



Preparing for El Niño

2015-2016

When strong El Niño conditions exist, there is a higher probability of increased rainfall in Sierra Madre. The increased rainfall can result in heavier than normal runoff, potentially causing both local and regional flooding. However, it is difficult to predict how strong this season's El Niño will become. The City of Sierra Madre urges all residents, businesses and visitors to prepare for significant rain.

Before the storms...

- ✓ "Ready for 7" - Create, purchase, or check your Home Emergency Kit. Residents are advised to be prepared to be entirely self-sufficient for seven continuous days.
 - ✓ Emergency supplies should include non-perishable food, water (1 gallon per day per individual), medicine, first aid, flashlights, radio, extra batteries, clothing, cash in small bills, etc.
 - ✓ Stage sandbags and keep necessary tools such as shovels and plastic sheeting handy. Sand and bags are available at the City Yards, 621 E. Sierra Madre Blvd. (north of the tennis courts in Sierra Vista Park). Bring a shovel to fill your own bags.
 - ✓ Prepare your vehicles! Change windshield wipers, check the tread and inflation of tires, and review other general maintenance.
 - ✓ Prepare your pets! Discuss storm preparations for sensitive animals with your veterinarian. Consider evacuation planning for animals, including documentation, transportation, and potential sheltering options.
 - ✓ Prepare your property! Clean rain gutters before a storm and be prepared to clean them often. Check all drainage devices and remove accumulated silt and debris. This will also have to be checked often.
- ✓ Outdoor clean-up! Inspect your yard area for dead trees or limbs. Remove or trim trees before the storms arrive. Remove accumulated yard debris to prevent blockage of natural flows.
 - ✓ Inspect roofs and retaining walls for leaks, gaps, cracks, or condition issues that may be problematic during rain events.
 - ✓ Check your homeowner's insurance policy. Consider adding flood insurance if necessary.
 - ✓ Sign up to receive emergency communications from the City of Sierra Madre and other regional agencies. A full description of communication tools and registration to receive alerts can be found at www.cityofsierramadre.com.
 - ✓ Adjust sprinklers! Most landscapes can get by in the rain season with watering just once a week. Be sure to turn off sprinklers during rain and for 48 hours after rain. Avoid over-saturation.
 - ✓ Be sure family members know how to turn off gas and power service to your home.
 - ✓ Consider opportunities to safely capture some of the storm water for reuse or infiltration. El Niño will not end the drought, but there may be opportunities to take advantage of the rain water.



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During the storms...

- ✓ Monitor local news closely for information about weather conditions, forecasts, power outages, and emergency response activities.
- ✓ Stay away from rushing water, particularly the Canyon wash. The volume of water can increase suddenly and water that is just six inches deep can knock you off your feet.
- ✓ Check on neighbors who may require special assistance such as senior citizens, persons with disabilities, and minors that may be home alone.
- ✓ If you must drive, be cautious and allow extra time for travel. California law requires that headlights must be turned on whenever windshield wipers are in use, even during daytime hours.
- ✓ Never try to cross flooded areas or enter moving water! Approximately 80% of flood-related deaths occur when drivers try to navigate through flowing waters.
- ✓ Do not park in front, or on top of, storm drain inlets when parking along the street.
- ✓ Make it a habit of keeping vehicles full of gas or fully charged. Gas stations and charging sites may not be available during emergencies.

- ✓ Be exceptionally alert for downed lines, downed trees, and road closures.
- ✓ Stay clear of any downed power lines, as well as anything that is in contact with a downed line. Always assume that a power line is live and hazardous. Report all downed lines as soon as possible to the Public Safety Department (contacts at bottom of this page.)
- ✓ Be prepared to leave immediately if an evacuation is ordered. Have alternate evacuation routes identified.
- ✓ Floodwaters may pick up sewage and pollutants from roads and structures. The floodwaters may also pickup dangerous debris such as nails and broken glass. Carefully clean up around your parcel as soon as possible after the storm.
- ✓ Look for electrical system damage. If you see sparks or broken/frayed wires, or if you smell hot insulation, turn off the electricity and leave off until an inspection confirms safety.
- ✓ Be nimble! Despite comprehensive planning, an El Niño driven storm event may provide a number of challenges that are unexpected.

Contacts and Resources

Emergencies: 911

Non-emergency Public Safety Dept.: 626-355-1414

Southern California Edison: 800-655-4555

Southern California Gas Co.: 800-427-2000

Additional El Niño Resources:

www.cityofsierramadre.com (local)

www.lacounty.gov/elnino (regional)

www.sierramadreemergency.org (CERT)

www.weather.gov/losangeles (weather)

www.dmac.ca.gov (disaster management)

www.pasadenahumane.org (pets)