



Ready Ventura County



Disaster Preparedness Guide

Be a Hero to Your Loved Ones





Emergency Information

In case of Emergency, Call 9-1-1



Sign up for VC Alert

 vcalert.org

 vc.alert@ventura.org

 805-648-9283

Ventura County delivers emergency alerts in English and Spanish to areas where there is a threat to health and safety.

Messages may include evacuation warnings or orders, severe weather advisories, police activity, missing at-risk announcements, and/or public health alerts.



For incident information, visit:
vcemergency.com

Joint Information Hotline:
805-465-6650
English & Spanish speakers (when activated)

Wireless Emergency Alerts & Emergency Alert System

Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEA) use cell towers to deliver emergency messages to any cellular phone within range. The Emergency Alert System (EAS) sends emergency messages through a network of radio, television and cable providers.



Participating radio stations in Ventura County:



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Who We Are

Emergency Services is a unit within the Ventura County Sheriff's Office made up of emergency managers with a variety of background experience, including law enforcement, firefighting, planning, technology and finance. This powerhouse team provides the expertise and dedication necessary for daily preparedness planning and emergency response.

Our Mission

To protect life, property, and the environment by leading the development and implementation of a county-wide cooperative plan for disaster preparedness, mitigation, response, and recovery.

When Disaster Strikes

In the event of a disaster, Emergency Services activates the County's Emergency Operations Center (EOC), a centralized location for coordinating county-wide emergency response activities, supporting first responders, providing emergency notifications and public information, and coordinating recovery efforts.

How You Can Prepare

While public safety is dedicated to protecting community members in a disaster, the key to whole-community resilience comes down to individual actions. Preparedness is everyone's responsibility, and our goal is to empower you to be Ready.

Follow These Four Basic Steps to Preparedness:



**Stay
Informed**



**Make
a Plan**



**Build
a Kit**



**Get
Involved**



VENTURA COUNTY SHERIFF
Emergency Services

800 S. Victoria Ave. L#3450
Ventura, CA 93009
(805) 654-2551
venturasheriff.org

Stay Informed

Knowing what to do during an disaster is essential to being prepared. The best way to stay informed is to sign up for emergency notifications from VC Alert at vcalert.org. It is also important to learn more about the potential hazards where you live and how to respond.

Visit readyventuracounty.org for more detailed hazard information and to customize your risk snapshot with the interactive hazard mapper.



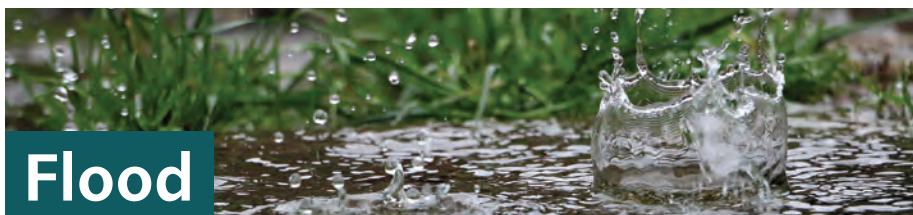
Ventura County is home to 10 dams, and four neighboring dams in LA County. Thanks to today's safety measures, dam failure is unlikely, but here are some ways to prepare:

- Find out about the dams in your area and if you are in an inundation zone. Use our hazard mapper at readyventuracounty.org.
- Map an evacuation route to higher ground, avoiding potential flood areas.
- Be aware of excessive rainfall, overflow spillage, or unusual water releases from local dams.
- Avoid walking through fast-moving water and be careful to avoid downed power lines.



Earthquakes are caused when underground faults shift suddenly. Ventura County has four local faults with historic activity and is potentially vulnerable to distant faults.

- Before an earthquake, identify a safe place at home, school, or work to shield yourself from falling debris.
- During an Earthquake, Drop, Cover and Hold On.
- If you are near the ocean, consider the earthquake an initial tsunami warning and move to higher ground.
- If you suspect a natural gas leak, turn off the valve on the gas meter to prevent fires and explosions. Wait for a professional to restore services.



Flood

Flooding occurs when stormwater overflows its usual outlets, creating hazardous conditions and damage.

- Before an event, identify areas near you that are prone to flooding, including streams, drainage channels, canyons, etc.
- If your property is prone to flooding, contact your local fire department for information about sandbag availability.
- During storm events, stay tuned to forecasts from the National Weather Service at weather.gov/lox.
- Use caution in flooded areas. Avoid driving or walking through flood waters and avoid downed power lines.



Human-Caused

Some disasters may be caused by human activity, accident, or intention.

Attacks in Public Places

- Stay aware of people & surroundings. If you see something, say something. Call 9-1-1.
- If an attack is unavoidable, remember to Run, Hide, Fight...in that order. Fight as a last resort.

Civil Unrest

- Do your part to keep the peace. Respect others. Cooperate with authorities and/or leave the area.

Explosions

- Prevention is key. Use caution and follow directions when handling dangerous materials or tools.
- Alert authorities regarding suspicious packages and get to safety.

Biological, Chemical & Radiological Releases

- Follow evacuation or shelter-in-place orders, ensuring to seal doors, windows, and ventilation sources.
- Seek medical treatment for unusual symptoms.

Hazardous Materials

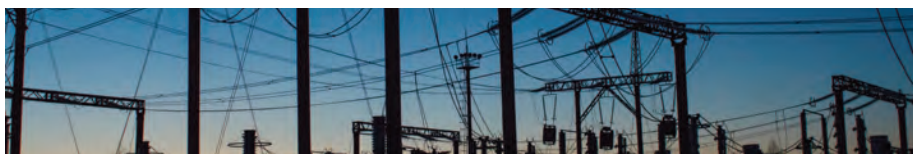
- Use caution and follow all instructions when handling dangerous chemicals.
- Report spills immediately - Call 9-1-1.



Landslide/Debris Flow

Land movement can be produced by heavy rain, earthquakes, or other changes in soil stability.

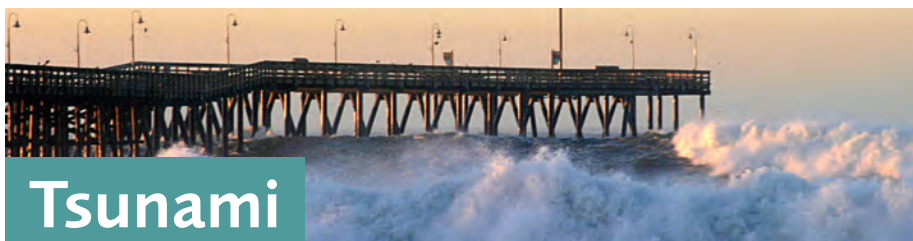
- If you live near a hillside, find out if there is a history of land movement in the area.
- Know the warning signs: changes in hillside appearance, loud noises, cracks, bulging at the base, leaning trees, and water drainage. **Don't wait for alerts from public safety. If it looks and feels dangerous, leave.**
- Keep track of rainfall rates and thresholds, especially in recent burn areas. Rainfall over 1 inch per hour may trigger flooding, landslides, or debris flow in any location.



Public Safety Power Shutoff

In the right weather conditions, outdated or compromised power equipment may present a fire danger. To reduce wildfire risk, utility providers may preemptively shut off power during extreme fire weather conditions.

- Register for notifications with Southern California Edison at [sce.com](https://www.sce.com) and for VC Alerts at [vcalert.org](https://www.vcalert.org).
- Keep track of the weather forecast for your area. PSPS outages most often accompany high winds and extremely dry conditions.
- Power restoration takes time. Equipment needs to be inspected for damage before re-energizing to prevent injuries and/or wildfires.
- Charge your devices and consider acquiring backup power sources, especially for medical needs. For more information regarding support for medical devices, visit [sce.com](https://www.sce.com).



Tsunami

Tsunamis may be caused by earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, meteor impact and/or landslides. Depending on the location and intensity of an event, the resulting tsunami may arrive in minutes or hours.

- Ventura County has local faults capable of producing a tsunami. Consider an earthquake your first warning of a possible tsunami.
- Know the signs a tsunami is coming: an earthquake, sudden, dramatically receding water, a loud ocean roar.
- Study and follow posted tsunami evacuation routes near water sources. Visit readyventura.org/tsunami for inundation and evacuation maps.
If possible, plan to travel 100ft above sea level and/or one mile inland.
- If you cannot get to higher ground, get as far away as possible and find something sturdy to hold onto.



Wildfire

Wildfire season is now a year-round phenomenon in Ventura County and throughout California. Ventura County's open space areas are abundant with fuels that allow wildfires to spread quickly, creating hazards where the hills interface with neighborhoods and homes. Here's how you can be prepared.

- Size up the situation. Don't wait for alerts from public safety. **If it looks and feels dangerous, leave.**
- Know where to turn. During a disaster, visit vcemergency.com for trusted and timely information.
- During a wildfire, public safety officials may issue evacuation notices. Register for alerts ahead of time at vcalert.org.
- In the event of an evacuation, you may be directed to a Temporary Evacuation Point (TEP). Find out more about the TEP near you at vcemergency.com.



Weather

Extreme weather conditions can sometimes disrupt Ventura County's generally mild climate. These conditions include drought, extreme cold or heat, severe storms, strong winds, and even the occasional tornado.

Cold/Heat

- Both excessive heat and cold can pose health concerns. Older adults and children may be more susceptible to extreme temperatures. During an event, limit outdoor activities and seek shelter. Consult your local jurisdiction or vcemergency.com for available relief locations.

Storms

- Stay tuned to weather forecasts from the National Weather Service at weather.gov/lox. Be prepared to stay by stocking up on supplies, or to go if your area is prone to flooding or landslides.

Wind

- High winds can quickly dry out vegetation and increase the risk of wildfire, utility outages and carry debris. Use caution when outside and avoid activities involving outdoor flames.

Tornadoes

- Local tornadoes generally begin as waterspouts when warm air from inland deserts mixes with cool air over the ocean. While not common, waterspouts sometimes make landfall as mild tornadoes or landspouts.

Know your Severe Weather Warnings

WATCH

**12 to 48 hours
in advance**

Severe weather event with the potential to harm life or property may develop.

ADVISORY

**minutes to hours
in advance**

Nuisance-level weather is imminent or occurring. Generally not life-threatening, but may cause hazards.

WARNING

**minutes to hours
in advance**

Severe weather event that may threaten life or property is imminent. Take action and follow instructions from local authorities.

All warnings issued in Ventura County are rebroadcast via the Emergency Alert System on local radio and television.

Make a Plan

Disasters can strike at any time of day, and it is possible your family members might not be together. Don't let lack of planning be the villain in your hero story. Follow these tips to stay prepared and connected.

- Establish a familiar and accessible meeting place for family members.
- Keep a list of contact phone numbers. Memorizing phone numbers is no longer commonplace. Write them down and keep them handy.
- Build a personal network of helpers to meet your specific needs. Ask friends and neighbors to help with kids, pets, or others needing assistance in your household.
- Find out about emergency plans where you and your family spend time regularly.



Pro Tips:

- Include out-of-town contacts as a central point of safety reporting. Long-distance calls may be more reliable.
- Remember, texting may work when phone calls do not.
- Don't reinvent the wheel! Find ready-to-use templates for your Family Emergency Plan and contact lists at readyventuracounty.org/plan.

Evacuation Information

In areas where there is a threat to public safety, law enforcement, fire department or public health officials may issue emergency instructions to protect life and property. These notifications will be made to residents using a variety of methods:

- VC Alert Emergency Notification System (vcalert.org)
- Door-to-Door notifications
- Hi-Lo Siren
- Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEA)
- Emergency Alert System (Broadcast Television / AM/FM Radio)

If you observe conditions near your residence or location that may jeopardize your safety, please do not wait for official notification from public safety personnel. Take immediate action to leave the area and get to a safe location.

Evacuation Order



Evacuation Orders are issued to indicate that conditions exist that **SERIOUSLY IMPERIL** or **ENDANGER** the lives of those in the defined area. Residents and members of the public should leave the area immediately. Once out of the area, unauthorized persons (including residents) will not be permitted to return until it is safe.

Generally, residents will not be forcibly removed from their property. However, persons found on public property may be subject to removal from the area, and those who interfere with the disaster response are subject to arrest.

Evacuation Warning



Evacuation Warnings are issued to advise residents that an evacuation order may soon be necessary. While danger may not yet be imminent, the potential for rapidly changing conditions to develop into a serious threat exists. Soft or hard road closures may limit access to the area. Residents should ready their households, including loved ones, friends, neighbors, pets and/or livestock, for evacuation. Those with access and functional needs or mobility issues should evacuate early.

Shelter-in-Place



Shelter-in-Place Orders may be issued when conditions exist that may endanger the lives of those in a defined area. Residents should select an interior room or rooms within their home or business with no or few windows and take refuge there. If hazardous materials are present, use dust masks for protection and plastic sheeting and/or duct tape to seal doors and windows. Access to the area under a shelter-in-place order may or may not be restricted by a soft or hard closure. Take shelter until local authorities give an all-clear.

Road Closures



Limiting access to an area during an emergency may be necessary to protect the public from danger. Public safety personnel may use road closures to prevent the general public from entering the area on foot or by vehicle.

Hard Road Closure: No access to the area is available except for public safety and authorized personnel.

Soft Road Closure: Access to the area is limited to members of the public who are residents with identification.

Temporary Evacuation Points & Emergency Shelters



Temporary Evacuation Points (TEP) are pre-identified locations where evacuated residents can safely gather during the initial evacuation phase. The Ventura County Human Services Agency will assist residents in evaluating shelter needs. Evacuated residents may access on-site comfort services provided by the Salvation Army and The American Red Cross.

If an extended evacuation is anticipated, an emergency shelter may be activated at the same location to accommodate residents with shelter needs.

To find the Temporary Evacuation Point nearest you, visit vcemergency.com.

Preparedness is for Everyone

Access & Functional Needs & Older Adults

Every situation is unique, and no one knows you quite like you do. Take time to plan and prepare for needs at every phase. Building a network of helpers expands collective capabilities.

- Learn about emergency plans in your area.
- Consider daily routines and needs to build your custom emergency kit. Keep a list of current medications and an extra supply, if possible.
- Find helpers who can assist with evacuation/transportation.
- Consider battery backup for medical devices.
- Receive bilingual notifications your way: phone, text, email, TTY or all of the above! Sign up for VC Alert at vcalert.org.

Kids

Children play a role in preparedness. You can help guide the journey:

- Talk about fears and how preparing can make a difference.
- Include youth in the family plan and maintaining emergency supplies.
- Learn about school emergency plans together.

Pets

Pets are family members too. Don't forget to have an emergency plan for your furry friends.

- Many public shelters and hotels do not have the ability to accommodate pets. Find a place where you can take your pets before a disaster.
- Ask a friend or neighbor to evacuate your pets if you are unable to do so.
- Keep a photo of you and your pet together for easy reunification.
- Keep a travel carrier and go bag prepped and ready.



Build a Kit

During an emergency, you can be a hero to your loved ones in just a few simple steps. So, while public safety heroes are leaping from tall buildings, you can take care of your family in a single bound.

Utilities and essential services could be interrupted for a while. Ward off a personal disaster by collecting these items ahead of time. **Build an emergency kit to sustain your family for at least THREE days.**



Emergency Kit Checklist

- ✓ Water, one gallon of water per person per day for at least three days, for drinking and sanitation
- ✓ Food, at least a three-day supply of non-perishable food
- ✓ Battery-powered or hand-crank radio and extra batteries
- ✓ Flashlight and extra batteries
- ✓ First aid kit
- ✓ Whistle to signal for help
- ✓ Local maps
- ✓ Dust mask, to help filter contaminated air
- ✓ Duct tape and plastic sheeting to seal windows and doors during shelter-in-place orders
- ✓ Moist towelettes, garbage bags, and plastic ties for personal sanitation
- ✓ Wrench or pliers to turn off utilities
- ✓ Can opener for canned food
- ✓ Cell phone with chargers, inverter, or solar charger

To view or download a complete comprehensive Emergency Kit Checklist, visit:

readyventuracounty.org/prepare

Pro Tips:

- On a budget? No problem. Many of these items can be found at local dollar stores.
- Put an old backpack to use or cruise garage sales and local thrift stores for an inexpensive bag to hold your kit.
- Make another kit for your vehicle, workplace, or school.
- For more tips and tricks on preparing, check out our resource list at readyventuracounty.org.

Get Involved

Now that you and your loved ones are protected, it's time to upgrade your hero status. Check out these opportunities to protect and serve your community.



Adopt a Sidekick

Be a part of something. Build a network of helpers to increase your capabilities. Make it part of your emergency plan to check on neighbors, friends, and coworkers, or be a preparedness or evacuation buddy.

Become an Influencer

Everyone has a circle of trust. You don't need an online channel to change the world. Talk to friends, family, coworkers, and community groups about disaster preparation.



Still not sure how to get involved? Visit readyventuracounty.org for a list of organizations doing great things in the community. There is always room for one more!

Follow us on Social Media

 @VenturaCountySheriff

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 @VCSheriff



VENTURA COUNTY SHERIFF
Emergency Services



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