



ORANGE COUNTY POST-BOND FIRE DEBRIS FLOW FACT SHEET

What is a debris flow?

According to the United States Geological Survey (USGS): Debris flows are among the most hazardous types of landslides. Post-fire debris flows are particularly hazardous because they can occur with little warning, can exert great impulsive loads on objects in their paths, and can strip vegetation, block drainage ways, damage structures, and endanger human life.

Are we in danger from debris flow?

YES, if you live in or near the burned area. Additionally, the Watershed Emergency Response Team (WERT) Report identified dozens of homes in the canyons as having a moderate to high risk to life from debris flow or flooding.

When are we in danger?

The USGS states that debris flows are most likely to occur during flash flood level rainfall, which is approximately .5 inch of rain in a one hour period or as little as 1/5 of an inch of rain in 15 minutes.

However, debris flows can occur with little or no notice. You should not delay taking protective measures just because you do not see much rain falling. By the time the rain becomes heavy, evacuation routes may be blocked by flooding or debris. For example, debris flows at Modjeska or Silverado Bridges will block access for emergency responders and escape for canyon residents.

How will we be notified?

Residents may receive notifications by phone of Evacuation Warnings and Orders. The Sheriff's Department will attempt to provide door-to-door notification during an evacuation warning limited only to those residents who have notified the County of their special needs and those identified as moderate to high risk to life. The County cannot guarantee notification will occur if the situation makes it unsafe or not possible. Please pay attention to your internal canyon communication links for information.

If you do not know if your home within an Evacuation Zone, please contact the Sheriff's Department Emergency Management Division at (714) 628-7054. For after-hours information, please call (714) 647-7000. Also visit www.ocsheriff.gov/bondfire

Evacuation Warning (Voluntary)

- Public safety officials may issue an **Evacuation Warning (Voluntary)** for Silverado, Williams, and Modjeska Canyons during a Flash Flood Watch.
- A **Flash Flood Watch** means that flash flood inducing rainfall is possible in your area.
- This evacuation warning (voluntary) means that officials recommend that everyone residing within the specified area evacuate in order to protect their safety.
- Residents with special needs and those with large animals will be asked to evacuate since they may require additional time for evacuation.
- Residents in homes identified as a moderate to high risk to life may also be asked to evacuate at this time.
- Sheriff's deputies will attempt to contact these residents to recommend they evacuate.

Evacuation Order (Mandatory)

- Public safety officials may issue an **Evacuation Order (Mandatory)** for Silverado, Williams, and Modjeska Canyons during a Flash Flood Warning.
- A **Flash Flood Warning** means that flash flood inducing rainfall is already occurring or will occur very soon.
- Due to the immediacy of the danger, Sheriff's deputies will NOT make door-to-door notifications during a flash flood warning. They will use sirens and/or a public address system to notify residents of the mandatory evacuation.
- Officials have deemed the area too dangerous for entry during a Flash Flood Warning. Persons who refuse to comply with an evacuation order should not expect rescue or other lifesaving assistance as first responders will also evacuate at this time.
- Evacuations of large animals will be restricted at this time to keep the roads clear for human evacuation.

What can we do to prepare?

Have an emergency kit and a plan to evacuate to a safe place outside the burn areas when the National Weather Service issues a flash flood watch or warning. Register at www.AlertOC.com for alerts.

What if we become trapped and can't evacuate?

If roads are blocked or it is unsafe to evacuate, you should shelter-in-place and remain awake to monitor the situation. Seek higher ground if you are in the debris flow pathway and you feel or hear rumbling upstream. There are no truly safe areas in the canyon due to steep, fire-damaged hillsides and limited access routes, so it is always best to evacuate early.

What if we need shelter?

Start identifying now where you and your animals will shelter if evacuated. If you do not have a safe place to evacuate to, the County and the American Red Cross will work to provide assist you in locating shelter at the time of the evacuation order.



Considerations for Canyon Residents During Rain Events

In the event you experience unsafe conditions and need to evacuate immediately, or are asked to evacuate your home due to safety concerns, please consider the following information to guide your decision-making:

We strongly recommend you follow all Evacuation Warnings and Orders that result.

If you have medical or mobility issues, large and small animals please consider evacuating during the Evacuation Warning (Voluntary) phase as roads may be congested and you will require extra time.

Prepare essential items in advance to bring with you when you evacuate, such as prescriptions, other medications, phone charger, blanket, water, light snacks, flashlight, clothing, pet supplies, comfort items, etc.

What you Need to Know

- Due to Covid-19, congregate or the traditional shared space style sheltering is unlikely to be offered.
 - We recommend you make advance plans to safely stay with family or friends.
 - If this is not possible, please consider booking into a local hotel (there are hundreds of hotels in Orange County and suggest you research close by hotels in advance.)
 - If you prefer a more homelike atmosphere you might consider booking with Airbnb (www.airbnb.com).
- If upon evacuation you are unable to find shelter on your own, you will be directed to a **Temporary Evacuation Point (TEP)**, which is a drive-up, outdoor location not far from the canyon.
 - This is the location where you will be offered resources and coordination to support you with:
 - Available information about the event
 - Water and a snack as available
 - Assistance locating safe shelter
- You will not exit your vehicle unless to use the restroom to avoid community transmission of COVID-19.

*****Please know that there are resources available to support your needs*****

We are strongly encouraging you to plan. We are here to support you and want to work together to keep you and your community safe during an evacuation and reduce community transmission of COVID-19.