

# NEWS

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March 16, 2023

**For Immediate Release**

## **With More Rain Forecast, Now is the Time to Prepare**

**Redwood City** – The seemingly endless cascade of storms in 2023 – with still [more rain in the](#) forecast – is a sharp reminder to get ready for all sorts of things that could go wrong.

Natural disasters, particularly [weather disasters](#), are becoming [more frequent and more costly](#), in both lives and losses. Extreme heat is now one of the [deadliest types](#) of weather incidents in the United States, causing more fatalities than hurricanes, tornadoes or flooding.

The best time to prepare for any [potential disaster is now](#), not when the lights go out or emergency managers are issuing evacuation orders.

Here is a guide to key local information that could help you and your family navigate an emergency, whether floods, fires, tsunamis, earthquakes or other challenges:

### **Sign Up for Emergency Alerts**

Local emergency officials say the best first step you can take is to sign up for [SMC Alert](#), a messaging tool that sends concise and actionable emergency information to email, cell phones and other devices and landline telephones.

SMC Alert is free (your carrier may charge you a fee to receive alerts on your wireless device) and is available in all cities and towns in San Mateo County.

[MyShake](#) is billed by the state as the “country’s first publicly available, statewide warning system that could give California residents crucial seconds to take cover before you feel shaking.” MyShake is Available at in the [Apple App](#) and [Google Play](#) stores.

FEMA [offers an app](#) that allows you to receive real-time weather alerts, send notifications to loved ones, locate emergency shelters in your area and more.

## Get Connected

Nine out of 10 San Mateo County residents live in one of 20 cities. Many have their own alert systems and social media channels. Sign up for them on your city's website ([find a list here](#)) and follow your local government, police and fire departments on social media, which are often the first to sound the alarm about an emergency near you.

Follow the County of San Mateo on social media:

- [Twitter](#)
- [Facebook](#)
- [Nextdoor](#)
- [Instagram](#)

Additional trusted social media sources with local information:

- [San Mateo County Sheriff](#)
- [Cal FIRE CZU](#) (San Mateo-Santa Cruz Unit)
- [National Weather Service Bay Area](#)

**Tip:** Did you know you can listen to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Weather Radio for the [San Francisco Bay Area online](#) whenever you want, no app required?

## Know Your Zone

Emergency managers have carved the Peninsula into more than [300 zones](#) on an online, publicly available map supported by Zonehaven, a California-based company under contract with the County of San Mateo.

Each zone is assigned a short code. All residents can enter an address to find [your zone](#).

In an emergency, first responders will issue evacuation or other orders and advisories based on the zones. This information will be pushed out via the news media, social media such as Twitter, emergency alert notifications and other platforms.

**Note:** Zonehaven does not send emergency alerts. Sign up for [SMC Alert](#) to receive emergency notifications.

**Tip:** Consider packing a paper map in your car or commuter bag. Why a paper map in this day of GPS and navigation systems? Simply because many of us would have trouble navigating to a shelter, hospital or meeting point in an unfamiliar neighborhood or city

# COUNTY OF SAN MATEO



*without a powered-up phone or on-board GPS, especially at night. Think of it as cheap insurance.*

## **Power Outages**

To stay up to date on power outages – and potential blackouts during fire season – check out [the outage map for Pacific Gas & Electric](#), which serves most of Northern California. You can also find [where to sign up for its alerts](#).

## **Road Conditions**

[511.org](#) provides up-to-date information on road conditions and closures.

Caltrans offers a [look-up tool](#) for current conditions on [California highways](#). You can also call 1-800-427-7623 for current highway conditions. [Mobile](#)

## **Make an Emergency Kit for Home, Work and Your Car or Commute**

The website [Ready.gov](#) offers numerous checklists on preparedness and tips on what to pack in a go bag for any type of emergency. And just as important, everyone should prepare a stay kit with essentials you may need for you and your family if you are without power, water or heat.

[CalFire](#), the [Department of Homeland Security](#), the [American Red Cross](#) and the [Office of the Administration for Children and Families](#) all have resources available for families on how to prepare for different types of disasters.

Be sure to pack an [emergency kit in your car](#) that includes water and high-calorie snacks along with typical items jumper cables.

Are you a commuter? The American Red Cross offers ideas to [help you prepare for emergencies](#) that may arise during your commute.

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