

**To:** Leon Page, County Counsel  
**From:** Michelle Anderson, County Emergency Manager *MLA*  
**Date:** October 31, 2024  
**RE:** Status Report, Item 17 for November 5, 2024 Agenda: Review the Need for Continuing the Local Emergency



The Airport Fire began on September 9, 2024, in the unincorporated area of the County on Trabuco Canyon Road. Unified Command was established initially between the Orange County Fire Authority, Orange County Sheriff's Department, Riverside County Sheriff's Department, CalFire and the United States Forest Service, and transitioned to the California Incident Management Team 2. The fire impacted both Orange and Riverside counties, burning 23,526 acres and was deemed 100% contained on October 5, 2024. There were 12 firefighter injuries and 2 civilian injuries.

The City of Rancho Santa Margarita proclaimed a Local Emergency on September 10, 2024; the City Council ratified the proclamation on September 11, 2024. The Orange County Board of Supervisors proclaimed a Local Emergency on September 10, 2024. The Governor proclaimed a State of Emergency on September 11, 2024. The Orange County Health Officer proclaimed a Local Health Emergency on September 13<sup>th</sup> and renewed it on 20<sup>th</sup>; the Orange County Board of Supervisors ratified the health emergency proclamation on September 24, 2024. On October 8, 2024, the Orange County Board of Supervisors adopted an Urgency Ordinance for the Airport Fire Debris Removal Program.

For Orange County:

- The Emergency Operations Centers for both the County and the City of Rancho Santa Margarita were activated.
- Evacuation Orders were issued for: Robinson Ranch, Ortega Highway, Caspers Park, Blue Jay Campground, and El Cariso.
- Evacuation Warnings were issued for: Rose Canyon, Trabuco Canyon, Dove Canyon, Silverado Canyon, Modjeska Canyon, and the East side of Coto de Caza.
- Trabuco Canyon Elementary and Robinson Elementary were closed through September 17, 2024.
- Parks closed included: O'Neil Regional Park, Casper's Wilderness Park, Thomas F. Riley Park, Arden Helena Modjeska Historic House, and Bell View Trail.
- Care and Shelter was established at the City of Rancho Santa Margarita Bell Tower and transitioned to the Foothill Ranch Library.
- Animal shelter was provided at OC Animal Care in Tustin and the City of Mission Viejo Animal Shelter.
- Large animal shelters were established at the Orange County Fairgrounds, Los Alamitos Race Course, and Nohl Ranch Saddle Club. San Diego County temporarily activated its fairground in support of large animal evacuation.
- A Local Assistance Center was hosted at Saddleback College for three days to offer support resources to impacted community members.

Costs: Estimated response costs and damages for public agencies include:

City/District	Estimated Response Costs & Damages
Orange County Fire Authority*	\$67,000,000
Orange County CEO	\$35,527
Orange County Community Resources (OCCR)	\$19,269
OCCR - OC Animal Care	\$42,840
OCCR - OC Parks	\$152,825
Orange County Counsel	\$47,778
Orange County Health Care Agency	\$47,414
Orange County Public Works	\$12,580,299
Orange County Sheriff-Coroner	\$1,926,755
Orange County Social Services Agency	\$46,657
Orange County Waste and Recycling	\$6,592
Rancho Santa Margarita	\$35,519
Trabuco Canyon Water District	\$1,001,000
<b>Operational Total</b>	<b>\$82,942,475</b>

\*OCFA figures include all IMT costs some of which may be reimbursable through the Riverside FMAG.

The Emergency Management Division is actively facilitating the submission of these costs and supporting documentation from each agency to the California Office of Emergency Services Recovery Unit in pursuit of California Disaster Assistance Act funding or Federal Emergency Management Agency Public Assistance. No eligibility determination has been made at the time of this status report submission.

#### Damaged Properties:

A CalFire Damage Inspection Team inspected properties in both Orange and Riverside counties. They identified a total 34 damaged and 160 destroyed structures. In Orange County, 4 damaged structures were identified and 89 destroyed structures were identified. Properties are grouped on the Ortega, on Santiago Peak, and in the unincorporated canyon area, including on the United States Forest Service land. Note: Multiple structures may be on a single property. For example, a home and a free-standing garage are counted as 2 structures while a home with an attached garage is counted as 1 structure. Structures are counted regardless of permit status or land ownership.

Supported by the Local Health Emergency Proclamation and the Urgency Ordinance:

- Orange County requested hazardous debris removal assistance from the California Office of Emergency Services and the Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC). This request was approved and the team will be deployed on November 5, 2024. Work will be conducted in collaboration with Orange County Public Works, Health Care Agency Environmental Health, and Orange County Waste & Recycling.

- Orange County requested watershed assessment and protection assistance from the California Office of Emergency Services Watershed Mitigation, Coordination, and Outreach Unit. This request was approved and the initial assessment has been completed. They will be onsite to implement protective measures from November 4<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> with the assistance of the Department of Water Resources and California Conservation Corp. Work will be conducted in collaboration with Orange County Public Works, Health Care Agency Environmental Health, and the Water Emergency Response of Orange County.
- Orange County has requested private property debris removal assistance from the California Office of Emergency Services. This request is pending the completion of the hazardous debris removal and watershed assessment and protection activities.

Recommended Action: Continue the local emergency proclamation; set review to determine need for continuing local emergency for December 17, 2024, 9:30 a.m. and every 60 days thereafter until terminated.

cc: Interim County Executive Officer Michelle Aguirre  
Clerk of the Board Robin Stieler  
Undersheriff Jeff Hallock, Sheriff-Coroner Department