



News from the Emergency Management Committee Chair (8/11/2023)

Climate Essentials for Emergency Managers

[FEMA has released](#) Climate Essentials for Emergency Managers to offer foundational learning opportunities for the emergency management community and beyond.

By sharing communication techniques, climate information, data resources, and guidance for connecting with experts, this resource helps advance the integration of climate change considerations into actionable efforts before, during, and after disasters.

To download the full resource, [click here](#).

Newsom Sends California Search-and-Rescue Teams to Hawaii in Wake of Deadly Maui Wildfires

[The Sacramento Bee reports](#) Gov. Gavin Newsom announced Thursday the deployment of 11 members from California search-and-rescue task forces to assist the hardest hit areas from devastating wildfires in Maui that have killed at least 53 people this week in Hawaii.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency worked closely with Newsom as the California governor directed the Office of Emergency Services to also deploy state personnel specializing in urban search-and-rescue and mass fatality management to support Hawaii's operations.

The specialized team includes local government firefighting personnel from Sacramento, Riverside and Oakland.

“The wildfires and devastation that Maui is experiencing is all too familiar and all too horrifying. We stand at the ready to aid Hawaii in its time of need,” Newsom wrote in a social media post.

Newsom spoke with Hawaii Gov. Josh Green on Wednesday on how California could support the island state through its response and recovery from the devastating wildfires, according to a Cal OES news release.

Nancy Ward, director of Cal OES, said she has been on the phone with Hawaii's emergency management director, Kenneth Hara, “to coordinate the types of resources that they need.”

“We have expertise, as everyone knows, in wildfires. We have expertise in debris removal, which is something that Hawaii has done for hurricanes — fire's a little bit different because you

have possibly remains, possibly hazmat materials,” Ward said in a released statement. “We have sent two of our subject matter experts on fire resources to Hawaii already.”

Several hundred volunteers with the American Red Cross are flying to, if not already in, Maui to give their support. The Red Cross has a “deep pool” of volunteer roles from sheltering to nurses to mental health and spiritual care as they work with local governments and evacuees during the crisis, officials said.

Red Cross Gold Country, a local California chapter of the American Red Cross, has already sent four volunteers from Northern California, three shelter-trained and one a government liaison, according to Steve Walsh, the chapter’s communications director.

Walsh said all volunteers will spend a two-week term in Maui and, because this is planned to be an extended event, that the Red Cross is constantly looking for new volunteers, which make up 96% of its workforce.

Those who are interested in volunteering with the American Red Cross can register online at <http://www.redcross.org/volunteer>. All costs of travel and board are covered by the nonprofit, which also relies heavily on donations.

Maui Fires: Devastating Before-and-After Images of Lahaina

[*The San Francisco Chronicle reports*](#) as deadly wildfires tear across the Hawaiian island of Maui, before-and-after photos of the historic town center of Lahaina, which has been devastated by the flames, show just how severe the damage has been.

A Google Earth image of the town before the fires shows several buildings along a road leading to Front Street, which runs along the water on Maui’s western shore. But a photo [shared Wednesday by Maui County](#) on Facebook, taken after the flames ripped through the town, shows the crumbled, burnt remains of those same buildings amid smoke-filled skies.

“Firefighting crews were continuing to battle a fire that burned multiple structures and brush in Lahaina, with four helicopters launched this morning to assist in the firefighting efforts,” the county’s Facebook update on the wildfire said. The town still had no phone service on Wednesday.

The Coast Guard rescued 14 people from the ocean off Lahaina, the county added, including two young children who were reunited with family members. Residents reportedly jumped into the ocean to avoid the fire.

Maui officials said at least 36 people have been killed by the flames, which were [fueled by hurricane-force winds](#).

Local officials, including Hawaii Lt. Gov. Sylvia Luke, [urged tourists to stay away](#) from the island.

A Firefighting Helicopter Crashed in Southern California While Fighting a Blaze, Officials Say

[ABC 10 reports](#) a firefighting helicopter crashed in [Southern California](#) on Sunday while fighting a blaze in Riverside County, emergency officials said.

The helicopter was performing work under contract with the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, fire captain and spokesman Richard Cordova said.

Sheriff's deputies responded at 7:20 p.m. PDT to an air emergency in the area of Pipeline Road and Apache trail as crews were battling the Broadway fire near Cabazon, [according to a post](#) by the Riverside County Sheriff's office on X, formerly known as Twitter.

The department is still investigating the crash and whether other aircraft were involved, Cordova said.

Details were not immediately available on the number of injuries or fatalities.

Lightning and Isolated Thunderstorms Could Strike Parts of California This Week

[Cal OES News reports](#) the California Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES) is urging Californians to be alert, as remnants of Tropical Cyclone Eugene make their way to the west coast. Moisture is expected across the state, bringing the threat of isolated thunderstorms and lightning strikes. Portions of Southern and Central California could be impacted starting Wednesday, while Northern California could be impacted Friday into the weekend.

Californians still wanting to get the most out of summer should be prepared for lightning and isolated thunderstorms during outdoor activities.

If you find yourself outside during thunder and lightning, go indoors or find a safe, enclosed shelter. Avoid open spaces, stay away from tall structures and objects that conduct electricity; and get down from elevated areas.

Don't shelter under an isolated tree and don't use a cliff or rocky overhang for shelter.

If you are in a group during a thunderstorm, separate to reduce the number of injuries if lightning strikes the ground and if you are in open water, come back to the shore immediately.

While significant rain is unlikely from this weather system, flash floods can occur with no warning. Listen to TV or radio and monitor social media for weather updates and emergency instructions; get to higher ground; never walk or drive through flood waters; and make sure your emergency flood kit is stocked.

There are additional steps Californians can follow to prepare for any emergency.

For review the additional steps, [visit the full article](#).

Cal Fire is Adding a Powerful New Tech Tool This Season to Help Predict How Fires Spread

[The San Francisco Chronicle reports](#) last fall, as the [Mosquito Fire](#) exploded across tens of thousands of acres in the Sierra foothills, the fire behavior specialists for Cal Fire sprung into action. As the blaze tore across the dry terrain of Placer County and threatened the town of Volcanoville, they mustered a broadside of tech tools, from thermal cameras to airborne sensors, to determine how and where the fire might spread. Predictive computer models looked at factors such as wind conditions and how dry different terrains might be based on a network of cameras.

Since 2019, much of that [predictive technology](#) has been run through a software called Technosylva, which allows Cal Fire specialists to plug in fire attributes like rate of spread to model what a blaze might do next.

But with the Mosquito fire, they tested a powerful new tool that will become standard this fire season to help the agency get the jump on fire spotting and weather-influenced behavior.

The technology, built by researchers at San Jose State University, is called the Weather Research Forecasting System and will be one of the tools Cal Fire uses this season to help the agency get the jump on fire spotting. The critical differences will be the ability to predict where firebrands, or embers, from a fire might land and ignite new hotspots, and to better understand how the hot and dry winds swirling around a conflagration will influence and even create the weather around it in real time.

Ideally, the technology, known as WRF-SFIRE, could help Cal Fire determine where those burning bits might land. It can also help firefighters know where to send assets like fire engines and aircraft ahead of time to stop spot fires before they grow.

Technosylva provides forecasts and other data to Cal Fire but is separate from San Jose State and its technology. Cal Fire receives WRF-SFIRE data through Technosylva's systems.

Known as a “coupled atmosphere model,” it ingests data about a fire to predict its potential future behavior, said Craig Clements, a professor of meteorology and climate science who directs the Wildfire Interdisciplinary Research Center at San Jose State University.

Predicting where firebrands — burning pieces of matter that can vary in size and which have been observed moving with the wind 20 miles or more away from a fire — swirling through the hot air and smoke plume of a fire will land is no simple feat, Clements said.

“It’s not easy because you are actually having to predict how a particle, whether it’s flat or if it’s circular or cylindrical, how that particle is moving through the plume and atmosphere and how far it’s transported downwind,” he said. “And then you have to (determine) the probability of ignition” based on the type of fuels the superheated kernels land on and the conditions there.

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

During Warm Weather, Cal OES Reminds All to Stay Safe

[Cal OES News reports](#) as Earth [experienced the hottest month on record](#) in July, the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES) is taking proactive steps to help protect Californians from the threat of extreme heat and other possible secondary impacts.

For years, heat has been the number one cause of weather-related deaths in America. Workers, including farmworkers, farmers, firefighters, and construction workers, are disproportionately impacted by extreme heat.

There are several basic steps you can take to protect yourself and your community from extreme heat. Learn more at: www.heatreadyca.com

California, Facing Another Wet Winter, Races to Prevent More Flooding with Levee Repairs

[The Los Angeles Times reports](#) as forecasters sound the alarm about another potentially wet California winter fueled by El Niño, Gov. Gavin Newsom is taking urgent but controversial measures to prevent a repeat of the [devastating floods](#) that befell the state this year.

An [executive order](#) signed by the governor this month will streamline levee repairs and debris removal to help protect and prepare communities for another inundation. Last winter, [dozens of levee breaches](#) around the state sent stormwater rushing into communities — killing several people and causing considerable damage.

Restoring levees, river channels and other elements of the state's aged flood infrastructure is crucial to public safety. But critics say Newsom's order also comes at the expense of several rules and regulations designed to protect the environment.

“Managing California water by executive order is bad business,” said Barbara Barrigan-Parrilla, executive director of Restore the Delta. “Whether it's drought or flood, we have to set proper science-based environmental standards and regulate according to those standards for the protection of people.”

Among the items outlined in the executive order are emergency repairs to levees directly affected by this year's floods, including portions of the Tulare Lake Basin and areas along the Pajaro and San Joaquin rivers.

Such work is needed. In March, water spilled from canals and broken levees into farm fields in Tulare County, [spurring the rebirth of the long-dry Tulare Lake](#) and leaving thousands of acres under feet of water, which officials say could take years to dissipate.

Only weeks earlier, the swollen Pajaro River [burst through its worn-down levee](#), flooding the entire town of Pajaro and sending its roughly 3,000 residents into a months-long exile from their homes.

Officials in Pajaro said the executive order was long in the making, as politicians in flood-prone regions have been urging the governor to make it easier to protect their communities.

“The governor made clear after the storms that he would do whatever was necessary to help expedite efforts along the levee and basin, and this was our key ask,” said Zach Friend, Santa Cruz County supervisor and a member of the Pajaro Regional Flood Management Agency Board.

The levee that was breached in March had been slated for an upgrade and new construction when the flooding happened, but the work had not yet begun. With a new threat of storms later this year, he said that every burden removed to make the project a reality “has the potential to save lives and livelihoods in the Pajaro Valley.”

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

California is Providing Storm Relief Funding to the Undocumented. Here’s How Much is Available

[The Sacramento Bee reports](#) undocumented Californians can still receive up to \$4,500 if they were impacted by the series of storms that bombarded the state from December to April.

The funding is available through the Storm Assistance for Immigrants project, a \$95-million program providing relief to individuals who do not qualify for federal assistance. Money disbursement began in June and will last until the end of May 2024 or when funding runs out.

Storm relief is available in the 22 California counties where President Joe Biden issued a Major Disaster Declaration. Eligible households can receive up to \$4,500, with qualifying adults receiving \$1,500 and children receiving \$500. Money will come in the form of a check or pre-loaded debit cards.

Several nonprofit organizations, including La Familia Counseling Center, have been tasked with helping people apply and receive the assistance. The groups were chosen because of their experience serving the immigrant community.

“Hopefully that’ll alleviate some of the stress or barriers,” said Karen Duenas, a program administrator for La Familia Counseling Center.

The nonprofit groups interview applicants and help with the verification process to minimize the risk of fraud. To receive funding, individuals must be over the age of 18, provide evidence of hardship from the storms and confirm ineligibility for federal assistance.

Duenas said families can typically expect to start receiving funding within a few weeks.

She also encouraged Sacramento residents to apply as soon as possible. Some counties have already used up their portion of the state funding and will eventually pull from the remaining money.

La Familia Counseling Center can be reached at 916-720-4735. The statewide number related to storm relief is 866-724-2023.

Cal OES Helps Prepare the Next Generation of Emergency Managers

[Cal OES News reports](#) preparing the next generation of emergency managers, the California Governor’s Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES) Director Nancy Ward spoke at the 2nd Annual Camp ReadyLA event.

Director Ward joined other leaders in emergency management and first responders during the week-long recruitment camp that equips program participants with disaster preparedness, team building, and leadership skills to pave the way for their professional development. This year, there were about 30 high school students and young adults who expressed interest in a career in emergency management – something that is becoming increasingly important.

“By bringing together all of you and showing interest in emergency management, you are caring about the safety and security of your own community,” said Cal OES Director Ward. “So, I thank you for taking the time to learn more about the work we do as emergency managers and helping make California more disaster resilient.”

Being an emergency manager isn’t easy, but it’s rewarding. As others run away from an emergency like a wildfire, emergency managers run toward it.

During times of need, Cal OES and other state and local partners send everything possible – like fire engines, ground crews and more – to fight that wildfire. The state works with local sheriffs to help them evacuate families if a wildfire is too close to their homes. Cal OES works with the county to help set up shelters or evacuation centers to ensure public safety and coordinates with local governments, like Los Angeles, to have all the resources they need – including food, water, first aid, comfort kits and other necessities – to ensure the local community is safe during a disaster.

To learn more about being an emergency manager and apply for a position at Cal OES, visit the [Cal Careers website](#).

What to Know About EG.5, the Most Prevalent COVID Subvariant in the US

[The Washington Post reports](#) the coronavirus has not disappeared. With the advent of successful vaccinations and better social management, however, it has [waned](#).

Globally, over 1 million new covid-19 cases and more than 3,100 deaths were reported in the 28 days up to Aug. 3, according to the latest World Health Organization [report](#) — bringing the death toll to almost 7 million since the pandemic began.

The attention of public health experts around the world is being piqued by a new subvariant, known as EG.5, which is becoming a dominant strain in countries including the United States and Britain.

Here’s what we know.

The EG.5 coronavirus is a subvariant and descendant of omicron — which remains the world’s most prevalent coronavirus strain.

EG.5 has narrowly surpassed other omicron descendants circulating in the United States and now accounts for the largest proportion of covid cases nationwide, [according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#).

“At this time, there is no evidence indicating EG.5 is able to spread more easily, and currently available treatments and vaccines are expected to continue to be effective against this variant,” Kathleen Conley, a CDC spokeswoman, said in an email.

Twitter users and some media outlets have unofficially [nicknamed](#) the subvariant “Eris” in keeping with Greek nomenclature, but this name is not used officially by the WHO.

All viruses evolve and change over time. In its latest update, the WHO [designated](#) EG.5, which includes a similar EG.5.1 strain, as a variant of interest that countries should monitor. While EG.5 may fuel increases in cases, the WHO said it poses a low risk to public health in comparison with other omicron descendants because there is no evidence it is causing more-severe disease.

The virologist and researcher Stuart Turville, an associate professor at Sydney’s University of New South Wales, called the EG.5 variant “a little bit more slippery” and “competitive” than its counterparts, able to “navigate better the presence of antibodies” produced by vaccines.

It is, however, only incrementally different from other subvariants, having evolved slightly to “give it a better ability to engage and enter cells a little bit better,” he said.

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

California COVID Surge Confirmed by 48.3% Positivity Rate in Walgreens Tests

[The San Francisco Chronicle reports](#) the recent resurgence of [COVID-19 in California](#) is confirmed by a significant upswing in positive test results at Walgreens locations across the state.

Data from the pharmacy chain reveal that the [positivity rate of coronavirus tests](#) conducted at its stores around California has reached 48.3% — the highest figure since January and nearly double the 27% figure recorded in June.

“We had a nadir this summer, but it stopped dropping and started to increase,” Dr. Erica Pan, the state epidemiologist, said in a [briefing with health care professionals](#) Tuesday. “We have seen test positivity go up in the past two to three weeks. I’m sure many of you are anecdotally both hearing about friends and family and colleagues (getting infected) as well as seeing more circulating COVID.”

Walgreens uses data from PCR and rapid antigen tests to gauge the positivity rate, or percentage of tests signaling the presence of the virus that causes COVID-19. California’s level currently surpasses the national average of 44.7%, which itself represents the highest rate since Walgreens began sharing test data in May 2021 from more than 5,000 outlets throughout the United States.

The California Department of Public Health reported a 10.1% [statewide positivity rate](#) for the week ending Aug. 6. But the number of people testing at pharmacies and health care facilities

that report results to the state has declined substantially since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Instead, most people use rapid antigen home test kits whose results are not collected by public health authorities. This means the high Walgreens numbers are likely skewed toward people who have already tested positive at home or feel unwell and are obtaining a lab test to confirm the results.

Still, the rising figures provide a crucial measure of directional trends.

“There’s definitely more COVID around than there was a few months ago,” Dr. Bob Wachter, UCSF’s chief of medicine, told Boston radio station [WBUR](#) last week. “This is a cyclical virus. It’s around all the time and it awaits for our immunity to wane.”

The recent surge in test positivity is mirrored in rising COVID-19-related hospitalizations across California, up 40% during the past month. For the week ending Aug. 5, the 14-day statewide average of hospitalized patients reached 1,055, up from the pandemic’s low point of 754 in the week ending July 6. The current figure is still far lower than the daily average of nearly 4,700 recorded during the same week last summer.

Nationwide, [COVID hospitalizations](#) have surged by 43% since late June, according to U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention data. There were 9,059 COVID-19 hospitalizations in the week ending July 29, up from 6,306 as of June 24. That figure also remains significantly lower than the peak observed during the omicron surge in July 2022, when weekly U.S. hospitalizations reached more than 44,000.

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

ICYMI: Funding Opportunities Ending Soon

- **The Local Immigrant Integration and Inclusion Grant (LIIG);** *disadvantaged communities; employment, labor & training; health & human services; housing, community and economic development*
 - Funded by: Governor’s Office of Business and Economic Development
 - Deadline: **Monday, August 14, 2023**
 - Total Estimated Funding: \$8.2 million
 - Full Grant Guidelines: [linked here](#)
- **2023 Golden State Social Opportunities Program;** *health & human services*
 - Funded by: Department of Health Care Access and Information
 - Deadline: **Tuesday, August 15, 2023**
 - Total Estimated Funding: \$8.8 million
 - Full Grant Guidelines: [linked here](#)
 - **Online Application:** [linked here](#)
- **2023 Behavioral Health Scholarship;** *health & human services*
 - Funded by: Department of Health Care Access & Information
 - Deadline: **Tuesday, August 15, 2023**
 - Total Estimated Funding: \$30 million

- **Full Grant Guidelines:** [linked here](#)
 - **Online Application:** [linked here](#)

Funding Opportunities

Integrated Climate Adaptation and Resiliency Program's Regional Resilience Planning and Implementation Grant Program

[The Governor's Office of Planning and Research](#) has created the Regional Resilience Grant Program (RRGP) to fund planning and implementation projects that strengthen climate change resilience at a regional scale. The RRGP funds projects led by partnerships that involve multiple jurisdictions working together to address the most significant climate change risks in their regions, especially in communities that are most vulnerable to climate change impacts.

The Budget of Act of 2021 dedicated \$25 million to support the RRGP. In Round 1, \$9.4 million is available in grants. The RRGP funds two project types: planning and implementation. The RRGP also funds capacity-building efforts that support each project type. All projects must have a regional focus and support communities most vulnerable to climate change. The RRGP can fund a variety of projects and gives regional partnerships flexibility to propose projects that best meet their region's specific climate resilience needs.

The ICARP's RRGP aims to: (1) Support regional projects aligned with ICARP priorities that improve regional climate resilience and reduce climate risks from wildfire, sea level rise, drought, flood, increasing temperatures, and extreme heat events. (2) Support projects or actions that address the greatest climate risks in the region, particularly in the most vulnerable communities. (3) Fill the gaps in climate resilience funding and support sustainable and cohesive climate resilient projects with regional collaborations. (4) Support equitable outcomes.

The RRGP will award funds based on project type (planning and implementation) and consider their respective capacity-building efforts. The RRGP aims to award funds to applications that encourage diverse regional-scale partnerships and collaboration. Planning grants will range from \$150,000 to \$650,000 and implementation grants will range from \$650,000 to \$3 million. Letters of intent are required.

The RRGP does not require match funding. Grantees may use RRGP funding to provide the required match funding for other grant opportunities. If the Grantee needs funding from sources other than the RRGP to execute the project, include those details in the budget, including the likely timescale for securing the additional funding.

The deadline to apply for this funding is **Tuesday, August 29, 2023**. Total estimated funding available is \$9.4 million. To view the full grant guidelines, [click here](#). To view the online application, [click here](#).

Regional Climate Collaboratives Program Round 2

[The Strategic Growth Council](#) has created this program to help communities establish partnerships, funding pathways, plan and policy readiness, and a local network of TA providers to pursue funding and implement climate projects. RCC funds collaboratives of cross-sectoral

and community-rooted partners, seeking to advance both place-based and region-wide climate change mitigation, adaptation, and resiliency efforts.

The Regional Climate Collaborative (RCC) Program is a grant program that provides resources to advance climate change mitigation, adaptation, and resilience within under-resourced communities. The program funds cross-sector partners to form a Collaborative and conduct various capacity building activities, such as partnership development, project and plan development, data collection, education and training, and the creation of technical assistance hubs to pursue climate investments.

SGC has a total of \$8.5 million available for Round 2 awards and anticipates funding 6 Collaboratives. Round 2 has two funding tracks:

1. Small grants range between \$500,000-\$999,999
2. Large grants range between \$1,000,000-\$1,750,000

The program includes a two-step application process. Both steps are required.

1. Pre-Proposal: Applicants must submit a Pre-Proposal by September 6, 2023 at 5:00 PM PT. The purpose of the Pre-Proposal is to help applicants, TA providers, and SGC assess whether applicants are on track to submit a complete, competitive application that meets all threshold requirements and to identify sections of the application that will need increased support. While Pre-Proposals are not scored, SGC will provide feedback on Pre-Proposals to help applicants strengthen their Full Proposal. Submitting a Pre-Proposal is required to move forward to the Full Proposal phase. (This can be seen as the intent to apply).

2. Full Proposal: Applicants must submit a Full Proposal by December 6, 2023 at 5:00 PM PT. Building off the Pre-Proposal, the Full Proposal requires more detail and final versions of the budget and workplan. Applicants can modify their project between the Pre-Proposal and Full Proposal.

Application technical assistance is available. Please email CACE@sgc.ca.gov to learn more.

Projects may occur on state or federal lands, as long as the project area meets the eligibility requirements. The program has a regional and place-based component. Project Area requirements start on page 15 of the Round 2 Guidelines.

The deadline to apply for this funding is **Wednesday, December 6, 2023**. Total estimated funding available is \$8.5 million. To view the full grant guidelines, [click here](#).

County Drought Resilience Planning Assistance Program

[The Department of Water Resources](#) has created this program with the intent of helping the counties to establish standing drought task forces or to develop the county drought resilience plans, per Senate Bill 552.

The DWR County Drought Resilience Planning Grant Program is offered as a sub-program of the Small Community Drought Relief (SCDR) Program, per the allocation of the Budget Act of

2021, Section 2, Item 3860-101-0001(a). Per Senate Bill (SB) 552 of 2021, counties are required to establish a drought and water shortage task force and develop a drought and water shortage emergency response and long-term mitigation plan for domestic wells and state small water systems (serving 4-14 connections) (CWC Section 10609.70).

California's 58 Counties are eligible to submit applications.

The deadline to apply for this funding is **Friday, December 29, 2023**. Total estimated funding available is \$5 million. To view the full grant guidelines, [click here](#).