



**COUNTY EXECUTIVE OFFICE**  
105 E. Anapamu St., Fourth Floor, Santa Barbara CA 93101  
(805) 568-3400 FAX (805) 568-3414

## **Press Release**

### **March 12, 2018**

**Contact:**

Santa Barbara County Joint Information Center  
805-696-1188 **Media Only**

### **Fast Approaching Storm Results in Immediate Mandatory Evacuation Order Issued for Areas of Extreme Risk for Debris Flow**

*National Weather Service Issued Flash Flood Watch for Thomas, Whittier, Sherpa and Alamo Burn Areas*

**(SANTA BARBARA, Calif.)** – The Santa Barbara County Sheriff’s Office, in consultation with National Weather Service and other public safety officials, has issued a **Mandatory Evacuation Order** effective today (Monday) for individuals in Extreme Risk (red) areas near the Thomas, Sherpa, and Whittier burn areas due to a rapidly approaching winter storm. Individuals must be out of the evacuation area by 8 p.m. tonight.

Those in High Risk (yellow) areas not under mandatory evacuation order, however, are under **Recommended Evacuation Warning** and are at risk for flooding or being cut off from services and utilities. People with access and functional needs or large animals living in High Risk (yellow) areas should consider immediate evacuation.

Updated meteorological models by the National Weather Service indicate that there now is a potential for rainfall to exceed the 0.5 inch per hour threshold that triggers debris flows tomorrow morning at daylight.

People in Extreme Risk (red) areas are required to evacuate. Officials will return individuals to their homes as soon as it is safe to do so. To determine if a residence or business is in the Extreme Risk Area, consult the evacuation boundaries map at [ReadySBC.org](http://ReadySBC.org).

Red Cross has established an evacuation center at Goleta Valley Community Center, 5679 Hollister Ave., Goleta, CA 93117. Anyone evacuated or otherwise affected by the approaching storm is welcome to find relief and comfort at this location. For assistance evacuating large and small animals, contact Santa Barbara County Animal Services hotline at 805-681-4332.

**-MORE-**

According to Santa Barbara County Sheriff Bill Brown, “The National Weather Service has informed us that the approaching storm is of greater intensity than was previously anticipated. The rate of rainfall is predicted to meet or exceed the threshold level that could trigger debris flows.”

The California Highway Patrol (CHP), the National Weather Service and public safety partners will monitor storm activity to ensure Highway 101 remains open to facilitate resident evacuations. If Highway 101 needs to be closed, CHP would do so just prior to the arrival of the intense portion of the storm. Bands of rain, timing and intensity will guide this decision. Closure information will be communicated broadly to the public as decisions are made. Community members should go to [ReadySBC.org](http://ReadySBC.org) for up-to-date information on evacuations and road closures. As this storm is expected to arrive during morning rush hour. Please consider altering your travel and commuting plans.

The interactive debris flow risk areas map was updated on Saturday, March 10 with changes effecting the Carpinteria community. Residents in this area should consult the map to determine the current status of this area.

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**In English:**

**Stay Connected:**

It is critical that people in Santa Barbara County register to receive emergency alerts. Sign up for Aware and Prepare emergency alerts at [www.ReadySBC.org](http://www.ReadySBC.org). If we can't reach you, we can't alert you.

For updates through social media, follow @countyofsb on [Twitter](https://twitter.com/countyofsb) and [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/countyofsb). For general information, call 2-1-1 from 805 area code or 800-400-1572 outside of 805, or text your zip code to 898-211.

**Permanezca Conectado:**

Es muy importante que las personas en el Condado de Santa Bárbara se registren para recibir alertas de emergencias. Inscríbase para recibir las alertas por medio de *Informados y Preparados* (Aware and Prepare) en [www.ReadySBC.org/es](http://www.ReadySBC.org/es). Si no podemos localizarlo, no podemos alertarlo.

Para actualizaciones por las redes sociales, siga @csbenespanol en [Twitter](https://twitter.com/countyofsb), @countyofsb en [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/countyofsb). Para información en general, llame al 2-1-1 desde el código de área 805, o al 800-400-1572 para fuera del 805, o mande por texto su código postal al 898-211.