



CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES

NEWS FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 24, 2016

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Officials Warn of Flash Flood Potential as Rainy Season Begins in California

Flood and fire officials from the California Department of Water Resources (DWR), CAL FIRE and the National Weather Service (NWS) warn that weather and land conditions across California increase the potential for flash flooding during the rainy season now under way. Five years of drought conditions have exacerbated wildfires across the state. Rain is beginning to fall on fire burn scars, making these areas prone to sudden erosion along roads and through neighborhoods.

State officials and the NWS urge the public to begin preparations for potential flood events.

DWR urges individuals and families to be aware of weather conditions and forecasts, know their risk and prepare to evacuate quickly if ordered by local officials. A list of recommended preparation steps and resources can be found at FloodPrepareCA.com.

The Department today released online an [educational video](#) showing recent catastrophic flooding after fire events across California and recommended actions the public should take if traveling through a flash flood-prone area.

“With an increased number of burn areas comes increased potential for flash flooding in those areas,” said Bill Croyle, Deputy Director of Statewide Emergency Preparedness and Security for DWR. “Flood preparedness is even more important this year due to widespread wildfires the state has experienced.”

DWR uses innovative monitoring tools that synthesize multi-agency data to understand detailed, real-time ground conditions, helping to inform officials of developing areas of flood concern. The NWS is responsible for issuing flood watches and warnings to the media and the public. Californians are encouraged to monitor television and radio broadcasts and to take advantage of a variety of smart phone apps, all of which carry NWS alerts.

For more information about the risk of flooding after fire, NWS provides an [online](#) explanation of what causes a debris flow. Also, the California Nevada River Forecast Center provides the public a firsthand look at locations of burn scars [here](#). As of October 15, California had experienced 6,726 fires burning a total of 560,888 acres.

CAL FIRE has taken measures to stabilize several slopes, including straw-mulching and installing Early Warning System rain gauges linked to local government emergency response systems to trigger evacuation. But the fire season continues, particularly in Southern California. Information about ongoing wildfires is available [here](#).

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Every Californian should take steps to conserve water. Find out how at SaveOurWater.com.

