

ACONA Meeting Notes, May 24, 2016

Following introductions, the following topics were covered:

Statewide Drought: Supplies and Conservation Actions

Speaker: Daniel Drugan, Water Program Technician, Foothill Municipal Water District

El Niño benefited Northern California but not areas in the south of the state and in the other western states. But local water conservation has been very good, so supply is exceeding demand. Still, groundwater levels continue to recede, with a commensurate increase in fire danger. And the drought is not over.

The governor has asked for new water use targets and reporting standards. He issued some new bans:

No potable water to driveways/sidewalks

No runoff from watering

No potable water in fountains unless recirculated

No washing a vehicle with a hose unless hose has a shutoff nozzle

No outdoor irrigation during and until 48 hours following measurable precipitation

No irrigation of public street ornamental medians

New regulations:

Local water companies can determine their own water control standard

Water companies self-report water supplies to the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB)

Two-day/week watering still in effect.

Traffic, Bike and Pedestrian Traffic Safety in Altadena:

The Rules of the Road

- Who do you call? CHP, Sheriff's or PPD?

- If you call "after hours," how do you reach the CHP? 911 System

Speakers:

Captain Steve Strull, CHP

Officer Xavier Bejar, CHP

Pedestrian bicycle safety. Accidents have gone up 11.5% this year.

Tips for motorists:

Expect bicyclists and watch for them

Reduce speed

Give them 3' of space

Be patient

Tips for cyclists:

Go with the traffic, not against it

Obey traffic laws

Be predictable

Make eye contact with drivers

Increase your visibility

Watch for parked cars

Give and get respect

911 System

Texting to 911 is in the works
911 calls are routed to the appropriate agency -- one-button transfer
10-15 operators on each shift
Working on expediting handling of multiple calls on the same incident
Once you make a 911 call, you cannot disconnect until the call is completed.

Fireworks in Altadena

Speakers:
Captain Vicki Stuckey, Altadena Sheriff's Station
Lt. Rob Lewis, Altadena Sheriff's Station

Sale, possession and use of fireworks are all ILLEGAL in Altadena. If arrested there can be a fine of \$50K and one year in jail. In most cases users will be cited and their fireworks will be confiscated. Last year there were 12 citations. All went to trial.
Only sanctioned fireworks shows are legal.
LA County Fire Dept. lists all attractions for the 4th of July
If you call the sheriff's station to report fireworks, you need to give as exact a location as possible, and as exact a description of the people using the fireworks as possible.
Additional units are deployed on the 4th of July, but the station is overloaded on the 4th.
Sparklers can reach 1200 degrees Fahrenheit and can start fires.
Hiking trails will be closed at their normal time.

Fire Danger is Early this Year!

Speaker:
Stephanie English, Community Services Liaison, Division III LA County Fire Department

There have already been active fires. Small (sub-30 acre) fires are becoming more common.
ICS - Incident Command System: convened to manage fires and other disasters.
Evacuations: If you are asked to evacuate, then DO it. Evacuation orders are based on predictions of where the fire is moving. Your evacuation makes it easier for fire fighters to operate.
Mandatory evacuation: The sheriff's department can order. If a resident refuses to leave, the sheriff's department may ask for next-of-kin information. Once you leave you can't go back in.
Ready Set Go Guide: step by step info on how to get ready for fires and what to do if there is a fire. Think about what you need to take with you if you have to evacuate. [See Resources page, November 4, 2014 for a link to the guide and a video.]
Twitter: @LACoFDDIV3 (includes Altadena), @LACoFD
Facebook: Los Angeles County Fire Department Division 3

Q&A

Q: Is the CHP supposed to be patrolling the streets? A: The CHP office is in Altadena, but its area of responsibility is much, much larger. This office also does a lot of dignitary protection. Officers are placed where the likelihood of accidents is highest, based on history. Altadena and La Crescenta have a very low collision profile in comparison to other areas this office patrols. There is usually only one car patrolling in our area.

Q: Watering the roof during a fire event: is it a no-no? A: If the fire isn't coming your way and you can douse an ember, that's okay. But in an active fire area where there is an evacuation order in effect, not a good idea.

Q: What are the chances of my house being looted after evacuation? A: The sheriffs patrol evacuated areas and won't let anyone in without an escort.

Q: There have been a lot of people speeding down Glenrose, Manor, Marengo... We've tried to get speed bumps but the criteria are hard to meet. A: When you have an issue with speeding vehicles, call the CHP. Patrols are assigned based on frequency of incident reports. Many incident reports have stop signs or speed bumps as recommendations from the officer.

Q: Who do we contact at CHP to get extra patrols for prevention? A: We need to be aware of issues to respond to them, so call. Ask to speak to one of the COPS officers.

Q: People are going 65 on Porter in a 30 MPH zone. There are speed bumps above and below us, and they are effective, but no speed bumps in our area so cars race through. We'd like to see speed bumps in our area. A: We'd like to see speed bumps there too.

Q: What rules do equestrians follow? A: Not considered a vehicle; considered a pedestrian. Must follow pedestrian rules.

Q: Stop signs with LED lights: might help in our area. Who do we talk to? A: The signs are being tested now. They are solar powered. Once testing is done they'll look at projected cost of putting them in all over the county. Comes out of Supervisor Antonovich's office.

Q: What are the three things residents should be looking for to prevent fire, and who do we call to report problems? A: Call your local fire station. The things you should be looking for are in the Ready Set Go guide. [Resource page, November 4, 2014 meeting.]

Q: If we are doing so well in conserving water, why are our rates going up? A: Fixed costs don't go down when water use goes down. And the cost of doing business continues to increase.

Q: There was a house for sale in our area with roof-high weeds. The bank wouldn't cut them down. Was told that nothing could be done for personal property, only commercial property. A: There is a 410 violation citation that can be issued. Seller is given 30 days to correct, then sale could be prevented and a lien put on the property.

Q: If a house has been "abandoned" (e.g., owner deceased, relatives out of state) what do we do? A: Call the sheriff's station who will call code enforcement.

Q: What are our accident hot-spots in Altadena? A: Collision data are mostly at major intersections. Minor accidents often don't get reported because people are afraid their insurance rates will go up. The CHP office can pull up data by intersection. CHP enforces the law, doesn't make it.