



# VENTURA COUNTY SHERIFF NEWS STORY



GEOFF DEAN, SHERIFF

[www.VCSD.org](http://www.VCSD.org)

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- Nature of Incident:** Community preparation for significant rainstorm
- Location:** Thomas Fire burn area – Western Ventura County
- Date & Time:** Jan. 8, 2018
- Unit(s) Responsible:** Sheriff's Office of Emergency Services, Ventura County Fire Department, Ventura County Public Works, County Chief Executive Office

**Narrative:**

Monday, January 8, 2018 will usher in the first significant storm for Southern California this season. As the storm has moved closer to the region, the rainfall rates have been estimated to bring intensities of a half inch to one inch per hour in the foothills of Western Ventura County overnight Monday into Tuesday between 10:00 pm and 6:00 am. That time period is expected to be the peak of the storm with rain tapering off after 6:00 am Tuesday. Additional rain with possible high intensity short term downpours could be seen throughout Tuesday.

Many areas in the county are susceptible to mudslides even without the impact the Thomas Fire has had on hillsides. The Thomas Fire has stripped hundreds of square miles of mountains and hillsides leaving no vegetation to hold the soil in place. According to geologists who have surveyed the burn area, Monday's storm could bring enough rain to cause mud and debris flows in areas that were impacted by the Thomas Fire. Members of the community need to be aware that debris flows can occur suddenly and without warning.

In anticipation of this and other storms this season, inmates at the Todd Road Jail have been steadily filling sandbags at the rate of 2,000 per day. The Ventura County Sheriff's Office has also acquired 40,000 surplus sandbags from the Department of Defense to distribute to the public during this rainy season. Ventura County Public Works has purchased additional sandbags and they will be available to the public for free, so residents and business owners can help to protect their properties from mud and debris flows. The sandbags are being distributed through Ventura County fire stations in and around the Thomas Fire burn area, and they will have supplies on hand so residents can also fill sandbags in the event the pre-filled bags run out. Residents can get sandbags from local fire stations during normal business hours. When they are not involved in an emergency response, firefighters will be available to assist residents.

For city of Ventura residents, free sand and sandbags are available (*while supplies last*) at:

- City of Ventura, Sanjon Maintenance Yard, 336 Sanjon Road (public parking lot)
- Poinsettia Pavilion, 3451 Foothill Road (lower lot)

Residents are asked to bring their own shovel.

The Sheriff's Office of Emergency Services will open their Emergency Operations Center Monday morning, and has held planning meetings in advance of this rain event with our partner agencies, such as the Ventura County Fire Department, Ventura County Public Works, County Chief Executive Office, city leaders throughout the region, and the American Red Cross.

Residents need to be prepared to evacuate if necessary. We had great success with our notification systems during the Thomas Fire, but no system is perfect. Be aware, stay tuned-in and help your neighbors, friends and families stay up to date. If evacuations are necessary the initial Red Cross shelter location will be at the Ventura County Fairgrounds – 10 W Harbor Blvd, Ventura

During Monday's rainstorm, residents can get the most up-to-date information about road closures and any areas impacted by the storm at the following website:

<http://www.vcemergency.com/>

Additional information about storm preparation can be found at the following website:

<http://venturacountyrecovers.org/category/rain-ready/>

The website also contains an interactive map produced by the United States Geological Survey that shows the potential debris flow hazard for areas in and around the Thomas Fire burn area.

Be sure to sign up for [www.vcalert.org](http://www.vcalert.org) for direct notification on evacuations and others emergencies.

City of Ventura residents can go to [www.cityofventura.ca.gov](http://www.cityofventura.ca.gov) for local information.

City of Ojai residents can go to [www.ojaicity.org](http://www.ojaicity.org)

City of Santa Paula residents can go to [www.ci.santa-paula.ca.us/](http://www.ci.santa-paula.ca.us/)

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**Approved by:** Sheriff Geoff Dean

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