EL NIÑO AND WINTER STORM PREPAREDNESS

Ready LA County



Los Angeles County is getting ready for a possible wet winter due to El Niño. We are urging residents to prepare now for the heightened potential of severe storms. Here's what El Niño could mean for our region, the steps the County is taking and the actions you can take now to protect your household.

What is El Nino?

El Niño is a naturally occurring climate pattern that warms the Pacific Ocean. The warmer the water, the more it evaporates — building massive storm clouds overhead. This means a greater chance of heavier rain and back-to-back storms in Southern California.

While a wet winter isn't guaranteed, the odds are elevated. Storm season officially begins mid-October and typically lasts through early spring.

What the County Is Doing to Prepare

LA County works year-round to prepare our infrastructure for winter storms, and a coordinated, countywide effort is already underway to keep residents safe this winter.



A robust flood protection system. LA County maintains one of the nation's most comprehensive flood control systems, including dams, reservoirs, debris basins, spreading basins, channels, storm drains and pump stations that work together to reduce flood risks and protect lives, property and critical infrastructure. LA County Public Works crews prepare for storm season months in advance by inspecting dams and channels, removing debris and sediment from reservoirs, maintaining storm drains and pump stations and ensuring flood control facilities are ready before winter storms arrive.

Protecting our most vulnerable residents. Severe weather doesn't affect everyone equally. The County is taking targeted steps to safeguard those at greatest risk:





Unhoused neighbors. People experiencing homelessness are particularly vulnerable during severe rain, flooding, high winds, cold temperatures and other extreme weather. Homeless Services and Housing outreach teams are connecting unhoused neighbors to safe, warm shelter ahead of winter storms. Know someone who needs help? Call 2-1-1.

Older adults. In partnership with LA County's Aging & Disabilities department, the County is working to ensure seniors, who may face heightened risk during extreme weather, have the resources and support they need to prepare and stay safe.

A ready response. County teams are coordinating resources across departments and partners so they can respond quickly when conditions deteriorate.

What You Can Do To Prepare

A little preparation goes a long way:

Get connected. Sign up for emergency alerts at ready.lacounty.gov.

Have a plan. Create an evacuation plan that meets your specific needs.

Secure your property. Clean out gutters, downspouts and storm drains and repair roof leaks before the storm hits.

Stock sandbags. Pick up sandbags before storms. Find them near you.

Know your risk. If you live near a hillside, canyon or recent burn area, it's important to check your flood and mudflow risks.
Find your flood zone.
Review mudflow protection and risk information.

Consider flood insurance. Standard homeowners' insurance does not cover flood damage. It's a separate policy that can take at least 30 days to go into effect, so signing up early is critical if you live in a higher flood risk area.



Weathering a Storm

Stay Alert and Avoid Hazards

When storms hit, stay alert. Steer clear of hazards such as downed power lines and flooded areas, and never drive or walk through flooded roadways. Watch for mud and debris flows. If you observe rising water or moving mud, move to higher ground.

Look Out for Others

Check on your neighbors, older adults, youth, and others who may need assistance preparing for and recovering from severe weather. from severe weather.

Helpful Resources

- **Alerts & updates:** Visit ready.lacounty.gov for alerts, preparedness guidance, and real-time updates.
- **Mud & debris flow advice:** Call (800) 933-0930 to speak to a Public Works engineer.
- **Homeowner resource:** Download the Homeowners Guide for Flood, Debris and Erosion Control (En Español).