

ACONA Meeting Notes, January 26, 2016

Following introductions, the following topics were covered:

Altadena Town Council Update

Diane Marcussen, ATC Chairman, went over the purpose of the town council. The council serves the approx. 43,000 residents of Altadena and conveys the community's concerns to Supt. Antonovich. ATC meets the third Tuesday of the month. Agenda is determined on the second Tuesday. The council's Land Use Committee meets on the first Tuesday to gather public comment on Conditional Use Permits and interactions with the Regional Planning Commission. Website: altadenatowncouncil.org for information on ATC and census tracts and representatives.

Community Standards Document (CSD) Committee deals with reviewing and updating the CSD for Altadena. Anything that is changed has to be enforceable.

Q&A: Radio-controlled cars can be used on the roadway as long as they are observing safety rules.

Fire Danger

Stephanie English, Community Services Liaison, Los Angeles County Fire Dept. Division III. Communications is biggest challenge in any emergency. Presented Ready Set Go plan and handed out a guide. (See ACONA Resources page, November 4, 2014 meeting, for a link.) This year, instead of two super scoopers, the county contracted for four because of the extreme fire danger posed by the drought. In spite of the rain we've already had, there is still a threat of fire. Three local threats: Fire, flood and earthquake.

El Niño preparedness: heavy rains anticipated for February and March. Get sandbags now; don't wait for the rain. Fire stations have them, limited to 25 bags per family. Call before you go to make sure the fire stations have them. Some stations have them already filled with sand. El Niño Twitter hashtag: #LARain.

El Niño

J. Lopez, Assistant Chief, Los Angeles County Fire Department Forestry Division, presented slides showing El Niño conditions. Sierra snow pack is at 133% of seasonal average, but we would need five years of precipitation to alleviate the drought. Fuel plants -- chamise, ceanothus, sages, sagebrush -- go dormant in the summer and their moisture level is very low then, which makes them good fuel for forest fires. In drought years their summer moisture level is much lower than the seasonal average.

Different color fire hydrant tops indicate different water pressure. Red is the lowest, blue is the highest (see Resources page for pressure ratings).

To prevent insect infestations, don't bring firewood from campgrounds back home and vice versa. Buy it where you burn it, and burn it where you bought it. Gold-Spotted Oak Borers have been found in Orange County and Castaic. The county has traps to check for infestations.

Chipping green waste prevents bug proliferation. This is what Athens does to green waste. Processed mulch rather than raw mulch is pest-free and safe to use.