



# County of Santa Cruz

COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE

701 OCEAN STREET, SUITE 520, SANTA CRUZ, CA 95060-4073

(831) 454-2100 FAX: (831) 454-3420

SUSAN A. MAURIELLO, J.D., COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

## PRESS RELEASE

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Contact: Rosemary Anderson  
Emergency Services Manager  
831-454-2715

### COUNTY HIGHLIGHTS EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS MONTH

From floods to fires to earthquakes, the County has seen more than its share of natural disasters, claiming resources, property and even lives. As the recent Soberanes Fire in Big Sur reminds us, disaster can strike at any time, requiring the community to summon its collective training, experience and will in mitigating the impacts.

During September's National Preparedness Month, the County Office of Emergency Services is urging all residents to get involved in protecting their community before disaster strikes. Don't wait until it's too late!

"Disasters, unfortunately, are part of life in Santa Cruz County, but preparedness can help assure the safety of your family and your home. To commemorate National Preparedness Month, we are highlighting a number of resources available to residents and recognize that preparedness is the shared responsibility of everyone in the community," Emergency Services Manager Rosemary Anderson said.

One of the most important things residents can do is register their cell phone for emergency notifications at the County's OES website, [www.santacruzcounty.us/OES](http://www.santacruzcounty.us/OES), where you can also check out our Feature of the Month. Residents may also check the current status of the Emergency Operations Center, register for PG&E outage alerts, access preparedness tips and planning resources, and view road closure info, stream levels, sandbag pickup locations and other important information.

Residents are also asked to consider signing up to get trained for one of the numerous Santa Cruz County CERT (Community Emergency Response Team) groups active in County neighborhoods. CERT teams play a vital role in disaster preparedness. Recently, nine CERT volunteers helped with the County's West Nile Virus outreach efforts,



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spending approximately 150 hours distributing 6,000 Public Health Advisories about West Nile Virus. CERT trainings are offered throughout the year. Go to <http://santacruzcountycert.org> for more information or to sign up.

Additionally, the Office for Emergency Services, local first responders and other key organizations tasked with disaster response will be holding group trainings this month in conjunction with Emergency Preparedness Month, including teams responsible for public safety, schools, public works and even ham radio communications and equine evacuations.

Residents may also volunteer through the County's Volunteer Initiative Program, which since 1984 has been providing people with local volunteer opportunities. For more, go to <https://scvolunteercenter.org/programs/volunteer-initiative-program>.