



Monthly Newsletter

February 2025

How to help LA fire victims

The images and stories surrounding the Los Angeles fires have touched millions of people around the country. Unfortunately, they also have activated a flock of scammers seeking to take advantage of our natural human desire to help.

If you are looking for a safe and reliable organization to which to donate to help the fire victims, the following are recommended by responsible officials:

[American Red Cross of Greater Los Angeles](#)

[California Fire Foundation](#)

[Los Angeles Fire Department Foundation](#)

[The Center for Disaster Philanthropy's California Wildfires Recovery Fund](#)

[Team Rubicon](#)

[World Central Kitchen](#)



What to know about bird flu

Governor Gavin Newsom declared a state of emergency on Dec. 18, 2024 in response to the ongoing H5N1 Avian Influenza (bird flu) outbreak. The declaration was designed to help state agencies respond more effectively by streamlining resources and operations.

Sacramento County Public Health reports that it is actively monitoring the bird flu situation locally and coordinating with state and federal agencies. You are encouraged to stay informed and follow precautions to protect yourself and your family.

Prevention Tips:

- Avoid contact with wild birds: Even if birds appear healthy, they can carry the bird flu virus.
- Get the flu vaccine: While the seasonal flu vaccine doesn't protect against bird flu, it can reduce the risk of severe illness and coinfection.
- Stick to pasteurized dairy products: Do not consume or handle raw milk or milk products from animals suspected to be infected. Do not feed pets raw milk products.
- Protective equipment: If you work with animals potentially exposed to bird flu, wear N95 masks, gloves and eye protection.

How Bird Flu Spreads

County health officials note that human cases of bird flu are rare but can occur when someone has close contact with infected animals or contaminated surfaces. Farmworkers and others who work closely with poultry or dairy cattle are at higher risk. No person-to-person spread of bird flu has been detected in California.

Bird Flu in California

Bird flu is spreading globally through wild bird populations, with outbreaks reported in poultry and dairy herds in the U.S. While human cases remain extremely rare, California health officials continue to work with local agencies to monitor and control the spread. Sacramento County Public Health will provide updates as new information becomes available. For the latest details and daily updates, visit [CDPH's bird flu webpage](#).

How to harden your home from fire

The sight of miles of devastation across long-established Los Angeles neighborhoods is a disturbing reminder that California residents are particularly vulnerable to the ravages of fire, even in urban areas.

While the Sacramento area does not experience the kind of dangerous annual wind events witnessed by the L.A. basin, we do live in close proximity to natural areas along our rivers that are vulnerable to fire from a variety of causes. And, given the warming climate and periodic droughts we experience, the lush landscaping and dense tree canopy that we all enjoy may also be hazardous during a fire crisis.



Firefighters interviewed during coverage of the L.A. fires underscored a number of actions that homeowners can take to reduce the chance that their homes could be ignited by flying embers from nearby blazes. Following are some home hardening suggestions provided by CalFire and the National Interagency Fire Center:

- Clean roof surfaces and gutters regularly to avoid accumulation of flammable materials such as pine needles, leaves, branches, etc.
- Clean debris from exterior attic vents and crawl space vents. Install 1/8-inch metal mesh screening to reduce embers from entering vents. (Many L.A. homes were ignited by embers that blew in through attic vents.)
- Replace or repair any loose or missing shingles or roof tiles to prevent ember penetration. (L.A. firefighters noted that some roofs were ignited by embers that blew into the gaps under rounded Spanish tiles. Filling those gaps may help prevent roof fires.)
- Repair or replace damaged or loose window screens and any broken windows.
- Screen or box in areas below patios and decks with wire mesh to prevent debris and combustible materials from accumulating.
- Move any flammable material away from exterior walls such as wood mulch, flammable plants, leaves and needles. Consider replacing those sections of wood

- fencing attached to your home with non-flammable fencing materials.
- Remove anything stored underneath decks or porches.
- Remove portions of any tree extending within 10 feet of the flue opening of any stove or chimney and keep branches off the roof.
- Maintain spark arresters over all chimney or stovepipe flue openings. Use screens constructed of non-flammable material. Mesh openings of the screen should not exceed 1/2 inch.
- Landscape vegetation such as trees and large shrubs should be spaced at least 15 feet apart to minimize fuel loading (the total amount of combustible material in a defined space).
- Remove low hanging branches from trees to a height of 15 feet from the ground to remove ladder fuels (vegetation that allows a fire to climb up from the ground into the tree canopy).
- Dispose of stove or fireplace ashes and charcoal briquettes only after soaking them in a metal pail of water for 24 hours.
- Store gasoline in an approved safety can away from occupied buildings.
- Propane tanks should be far enough away from buildings for valves to be shut off in case of fire. Keep that area clear of flammable vegetation.
- All combustibles such as firewood and wooden picnic tables and chairs should be kept at a distance from structures.
- Your address number should be visible on your home to ensure that first responders can find your home easily.



Sign up for emergency alerts

The [Sacramento County Office of Emergency Services](#), in partnership with Yolo and Placer County emergency agencies, cooperatively manage a state-of-the-art emergency alert system known as *Sacramento Alert*. Sacramento Alert is a web-based application that enables authorized county, city, and special district public safety officials to disseminate public safety information rapidly and efficiently to the residents of Sacramento.

[CLICK HERE](#) to sign up for emergency alerts.

Planning for emergencies in advance

From Consumer Reports

“Always have an emergency plan with at least three different methods of communication,” says David Ofwono, director of First on Compliance, an emergency preparedness consulting company based in California. “If something occurs, the first thing I need to know is, are the people I care about okay?”

Here are ways to keep your family safe and connected in an emergency.

Set Up Multiple Ways of Connecting

- **Enter key contacts into the phones of all your household members.** Give household members paper contact lists too. Tap someone outside your area to be an emergency communication hub. Everyone can agree to contact that person in the event you can't reach each other. And make sure your electronic devices are ready for a natural disaster.
- **In a crisis, text rather than call.** "Anytime there's a disaster, the first thing everyone does is jump on their cell phones, which overwhelms the bandwidth for the providers," Ofwono says. "But texting takes up less bandwidth, and texts may go through."
- **Turn on one device at a time to conserve power.** If possible, situate yourself near a major venue where emergency workers have parked mobile communication trucks that provide extra bandwidth, Ofwono says. You may have a better chance getting through on your cell phone.
- **Access social networks such as Facebook and Nextdoor to tap community resources.** Facebook, for instance, has a crisis response hub that features pages related to specific catastrophes. On those pages, individuals can tell friends they're safe, ask for or offer help, and find other information.
- **Make sure you get wireless emergency alerts (WEAs) on your cell phone.** These free notifications about critical situations are sent by government officials to mobile devices. Check this [compatible device list](#) and read more about WEAs at [FCC.gov](#).
- **If your home phone system operates via Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP), make sure it has a backup battery.** The backup can extend the line's run time and allow for emergency calls. If your home is among the few that still has a copper landline, you may find that that connection works in an outage when your other phones don't.

How to Build a 'Go Bag'

Contents should include:

- Water and nonperishable, nutritious food.
- Phone charger, flashlight and radio (battery or hand-crank).
- Change of clothes, sturdy shoes, personal items.
- IDs, personal docs, key contacts, maps, cash in small bills.
- First-aid kit and meds.
- Duct tape.

Hone Your Family's Emergency Plan

- **Store go bags and emergency kits where they're easy to grab.** Check every few months to make sure the food items and medicines inside haven't expired, and that your documents are up-to-date.
- **Save directions to local shelters, and have a paper map on hand as well.** Find out in advance which shelters will take your pets.
- **Run drills with your household at least annually.** Practice [dealing with fire](#), entering a safe room, evacuating and packing the car. Determine where to meet outside the home if separated; scout at least two alternative, easy-to-reach places. Turn drills into games to motivate rather than frighten the kids.

County roads meetings

Supervisor Rich Desmond has scheduled several meetings to discuss transportation and road conditions. During the meetings, Ron Vicari, director of the county Department of Transportation, and Lupe Rodrigues, chief of transportation in the Division of Operations and Maintenance, will provide updates on road conditions and what the county is doing to improve roads.

Following are the two meetings closest to our neighborhood:

Arden Arcade Community Meeting

DATE: Monday, March 10, 2025

TIME: 5:30 pm - 6:30 pm

LOCATION: Sacramento Suburban Water District, 3701 Marconi Ave, Ste 100

Carmichael Community Meeting

DATE: Thursday, March 6, 2025

TIME: 5:30 pm - 6:30 pm

LOCATION: Carmichael Park Clubhouse, 5750 Grant Ave, Carmichael

DA launches new podcast

The Sacramento County District Attorney's Office is launching a new "Off the Record" podcast, available on all major podcast platforms with a video version on the county's YouTube Channel.

The DA's staff explains that "Off the Record" dives deep into stories, presenting cases and topics in a totally immersive way, including 911 calls, video and photo evidence, bodycam footage and on-location shoots.

The launch episode features a human trafficking case, which includes video evidence of a victim getting slammed by a car door and demeaned by her trafficker and several other traffickers in a parking lot. The episode also includes a 911 call reporting the victim being sexually exploited and photo evidence of physical injuries the victim suffered over a period of time.

[CLICK HERE](#) to view the video.

Scam: QR code on unexpected package

From the Federal Trade Commission

An unexpected package from an unknown sender arrives in your name. You open it and find a note that says it's a gift, but it doesn't say who sent it. The note also says to scan a QR code to find out who sent it or to get instructions on how to return it. Did someone really send you a gift? Or is it an attempt to steal your personal information?

If you know it's really a gift, you can keep it. But know that the unexpected package could be a scam. If you scan the QR code, it could take you to a phishing website that steals your personal information, like credit card numbers or usernames and passwords. It could also download malware onto your phone and give hackers access to your device.

If you scanned the QR code and entered your credentials, like your username and password, into a website, change your password right away. Create a strong password that is hard to guess, and turn on [two-factor authentication](#).

If you're concerned someone has your personal information, get your free credit report at [AnnualCreditReport.com](#). Look for signs that someone is using your information, such as accounts in your name you don't recognize. (You can get a free credit report every week.)

Also review your credit card bills and bank account statements and look for transactions you didn't make. And consider taking other steps, such as freezing your credit or putting a fraud alert on your credit report.

If you think someone stole your identity, report it and get a personal recovery plan at

What else can you do to protect your personal information? Regularly update your computer software and your phone to get the latest security patches. And learn to recognize a [phishing email or text message](#).

And what about the package? The law says you can keep it as a gift.

Member Q&A

Q: Is there a way I can call our on-duty deputy to alert him to an issue?

A: If you are witnessing a crime in progress or if you believe you may be in personal danger, do not hesitate. Call 911 IMMEDIATELY.

If you wish to let our deputies know about a non-emergency issue, simply login to your member portal, go to the list of links to the left of your membership information and you will see a "Contact Patrol Deputy" link. Click on that, fill out the form and submit it.

Because we have a different deputy every shift and they come from multiple patrol districts, it is not possible for us to hand off a single cell phone to a different deputy every shift.

If your issue is not a serious emergency, but still needs more immediate response, you may call the Sheriff's Department non-emergency line at (916) 874-5115. When you do, if we have a deputy on duty, the dispatcher will alert him or her for a prompt response. If not, the call will be relayed to a regular Sheriff's patrol for possible response, depending on availability.

HOW TO CALL FOR HELP

IN AN EMERGENCY

If you have an immediate emergency - if your life or property is in immediate danger, if you feel threatened by someone on or near your property, if you have just become the victim of a crime or if you are witnessing a crime in progress:

- CALL 911 from a land line.
- Or, if calling from a cell phone within Sacramento County, call (916) 874-5111.

TO REPORT A CRIME

There are two ways to report a crime to the Sacramento County Sheriff's Department:

1. Call the Sheriff's Department NON-EMERGENCY LINE at (916) 874-5115. To bypass the recorded messaging when you call, dial 0 after the line is answered.
2. File a report online through the Sheriff's Department website. Click on this link to begin the process: https://www.sacsheriff.com/pages/crime_report.php

SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY (Not an emergency)

If you see someone engaged in suspicious activity but it is not an emergency, call 916-874-5115 (Sheriff's Department non-emergency line).

GENERAL CONCERNS, REPORTS OR QUESTIONS

If you have an issue that can be addressed later, you may contact our neighborhood patrol officers about it. The best way is via [EMAIL at wilhaggin4@sacsheriff.com](mailto:wilhaggin4@sacsheriff.com).

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