



PROCLAMATION OF LOCAL EMERGENCY BY DIRECTOR OF EMERGENCY SERVICES FOR THE FEBRUARY 2024 STORMS

WHEREAS, Chapter 12, Sec. 12-5(a) of the Santa Barbara County Code empowers the County of Santa Barbara, Director of Emergency Services, to proclaim a local emergency if the Board of Supervisors is not in session; and

WHEREAS, Government Code section 8558(c) defines a "Local Emergency" as: "the duly proclaimed existence of conditions of disaster or of extreme peril to the safety of persons and property within the territorial limits of a county, city and county, or city, caused by such conditions as air pollution, fire, flood, storm, epidemic, riot, drought, sudden and severe energy shortage, plant or animal infestation or disease, the Governor's warning of an earthquake or volcanic prediction, or an earthquake, or other conditions, other than conditions resulting from a labor controversy, which conditions are or are likely to be beyond the control of the services, personnel, equipment, and facilities of that political subdivision and require the combined forces of other political subdivisions to combat"; and

WHEREAS, beginning January 31, 2024 a powerful, slow moving, atmospheric river storm system ("February 2024 Storms") struck California and Santa Barbara County, and is expected to continue for several days threatening life and safety, public and private property and structures, and other critical infrastructure; and

WHEREAS, the February 2024 Storm series poses serious risks of rock falls, flooding, landslides, debris flows, severe winds, and coastal flooding throughout the county, with the highest risk associated with watersheds below the Thomas, Cave, and Alisal Fire burn areas, which include residences, agricultural and ranching land, recreational facilities, roads, and critical infrastructure; and

WHEREAS, the National Weather Service issued multiple Winter Storm Warnings, including High Wind Warnings, Wind Advisories, and Flood and Flash Flood Warning and Watches throughout the State, including Santa Barbara County, due to impacts from the February 2024 Storms, which include dangerous and life-threatening flooding, landslides, and damaging wind that may impact trees, other large objects, and power lines potentially causing property damage and power outages; and

WHEREAS, based on National Weather Service predictions, County Public Works and public safety partners initiated emergency protective measures and response preparations January 25, 2024 and continued with these efforts in preparation of the storms arrival; and

WHEREAS, the National Weather Service also issued high surf advisories, forecasting coastal flooding, large breaking waves, and dangerous rip currents; and

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WHEREAS, the Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Office issued Evacuation Warning that transitioned into Evacuation Orders for approximately 1,214 residents living in flood and debris flow prone areas effective 2:00 pm February 3, 2024, with additional evacuations occurring as needed throughout the County; and

WHEREAS, evacuation shelters for residents and animals have been opened; and

WHEREAS, on February 4, 2024, Governor Newsom proclaimed a State of Emergency for the early February 2024 storms for eight counties, including the County of Santa Barbara; and

WHEREAS, these February 2024 Storms are predicted to cause conditions of extreme peril to the safety of persons and property within the County of Santa Barbara and are likely to be beyond the control of the services, personnel, equipment and facilities of the combined forces of Santa Barbara County Operational Area to combat; and

WHEREAS, these conditions warrant and necessitate that the County proclaim the existence of a local emergency in order to utilize all resources necessary to respond to the needs of community and the damage that will likely be caused by this storm, and to receive assistance from the State and Federal governments should it be requested; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Supervisors of the County of Santa Barbara is not in session.


NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY PROCLAIMED that a local emergency now exists in the County of Santa Barbara for the entire Santa Barbara Operational Area and that:

1. All the recitals set forth above are true, correct, and valid; and
2. The conditions of extreme peril are not the result of labor controversy; and
3. This proclamation of local emergency invokes in the County of Santa Barbara all powers and mechanisms set forth in the California Emergency Services Act (Government Code sections 8550 et seq.), Santa Barbara County Code, Chapter 12 and all other applicable laws, to be used by authorized personnel of the County of Santa Barbara; and
4. Pursuant to Santa Barbara County Code, Chapter 12, Sec. 12-5(b), the Director of Emergency Services is empowered to require emergency services of any county officer or employee and to requisition necessary personnel or material of any county department or agency; and
5. A copy of this Proclamation of Local Emergency shall be posted in a publicly accessible location at the County Administration Building as soon as reasonable and safe to do so, and County personnel shall endeavor to make copies of this Proclamation available to news media; and

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6. A copy of this Proclamation of Local Emergency shall be forwarded to the Director of the Governor's Office of Emergency Services requesting that the Director find it acceptable in accordance with the state law; that the Governor waive any regulations that may hinder emergency protective measures and recovery efforts; and that recovery assistance be made available under any other State and Federal programs that may be available; and
7. This Proclamation of Local Emergency shall be effective immediately and shall remain in effect for a period of seven (7) days, unless ratified by the Board of Supervisors, and extended, or unless sooner terminated; and

Dated: 2/4/24
Time: 7:45pm

DocuSigned by:

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Mona Miyasato
County Executive Officer/
Director of Emergency Services
County of Santa Barbara