

# **Emergency Proclamation Information Related to the December 2010 Storms in San Luis Obispo County**

## **What is a Proclamation of Local Emergency?**

When there is a condition of extreme peril or potential peril to the safety of persons and property, and the condition is beyond the capability of the local forces to control effectively, the local governing body (city council, board of supervisors or a person authorized by ordinance) may proclaim that a local emergency exists. A local emergency may be proclaimed to exist due to a specific situation, such as flood, fire, storm, earthquake, epidemic, drought, sudden and severe energy shortage, or other condition. The type of disaster, date of occurrence and area affected are to be identified.

Among other things, the proclamation of a local emergency:

- Allows the chief executive or other authorized official designated by local ordinance to take any measures necessary to protect and preserve public health and safety;
- If the conditions described in the California Emergency Services Act warrant a local emergency, it enables local agencies to request state assistance under the State Disaster Assistance Act.

## **What is a state of emergency proclamation?**

After a proclamation of a local emergency, the local jurisdiction may request by letter or resolution that the governor proclaim a state of emergency in the area to fully commit state and mutual aid assistance and provide resources to assist local public agencies. For local public agencies a state of emergency also allows for the possibility of certain response and recovery costs to be partially reimbursed by the state. The reimbursement for eligible costs is 75%.

## **What about a federal disaster declaration?**

Following the proclamation of a state of emergency, the California Emergency Management Agency (Cal EMA) may recommend that the governor request a presidential declaration of a major disaster. The governor's request to the president is submitted through the Federal

Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

## **So what has happened in San Luis Obispo County due to the December 2010 storms?**

On December 21, 2010 the County proclaimed a local emergency retroactive to 12:01 A.M. December 19 based on storm damages and the challenge to respond to needed recovery efforts. The County then requested the governor to proclaim a state of emergency and to request a federal disaster designation for San Luis Obispo County. The governor did proclaim a state of emergency later in the day on December 21. The governor's proclamation covers all local government agencies in the county, regardless of jurisdiction (cities, special districts, other public agencies).

## **Now what?**

While public agencies may be able to get partial reimbursement from the state for some response and recovery costs, a federal disaster may also provide at least partial recovery assistance for affected individuals.

To support its request for a federal declaration it is essential that the requesting local jurisdiction forward an estimate of damage and financial loss to Cal EMA as soon as possible. Estimates of loss are an important part of the criteria that Cal EMA considers when making a determination to request a presidential declaration of emergency or disaster.

As of December 23, 2010 the county Office of Emergency Services (OES) is working with other local agencies and the state to develop a very preliminary initial damage estimate (IDE). The IDEs from each affected county will be tallied up into one statewide IDE. Once that is complete, the state will determine if it will make a federal disaster request. Even if the governor does make the request there is no assurance it will be granted, or granted for every county. There is no estimate on when the state will be able to make a decision to request federal assistance. County OES will provide updated information as it becomes available on the status of the request.