



COUNTY OF SAN MATEO DEPARTMENT OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT



Emergency Services Council Meeting

IN-PERSON WITH REMOTE PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AVAILABLE

September 17, 2025 5:30PM – 7:00PM

Regional Operations Center
501 Winslow Street, Redwood City CA 94063

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://smcgov.zoom.us/j/93614965779?pwd=eCr2c4x8dwa7eGau35TI8GdhuVDFJH.1>

Meeting ID: 936 1496 5779

Passcode: 6503634790

Dial by your location

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AGENDA

- | | |
|---|-----------------|
| 1) Roll Call (2 minutes) | Chair |
| 2) Public Comments, Correspondence (Clerk), Announcements (3 minutes) | Clerk |
| 3) Action to Set Agenda and Approve June 11, 2025 Meeting Minutes (5 minutes) | Chair |
| 4) Glenwood Camp Update (10 minutes) | Guest |
| 5) Joint Exercise of Powers Agreement Update (5 minutes) | Director |
| 6) Director’s Year in Review (10 minutes) | Director |
| 7) Recommended 2026 Meeting Calendar – VOTE REQUIRED (10 minutes) | Director |
| 8) Alert & Warning Presentation and Discussion (40 minutes) | Guest |
| 9) Report Outs Related to Emergency Services Council (5 minutes) | |
| 10) Adjournment | Chair & Members |
| | Chair |

Meetings are accessible to people with disabilities. Individuals who need special assistance or a disability-related modification or accommodation (including auxiliary aids or services) to participate in this meeting, or who have a disability and wish to request an alternative format for the agenda, meeting notice, agenda packet or other writings that may be distributed at the meeting, should contact the Agenda Administrator of the Emergency Services Council at least 2 working days before the meeting at (650) 363-4790 and/or DEM_Info@smcgov.org. Notification in advance of the meeting will enable the County to make reasonable arrangements to ensure accessibility to this meeting and the materials related to it. Attendees to this meeting are reminded that other attendees may be sensitive to various chemical-based products.

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**COUNTY OF SAN MATEO
DEPARTMENT OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT**



Emergency Services Council Committee Meeting Minutes

June 11, 2025

This meeting was called to order at 5:30PM by Council Vice Chair Medina

I. Roll Call

Atherton	Council Member Lewis (Alternate)	Present
Belmont	Council Member McCune	Present
Brisbane	Council Member Lentz	Present
Burlingame	Council Member Stevenson	Not Present
Colma	Council Member Slaughter	Present
Daly City	Council Member Sylvester	Not Present
East Palo Alto	Council Member Abrica (Alternate)	Present
Foster City	Council Member Niederhofer	Present
Half Moon Bay	Council Member Jonsson	Present
Hillsborough	Council Member Chuang	Not Present
Menlo Park	Council Member Combs	Not Present
Millbrae	Council Member Rainaldi	Present
Pacifica	Council Member Wright (Alternate)	Present
Portola Valley	Council Member Hufty	Not Present
Redwood City	Council Member Eakin	Present
San Bruno	Council Vice Chair Medina	Present
San Carlos	Council Member Dugan	Present
San Mateo	Council Member Newsom	Present
South San Francisco	Council Member Flores	Not Present
Woodside	Council Member Goeld	Present
County of San Mateo	Council Chair Gauthier	Not Present

Attending Agency Representatives:

- Deputy County Executive Ely, San Mateo County Executive’s Office
- Director Dhapodkar, San Mateo County Emergency Management
- Assistant Director Reynolds, San Mateo County Emergency Management

- Public Education & Outreach Officer Curtis-Robles, San Mateo County (SMC) Mosquito & Vector Control District
- San Mateo County Health Officer Baldwin-Santana, Public Health
- Battalion Chief Pino, CalFire
- CEO Zelkha, Manzanita Works
- Clerk of the Committee Jen, San Mateo County Emergency Management
- Secretary of the Committee Mak, San Mateo County Emergency Management

II. Public Comments, Correspondence, Announcements

- None

III. Action to Set Agenda and Approve Agenda Items

- Approved without objection.

IV. SMC Mosquito & Vector Control Update

- SMC Mosquito & Vector Control District operates independently from the County, is state-certified, and provides free, tax-funded services focused on protecting public health through data-driven pest management and disease surveillance.
- West Nile Virus remains the top concern; the public is encouraged to report dead birds as early indicators for potential outbreaks.
- Efforts include continuing to control invasive *Aedes aegypti* mosquitoes, known for aggressive behavior and disease risk, and providing tick bite prevention education with free resources available online.

V. Public Health Update

- The County is anticipating an increase in high-temperature days this summer and has seen rising heat risk levels each year since 2020. Emergency room visits related to heat are now being monitored to track trends.
- Public Health is focused on outreach to vulnerable populations, including older adults, pregnant women, and young children, with targeted information and services.
- Air quality concerns focus on ozone in the summer and fine particle pollution (PM_{2.5}) in the winter. Although San Mateo County rarely exceeds health standards, the County is working with community partners and the Sustainability Department to share health guidance, while Epidemiology monitors ER visits on poor air quality days.

VI. Fire Season Outlook

- In Northern Operations areas, warmer and drier conditions are expected in May through July, with increasing fire potential in inland oak woodland regions and critically dry fuels likely in June and July.
- Expect a warm spring continuing into summer with very warm to hot periods in late June and July. The shift from La Niña to an El Niño-Southern Oscillation (ENSO) Neutral complicates forecasting beyond August. Indicators suggest a near-to-above-average North American Monsoon in summer 2025. Significant fuel buildup, especially in grasses, may lead to increased fire ignitions, challenging control efforts starting in late June.

VII. Wildfire Prevention Collaboration

- Manzanita Works, a nonprofit named after a resilient native plant, builds public/private consortia to enhance collective purchasing power, improving transportation, working conditions, and living standards for essential workers in the Bay Area.
- The Community Resource program includes Tool Share (allowing residents and groups to borrow tools and equipment), Essential Tools (a stock of vegetation management equipment for wildfire prevention), and Essential Time (a community time bank where volunteers log service hours to exchange credits, supporting wildfire prevention and other community efforts).
- Manzanita Works is partnering with property owners across seven Bay Area counties, including diverse stakeholders and communities, to create a regional wildfire consortium. The group uses collective purchasing aligned with FireWise USA standards to support home hardening and vegetation management.

VIII. Director's Update

- All Hazards Evacuation Planning (AHEP) – The AHEP Work Group will meet both in-person and virtually to review planning materials and discuss best practices for localized evacuation plans. The group kickoff includes a Ladriss Evac-1 educational session on Thursday, June 12, 2025.
- BayEx – SMC EM partnered with the California National Guard's 95th Civil Support Team (CST) for a full-scale exercise involving over 160 participants from nearly 20 agencies across California after more than six months of preparation.
- Be Wildfire Safe and Ready - The "Be Wildfire Safe and Ready" community outreach event on April 26, 2025, attracted 414 attendees who engaged with emergency response experts, connected with local agencies, and received essential safety resources.
- Council Vice Chair Medina Remarks – FEMA is undergoing significant changes, including staff reductions and program cancellations, which may affect local disaster preparedness funding. In response, San Mateo County is closely monitoring federal funding shifts and relying on the strength of its Joint Powers Agreement to maintain coordinated, resilient emergency management efforts. They emphasized the Council's commitment to transparency, adaptability, and leading the way in protecting and preparing communities despite federal uncertainty.

IX. Members Report

- Nothing to report.

X. Adjournment

- The meeting was adjourned at 6:38PM.

XI. Announcement of the next meeting: September 17, 2025.

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COUNTY OF SAN MATEO
EMERGENCY
MANAGEMENT

Dr. Shruti Dhapodkar
Director

County Government Center
501 Winslow Street
Redwood City, CA 94063
(650) 363-4790
www.smcgov.org/dem

Date: September 17, 2025
To: Emergency Services Council (ESC)
Cc: Adam Ely, Deputy County Executive
From: Dr. Shruti Dhapodkar, Director
Subject: Glenwood Camp Update

CAL FIRE and San Mateo County are working in close partnership to transform the aging Glenwood Boys Ranch into a modern facility capable of housing and supporting CAL FIRE hand crews. This collaboration blends County resources and infrastructure with CAL FIRE's operational expertise to create a capability that benefits both wildfire preparedness and community safety.

San Mateo County provides the facility, local support, and infrastructure, while CAL FIRE contributes trained personnel, program management, and specialized fire crew operations. The site will house four personnel a day during peak fire season. This will equate to two fire hand crews a day during peak. By rehabilitating the site, the County ensures long-term use of an otherwise underutilized property, while CAL FIRE gains a strategically located base for staffing and deploying crews.

The Glenwood Camp will not only increase CAL FIRE's capacity to respond to emergencies but also allow crews to perform vital fuel-reduction and vegetation-management projects throughout the region. These combined efforts strengthen wildfire resilience, maximize public resources, and demonstrate how local and state agencies can work together to meet critical fire-prevention goals.

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Date: September 17, 2025
To: Emergency Services Council (ESC)
Cc: Adam Ely, Deputy County Executive
From: Dr. Shruti Dhapodkar, Director
Subject: Joint Exercise of Powers Agreement Update

On September 19, 2024, the Emergency Services Council (ESC) voted to approve and formally adopt the Revised and Restated Joint Exercise of Powers Agreement (ESC-JPA MOU).

Subsequently, the city or town council of each ESC member approved the ESC-JPA MOU, and the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors (SMC BOS) discussed and unanimously approved the ESC-JPA MOU at its meeting on August 12, 2025.

In the final phase of the ESC-JPA MOU adoption process, SMC Emergency Management is facilitating the signature process by sending a DocuSign email to the city or town manager of each Member Agency. This step consolidates the documentation of each Member Agency's approval in a single record.

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Date: September 17, 2025
To: Emergency Services Council (ESC)
Cc: Adam Ely, Deputy County Executive
From: Dr. Shruti Dhapodkar, Director
Subject: Director's Year in Review

This year marked a transformation for San Mateo County Emergency Management. We shifted from reactive preparedness to proactive resilience, focusing on four key areas:

1. Alert and Warning – Strengthening communication systems to ensure timely, accurate messaging during emergencies.
2. Community Outreach – Expanding engagement and preparedness education across every corner of our county.
3. Training and Exercises – Building skills and capacity through hands-on learning and scenario-based practice.
4. Real-World Response – Supporting jurisdictions and partners during active incidents.

Equally important, we have been listening and learning—conducting gap analyses, adapting plans, and addressing the concerns shared by our operational area partners and community members. This ongoing feedback loop is shaping a stronger, more responsive emergency management organization. Please take time to review the comprehensive work described in the attached annual report.

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Date: September 17, 2025
To: Emergency Services Council (ESC)
Cc: Adam Ely, Deputy County Executive
From: Dr. Shruti Dhapodkar, Director
Subject: Recommended 2026 Meeting Calendar – VOTE REQUIRED

San Mateo County Emergency Management (SMC EM) proposes the following 2026 meeting calendar. We propose to continue 2025’s meeting calendar cadence of having the first 2026 ESC meeting in February to allow Member Agencies time to appoint representatives.

We recommend all Member Agencies approve the proposed 2026 ESC meeting calendar.

Meeting	Date	Time
Finance Committee Meeting	Thursday, January 22, 2026	3:00 PM – 4:00 PM
ESC Meeting	Thursday, February 19, 2026	5:30 PM – 7:00 PM
Finance Committee Meeting	Thursday, April 16, 2026	3:00 PM – 4:00 PM
ESC Meeting	Thursday, May 21, 2026	5:30 PM – 7:00 PM
Finance Committee Meeting	Thursday, June 4, 2026	3:00 PM – 4:00 PM
ESC Meeting	Thursday, June 18, 2026	5:30 PM – 7:00 PM
Finance Committee Meeting	Thursday, August 20, 2026	3:00 PM – 4:00 PM
ESC Meeting	Thursday, September 17, 2026	5:30 PM – 7:00 PM

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Date: September 17, 2025
To: Emergency Services Council (ESC)
Cc: Adam Ely, Deputy County Executive
From: Dr. Shruti Dhapodkar, Director
Subject: Alert & Warning Presentation

Effective emergency communication saves lives. But there is a critical difference between simply sharing information and issuing a true warning that compels protective action. San Mateo County Emergency Management (SMC EM) is establishing a new standard for alerts and warnings to ensure clarity, consistency, and public trust when minutes matter.

Our approach includes:

- Alert & Warning Seminar: Convening experts and practitioners to align on best practices and innovative strategies.
- Agency Readiness: Equipping all 32 authorized alerting agencies with standardized tools and procedures.
- Research-Based Templates: Deploying updated messaging templates grounded in national research to promote clear, consistent language.
- Hands-On Workshops: Training partners through scenario-based exercises to strengthen real-time performance.
- Public Media Campaign: Engaging the community so residents understand the importance of alerts, warnings, and how to respond.

By combining research, training, operational alignment, and public outreach, SMC EM is moving beyond information-sharing toward a resilient, evidence-based alert and warning system – one designed to save lives and build community confidence.

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Emergency Services Council Meeting

September 17, 2025



Agenda



1

Roll Call
Council Chair

2

Public Comments, Correspondence, Announcements
Clerk

3

Action to Set Agenda and Approve June 11, 2025 Meeting Minutes
Council Chair

4

Glenwood Camp Update
Guest

5

Joint Exercise of Powers Agreement Update
Director

6

Director's Year in Review
Director

7

Recommended 2026 Meeting Calendar (VOTE REQUIRED)
Director

8

Alert & Warning Presentation and Discussion
Guest

9

Report Outs Related to Emergency Services Council
Council Chair



1

Roll Call

Council Chair Gauthier



Public Comments, Correspondence, Announcements

2

Clerk Jen



3

Action to Set Agenda and Approve June 11, 2025 Meeting Minutes

Council Chair Gauthier



Glenwood Camp Update

Chief Norwine



5

Joint Exercise of Powers Agreement Update

Director Dhapodkar



Director's Year in Review

Director Dhapodkar

Innovations & Accomplishments

- Alert & Warning
- Community Outreach
- Training & Exercise
- Real World Response

TOGETHER FORWARD



20 Annual 25 Report



Alert & Warning



South San Francisco Police Dispatch Workshop



Alert & Warning Message Library Deck



Alert & Warning Seminar with Dr. Sutton

Community Outreach



Emergency Operations Plan (AFN) Meeting



Farmworker Advisory Commission Presentation



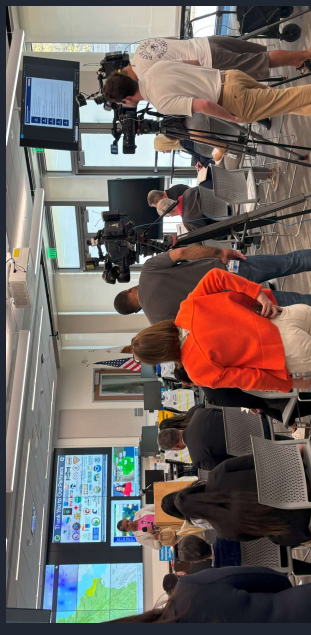
21st Annual Disaster Preparedness Day



Be Wildfire Safe & Ready



Pizza & Prep Community Party



Tsunami Awareness Press Conference

Training & Exercises

17
Events



UASI CBO Tabletop Exercise



2025 BayEx



CERT Earthquake & Traffic Training

Real World Responses

16
Events



1030 Commercial St. San Carlos HazMat



Eccles Ave. South San Francisco HazMat



December 5, 2024 Tsunami Activation



Edgewood Fire Response

7

Recommended 2026 Meeting Calendar (VOTE REQUIRED)

Director Dhapodkar



2026 ESC Meeting Calendar

We recommend all Member Agencies approve the proposed 2026 ESC meeting calendar.

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Alert & Warning Presentation and Discussion

Dr. Sutton



Effective Alerts and Warnings

Jeannette Sutton, PhD

San Mateo County Emergency Services Council

Wednesday, September 17, 2025

EMERGENCY ALERTS X

Emergency Alert
 BALLISTIC MISSILE THREAT INBOUND TO HAWAII. SEEK IMMEDIATE SHELTER. THIS IS NOT A DRILL.

EMERGENCY ALERTS now

AMBER Alert
 UT AMBER Alert

Emergency Alert
 FNSB Alert: Level 3 (GO) Evacuation is now in effect for Hayes Creek Neighborhood Evacuate

Emergency Alert
 BLUE ALERT ISSUED FOR SETH ALTMAN WANTED FOR THE INVOLVEMENT IN THE INJURY OF AN OFFICER BY HALL COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE. SUSPECT IS A 33 YEAR OLD WHITE MALE 6'02" 220 LBS. ALTMAN IS WEARING A BLUE T-SHIRT AND BLUE JEANS. SUSPECT IS BELIEVED TO BE ARMED AND DANGEROUS. IF SEEN, DO NOT APPROACH AND CALL 9-1-1.

Imagine...

Your family is at home. They receive one of these messages.

What would they do?

Who will they talk to?

The message was sent in your city/district.

What are you going to do?

There are many types of bad alerts that are sent:

Not geographically specific

Issued at the wrong time of the day

Sent for an event that doesn't require action

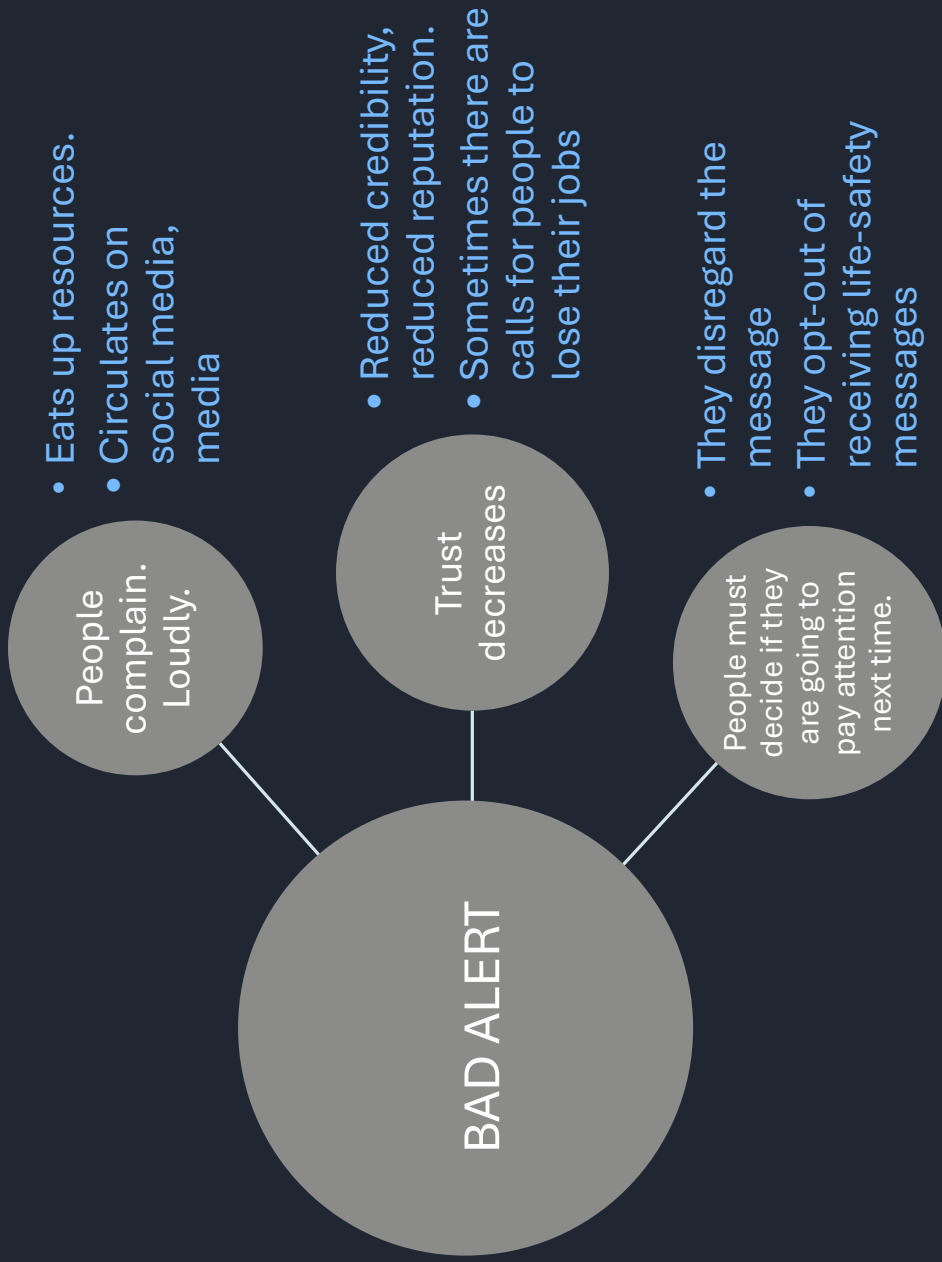
"False" alert – mistake, inaccurate

Incomplete information

Filled with incomprehensible jargon

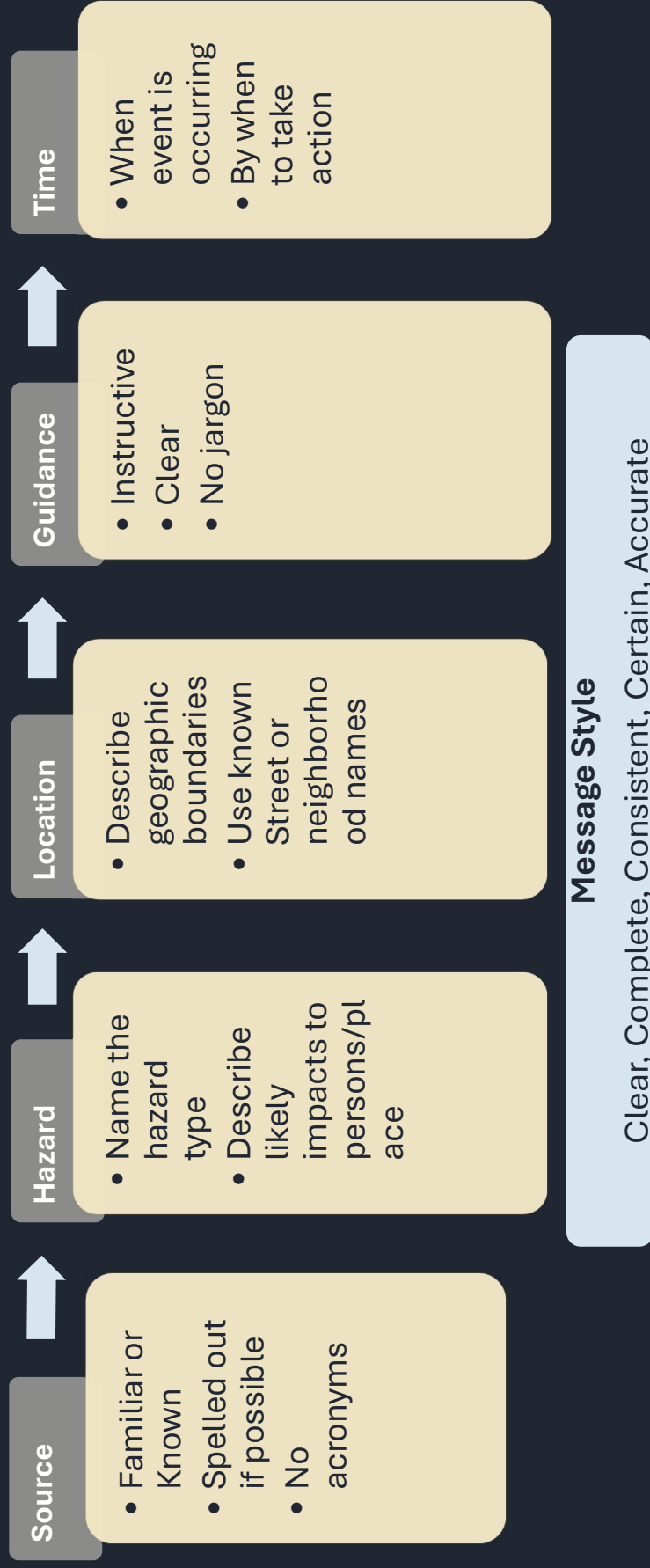
Sent for threat that doesn't matter to you

We know what happens when a bad alert is issued.



We also know how to fix it with
five decades of research on
emergency alerts.

The Five Elements Framework



New Alert and Warning Research Findings

What if I think my messages are better?

Complete messages work best; the workflow I show you is superior to the standard of practice; replicated results in 6 major metropolitan areas

What about sending "All Clear" messages?

People need to know that the event is resolved, and they are safe to return/resume

How about Missing Person messages?

Complete messages increase information recall; don't rely on URLs; don't use jargon

New Alert and Warning Research Findings

What is the effect of the use of ALL CAPS?

- When selectively used, visual attention increases, and reading is easier

What is the effect of not naming the hazard?

- Decreased efficacy, decreased trust in sender.

What about using jargon?

- Zones, technical language, decreased understanding, delays action

Law Enforcement Example

Law Enforcement Example

SMC Alert: Sheriff's deputies are in the area of Aliso Way in Ladera for an active investigation. There is no threat to the public. Please avoid the area.

Note: Provide additional details about how to shelter in place such as “go inside, lock doors and windows”.

Template

- SMC Alert: **[AGENCY]** **[LAW ENFORCEMENT/POLICE]** **[ACTIVITY/PRESENCE/SITUATION/INCIDENT]** in **[LOCATION]** at **[TIME]**. SHELTER IN PLACE. Road closures and traffic delays possible in area. AVOID area until ALL CLEAR is given. CHECK **[SOURCE]** for **[UPDATES/INFORMATION]** at **[URL]**.

Evacuation Example

Evacuation Message

Residents of 100 Harbor Blvd. An evacuation is taking place. Please go to 400 Harbor.

Templated Message

SMC Alert: **[AGENCY]** EVACUATION ORDER issued for **[LOCATION]** due to **[HAZARD]** as of **[TIME]**. There is a serious threat to life and property. LEAVE NOW. FOLLOW instructions from emergency personnel. **[Temporary Evacuation Point/Shelter]** at **[LOCATION]**. Do not return until officials have lifted evacuation order. CHECK your zone at **[GENASYS PROTECT URL]**.

Wildfire Example

Wildfire Example

SMC Alert: Several Fire units including aircraft are responding to a vegetation fire south of Hwy 92 near 11631 San Mateo Road in Half Moon Bay Expect traffic delays use alternative routes.

Note: both the physical location boundaries and a link to zone information are provided.

Templated Message

SMC Alert: **[AGENCY]** WILDFIRE EVACUATION WARNING issued for **[LOCATION]** as of **[TIME]**. Prepare to evacuate: GATHER loved ones, pets, medications, important documents, and your go bag. **STAY** aware and be ready to leave. **CHECK** your zone at **[GENASYS PROTECT URL]**.

“All Clear” or Post Alert Example

Wildfire All Clear

The fire along the railroad tracks is under control and the shelter in place is lifted.

New Template

SMC Alert: **[AGENCY]: WILDFIRE** threat has ended for **[LOCATION]**. You may **[CONCLUDE PROTECTIVE ACTIONS/RESUME NORMAL ACTIVITIES/RETURN TO THE AREA]**. CHECK **[SOURCE]** for **[UPDATES/INFORMATION]** at **[INFO]**.

How do we fix bad messaging?

Templates, Training, Policy

What We've Delivered So Far

- Alert & Warning Seminar
- Alert & Warning Message Library
- Message Templates Uploaded to Rave
- Video Trainings
- Technical Assistance



What's Next for Alert & Warning

- Agency Readiness
- Research-Based Templates
- Trainings
- Tools
- On-Demand Support
- Public Media Campaign



9

Report Outs Related to Emergency Services Council

Council Chair Gauthier



THANK YOU



Together Forward.

TOGETHER FORWARD



COUNTY OF SAN MATEO
EMERGENCY
MANAGEMENT

20 Annual
25 Report





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A Message from our Director

Dr. Shruti Dhapodkar

This past year demonstrated that steady, intentional progress creates lasting resilience. While headlines focus on dramatic disasters elsewhere, we've been building the strength that enables our community to thrive through any challenge.

Our team has fundamentally reimagined emergency management for San Mateo County. We've moved beyond traditional preparedness to create systems that adapt, learn, and improve continuously. The foundation we're building today—from evidence-based emergency communications to comprehensive infrastructure planning to multilingual community engagement—will serve our community for decades to come.

What sets this year apart is our commitment to getting the fundamentals right before crisis strikes. When the December 5, 2024 tsunami warning and July 29, 2025 tsunami advisory tested our systems, we already had Dr. Sutton's research-backed improvements in motion. When ongoing infrastructure challenges face our coastside communities, CRISP provides the comprehensive assessment and funding framework needed to secure resources for critical improvements. This is the power of proactive emergency management.

The story of San Mateo County shows that we can break through the cycle of crisis and complacency. Excellence in emergency management isn't about dusting off old playbooks—it requires a careful integration of technological innovation with robust community partnerships. We're constructing intelligent, connected communities that can respond to tomorrow's challenges today. When the next disaster comes, our communities will be better prepared because we've advanced from simple reaction to informed anticipation.



SMC EM by the Numbers

September 2024 - August 2025

16 emergency responses

37 public outreach and education events

11 training sessions

6 exercises conducted

70 TOTAL STRATEGIC ACTIVITIES COMPLETED

Emergency Communications

Evidence-Based Best Practices

Communications failures cost lives during disasters. Building on lessons learned from Hurricane Helene and the Los Angeles wildfires, we partnered with alert and warning subject matter experts to strengthen how San Mateo County communicates during emergencies. This initiative, which gained recognition in The Atlantic, NBC News, KTVU Fox, and numerous local and national outlets, reflects our commitment to research-backed emergency management practices.

Research-Driven Improvements

We moved beyond assumptions to implement scientifically tested communication frameworks designed to improve emergency response outcomes that included:



Comprehensive system analysis reviewed 50+ county alerts and identified specific improvements needed to meet research-backed effectiveness standards.



Five Elements Framework adoption ensures every emergency message includes hazard information, location details, protective actions, timing, and credible sources.



National leadership recognition as one of the first counties to implement the Five Elements Framework evidence-based approach, drawing attention from emergency management professionals nationwide.

Operational Area-Wide Implementation

We hosted a groundbreaking seminar this past summer that began the work of strengthening our regional emergency communication capabilities across the Bay Area.



100 emergency professionals engaged from 37 organizations across 8 Bay Area counties in intensive Alert & Warning training sessions.



Standardized template development eliminates dangerous improvisation during crisis moments with 40 pre-tested messages for common hazards and threats.



Multi-jurisdictional coordination protocols ensure consistent messaging across boundaries when disasters affect multiple communities simultaneously.



Emergency Communications

Evidence-Based Best Practices

Real-World Validation

Our enhanced systems were immediately tested during two significant tsunami events that validated our proactive approach.



December 5, 2024 tsunami warning provided initial testing ground for improved communication protocols during actual emergency conditions



Tsunami Hazard Dashboard development and deployment addressed critical information gaps identified during the December 2024 event when state emergency websites crashed under high traffic demand, leaving residents unable to determine evacuation zones or safety locations.



July 29, 2025 tsunami advisory demonstrated measurable improvements in message clarity and public understanding compared to regional responses. We directed the public to utilize our Tsunami Hazard dashboard and the dashboard tracked **78,144 views during the advisory** validating the system's capacity to provide immediate, accessible hazard zone information and evacuation guidance when residents needed it most.



Ongoing refinement process incorporates lessons learned from each event to continuously improve emergency communication effectiveness and in September 2025 we will host practical workshops with our operational area partners so we can continue to practice together on getting alerts right when they matter most.

Infrastructure Innovation

Award-Winning CRISP Framework

The Coastside Resilience Infrastructure Strategic Plan (CRISP) represents our most ambitious infrastructure initiative, creating the county's first systematic approach to critical infrastructure assessment and funding. We are grateful for the support from the Emergency Services Council and Supervisor Mueller's Office, which helped make this work possible. CRISP earned two California Emergency Services Association (CESA) Coastal Chapter awards for innovation in infrastructure resilience methodology.

Comprehensive Assessment Achievement

We developed the first inventory of coastside infrastructure needs through rigorous stakeholder engagement and data analysis.



105 infrastructure projects identified from 60 stakeholders representing 21 public and utility services, creating unprecedented visibility into critical infrastructure gaps.



Data-driven prioritization framework categorized projects into federal funding-eligible (13 Category A projects), state/local funding pathways (15 Category B projects), and development-stage initiatives.



GIS database development visualizes infrastructure needs and establishes foundation for ongoing monitoring and assessment.

Systematic Funding Strategy

We created clear pathways for infrastructure investment that maximize the likelihood of successful project implementation.



Category A Priority Funding Projects that meet the federal definition of critical infrastructure. Projects in this category align with national priorities and are strong candidates for grant writing support to help advance their implementation. **13 national-level critical infrastructure projects identified through CRISP.**



Category B Critical Infrastructure Projects that play an essential role in community resilience while not being identified as a national critical infrastructure priority. This project addresses local priorities that do not align with national funding criteria. **15 local priority projects identified through CRISP for state and regional partnership development.**



Category C All Other Submitted Projects that require further detail before they can be considered for funding opportunities.



Infrastructure Innovation

Award-Winning CRISP Framework

Replicable Model Development

CRISP's methodology provides a template for systematic infrastructure resilience planning that other counties can adapt to their specific needs.



Transparent evaluation system combines CISA Critical Infrastructure standards, mitigation benefits assessment, and county operational importance.



Collaborative engagement process demonstrates how to effectively gather input from various stakeholders while maintaining project focus.



Reaching People Where They Are

We've made deliberate investments to ensure emergency preparedness reaches every community member. During disasters, language, culture, and ability barriers can become life-threatening obstacles. We design programming that meets people where they are, relying on trusted messengers, industry-leading systems, and culturally appropriate approaches.



Multilingual alert templates developed for common hazards ensure rapid, accurate messaging in multiple languages simultaneously.



Community messenger networks activate trusted local leaders who can communicate in residents' preferred languages and cultural contexts.



Accessible format development includes visual aids, simplified language, and multiple communication channels to reach assorted learning preferences and technology access levels.



Over half of our emergency management staff speaks a second language fluently, including Spanish, Mandarin, French, Hindi and Arabic.



Partnership-driven outreach through organizations like Thrive, Puente, Farmworkers Advisory Commission, and Belle Haven community leaders who understand local needs.

SMC EM Strategic Transformation

What's New

Community-Informed Strategic Planning

We conducted the most comprehensive stakeholder engagement process in our department's history to ensure our strategic direction reflects actual community needs and operational realities.



Seven listening sessions across the county engaged 175+ participants from 96 organizations, creating unprecedented dialogue between emergency management and our operational partners.



TARGET gap analysis framework systematically identified improvement areas across Training, Activation of resources, Rapid coordination, Gap assessment, Emergency communications, and Tending to vulnerable populations.



4.37 out of 5 excellence rating from partners validated our strong foundation while highlighting specific enhancement opportunities for strategic focus.



Comprehensive community survey launched at our 21st Annual Disaster Preparedness Day in English, Spanish, and Mandarin to gather household-level insights on preparedness, evacuation considerations, and communication preferences.

Comprehensive Internal Development

We invested deeply in our organizational foundation, recognizing that resilient communities require resilient teams that leverage their individual strengths for the collective benefit.



Strengths-based team optimization methodology applied to each SMC EM team member and utilized to assemble teams that uniquely leverage their discreet strengths to enhance decision-making and collaborative problem-solving across all program areas.



Evidence-based wellness program incorporating neuroscience research to expand team neuroplasticity and stress management capabilities.



Complete brand evolution developed through intensive community research, creating clarity and consistency that builds trust with stakeholders.



SMC EM Strategic Transformation

What's New

Data-Driven Planning

We're using cutting-edge research to prioritize investments that maximize community resilience.



Partnership with data scientist brought national expertise to analyze California and San Mateo County trends.



Systematic risk assessment identifies unique local vulnerabilities requiring targeted mitigation strategies.

Community Engagement Innovation

We expanded beyond traditional outreach to create sustained engagement that builds long-term preparedness culture.



Board of Supervisors-partnered events across multiple districts increased community reach and credibility through trusted local leadership.



Launched the Emergency Management Partnership Initiative, a systematic approach to build deeper stakeholder relationships with operational area partners through collaborative planning and shared ownership of preparedness initiatives across all project areas.



Winter Storm Preparedness Webinar (December 2024) delivered proactive community education ahead of seasonal hazards, reaching residents with actionable preparation guidance.



SMC EM Exercises

Program Excellence

Our exercise program evolved from basic drills to sophisticated scenario planning that prepares partners for complex, real-world challenges.



ShakeTank for CBOs (October 2024) engaged community-based organizations in earthquake response planning, highlighting their critical recovery role.



AI-powered wildfire simulation (March 2025) piloted innovative evacuation decision-making tools with Ladriss partnership.



Regional BayEx 2025 (May 2025) participated in a five-day, seven-location CBRNE exercise with California National Guard's 95th Civil Support Team.



CERT Annex Earthquake and Traffic Training (June 2025) provided hands-on skills development for Community Emergency Response Teams.



Tsunami Readiness (August 2025) tested coastal evacuation protocols and community response procedures in Half Moon Bay.



Response Readiness

Real World Impact

Our enhanced capabilities were tested repeatedly this year, demonstrating the value of our systematic approach to preparedness and response coordination.



Tsunami Warning and Advisory SMC EM coordinated regional response and validated improved communication protocols.



South San Francisco Fire SMC EM provided mutual aid coordination and resource management.



Hazmat Responses SMC EM deployed with hazmat team at eight responses across multiple jurisdictions.

Each response provided valuable learning opportunities that directly informed our training programs and operational improvements.



Looking Forward

2025 - 2026 Priorities

Community Resilience Centers Launch

Establishing 13 library-based resilience centers that serve as daily community anchors and emergency response nodes.

Disaster Service Worker Program Expansion

Training 85% of county employees as qualified DSWs to enhance organizational readiness and response capabilities.

Comprehensive Planning Updates

Finalizing Emergency Operations Plan and starting in September 2025, the Multijurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan updates that reflect current risks and best practices.

Training & Operational Integration

Hosting 10 or more training opportunities annually to strengthen capabilities across the county.



Partnership Recognition

Our success requires collaborative relationships. We appreciate our operational area partners who participated in strategic planning, our 20 city and unincorporated area partners who engage consistently in preparedness activities, and the community-based organizations that ensure programs reach every resident. We also recognize the essential contributions of emergency medical services, public safety communications, fire, law enforcement, special districts, and many other community partners whose expertise and commitment strengthen our collective ability to prepare for, respond to, and recover from emergencies.

Foundation for 2030

Every initiative this year advances our strategic commitment to becoming the nation's most resilient county by 2030. We're building systematic capabilities that will enable San Mateo County to withstand, adapt to, and rapidly recover from any emergency while emerging stronger.


Our approach combines proven emergency management fundamentals with innovative partnerships, cutting-edge research, and deep community engagement. The CRISP framework provides our infrastructure roadmap, the Alert & Warning transformation ensures effective crisis communication, and our multilingual programming guarantees equitable access to preparedness resources.

This foundation positions us to meet future challenges with confidence and capability. When the next emergency strikes, San Mateo County will be prepared not just to respond, but to demonstrate how proactive, evidence-based emergency management protects and serves every community member.

Together Forward - building resilience through intentional partnership, systematic improvement, and unwavering commitment to our community's safety and prosperity.

For detailed program information, strategic plan updates, or partnership opportunities, contact San Mateo County Emergency Management.

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www.smcgov.org/dem 



TOGETHER FORWARD