

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SAN LORENZO VALLEY WATER DISTRICT PREPARES FOR SEVERE WINTER STORMS

El Niño planning includes joining a statewide water district mutual aid consortium.

DEC. 14, 2015 — BOULDER CREEK, CA — The San Lorenzo Valley Water District (SLVWD) today announced staff has been planning an Emergency Operational Response to El Niño in preparation for storm events. The response includes joining the California Water/Wastewater Agency Response Network (CalWARN) to have the resources available to respond and recover more quickly from a disaster.

“It appears quite likely that the present El Niño will exert a powerful influence upon California weather this coming winter,” said Brian Lee, SLVWD General Manager. “There has never been a year in California’s history with this much advance warning regarding the potential for very heavy precipitation, and the District has taken this time to take steps to mitigate the related hazards likely to emerge in the coming weeks and months.”

SLVWD staff identified five areas of focus in their storm-response planning: extended loss of PG&E power, generator and vehicle fuel, material inventory, staffing and staff safety.

In the event a District-wide disaster occurs, it would require additional staff almost immediately to avoid prolonged water outages and facilitate repairs.

Joining the CalWARN Program provides SLVWD with the staffing resources necessary, should disaster occur. CalWARN members receive mutual assistance and sharing of emergency resources among members statewide, similar to other statewide mutual aid programs. For example, CalWARN members responded to the City of Napa following a 6.0-magnitude earthquake on Aug. 24, 2014 that caused nearly 150 mainline failures to the municipal water distribution system. CalWARN reached out to Napa within two hours of the earthquake and had teams assisting in the city the same day.

Previous El Niño events have brought as much as 200 percent of average precipitation, increasing the risk of flooding and landslides.

Other steps taken by SLVWD staff to prepare for winter storms include:

- Renting and installing two 500-gallon fuel tanks for gas and diesel at the Kirby Water Treatment Plant to supply fuel as needed to District vehicles and generators.
- Reserving an additional 45-kilowatt generator to rent for approximately three months during the winter storms. Both stationary and mobile generators are used

to run the water treatment and wastewater plants, as well sites and booster stations, when the power is out. The mobile generators, including the one that would be rented, would be shuttled from booster to booster filling storage tanks typically 2 to 4 hours per site and relocated 24 hours a day as needed.

- Creating procedures for mandatory hourly staff safety checks during disaster response to ensure travel conditions are safe, and that staff are getting adequate meals and rest during extended work hours.
- Inventorying supplies.

“Although the District’s operations are 24/7 and emergency response planning is ongoing, giving special attention to preparing for severe storms this winter is a priority for SLVWD staff,” Lee said.

ABOUT THE SAN LORENZO VALLEY WATER DISTRICT

The San Lorenzo Valley Water District is located in the mountains of northern Santa Cruz County. The district serves more than 7,500 metered connections. Established in 1941, the district supplies water to the communities of Boulder Creek, Brookdale, Ben Lomond, Zayante, Scotts Valley, Manana Woods and Felton. For more information, visit www.slvwd.com or www.facebook.com/slvwaterdistrict.

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