverbial sleeve. Rescinding emergency declarations may also change how residents access vital resources such as vaccines, treatments and tests.

“As we have experienced throughout the pandemic, there are no absolutes,” said Los Angeles County Public Health Director Barbara Ferrer. “There’s a temptation to say the pandemic is ending and, for some, this experience is very real. For others, they continue to feel the impact daily — whether it is living with the loss of a loved one, the economic toll of the pandemic or the effects of long COVID.”

But given that “we didn’t see a large winter surge and that our hospitalization and death rates have remained stable is positive,” she added during a recent briefing. “I’m optimistic about this next phase.”

For further information as to what you should know, [visit the full article](#).

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

- **English Language Learner Integrated Education and Training Fund Program Year 2022-23**; *disadvantaged communities; education; employment, labor & training*
  - Funded by: Employment Development Department
  - Deadline: **Monday, March 6, 2023**
  - Total Estimated Funding: \$18 million
  - **Full Grant Guidelines**: [linked here](#)
- **2022-23 Restorative Justice Training (RJ) Program RFP – (2<sup>nd</sup> Release)**; *education; health & human services; law, justice, and legal services*
  - Funded by: Governor’s Office of Emergency Services
  - Deadline: **Tuesday, March 7, 2023**
  - Total Estimated Funding: \$250k
  - **Full Grant Guidelines**: [linked here](#)
- **Climate Adaptation Planning – Sustainable Transportation Planning Grant Program**; *transportation*
  - Funded by: Department of Transportation
  - Deadline: **Thursday, March 9, 2023**
  - Total Estimated Funding: \$50 million
  - **Full Grant Guidelines**: [linked here](#)
    - **Online Application**: [linked here](#)

### **Funding Opportunities**

#### **CAL FIRE Wildfire Prevention Grant Program FY 2022-23**

[CAL FIRE’s Wildfire Prevention Grants Program](#) provides funding for fire prevention projects and activities in and near fire threatened communities. Funded activities include hazardous fuels reduction, wildfire prevention planning, and wildfire prevention education with an emphasis on improving public health and safety while reducing greenhouse gas emissions.



The Wildfire Prevention Grants Program funds three types of activities: hazardous fuels reduction, Wildfire prevention planning, and Wildfire prevention education. Please see the corresponding FY 2022-23 Wildfire Prevention Grants Procedural Guide located on the Wildfire Prevention Grants webpage.

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To see a full list of eligible geographic area requirements, please see the corresponding FY 2022-23 Wildfire Prevention Grants Procedural Guide located on the Wildfire Prevention Grants webpage.

The deadline to apply for this funding is **Wednesday, March 15, 2023**. Total estimated funding available is \$115 million. To view the full grant guidelines, [click here](#). To view the online application, [click here](#).

### **2023 CUSP Program – Drought Relief Technical Assistance and Direct Producer Grants**

[The CA Department of Food and Agriculture](#) has created this program to partner with technical assistance providers to support California agricultural producers with business management training, marketing and other financial tools. Partnering organizations can also provide direct producer grants for drought relief to eligible producers.

The 2023 California Underserved and Small Producers Grant Program (CUSP) is designed to facilitate support for small and medium scale California agricultural producers, or small and medium scale Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers through technical assistance with business planning and marketing strategies. The program also includes direct producer grants for drought relief for those same priority groups.

Eligible applicants include nonprofits and tribal governments. Other applicant types include Resource Conservation Districts and County Departments of Agriculture.

The deadline to apply for this funding is **Thursday, March 16, 2023**. Total estimated funding available is \$22 million. To view the full grant guidelines, [click here](#). To view the online application, [click here](#).

### **2022-23 Listos California Statewide Grant (LS) Program RFP**

[The Governor's Office of Emergency Services](#) has created the Listos California Statewide Grant (LS) Program to support organizations throughout California that serve multiple counties and/or larger populations with key social vulnerability factors located in areas at moderate to high risk from natural hazard. Community-based organizations throughout the state, referred to as CBOs, can work independently or subgrant with local CBOs to provide disaster training and resources to vulnerable and diverse populations. This work is intended to increase their communities' disaster preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation capabilities.

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Eligible applicants include nonprofits and public agencies.

The deadline to apply for this funding is **Monday, March 20, 2023**. Total estimated funding available is \$8 million. To view the full grant guide