



EMERGENCY SERVICES PRESS RELEASE

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FRIDAY, JULY 18, 2008 - 1410 HRS

TO: Monterey County Media Organizations

SUBJECT: PUBLIC ASSISTANCE PROCESS BEGINS FOR BASIN COMPLEX FIRE

Costs resulting from the Basin Complex Fire borne by public agencies, including special districts and private non-profit organizations, are immense. These are also reimbursable costs, at least in part, under the California Disaster Assistance Act (CDAA) and the federal Stafford Act due to emergency declarations signed by Governor Schwarzenegger and President Bush. Reimbursable costs include not only personnel but also supplies, materials, and loss of infrastructure.

Although primary fire suppression responsibility belongs to the U.S. Forest Service, local agencies are providing critical support to operations and in some cases, are directly providing the response. For instance, evacuations are handled by the Monterey County Sheriff's Office. The Monterey County Emergency Operations Center (EOC) was activated for the duration of the event, where a number of functions including public information, health, care and shelter, etc., were managed.

The County's EOC is staffed by personnel from various jurisdictions throughout the County. The position of Operations Section Chief was filled by North County Fire Chief Chris Orman for the first week of activation. Salinas City Fire Battalion Chief Sid Turner worked over the entire course of the event to coordinate EOC support of field operations. Representatives from the American Red Cross, Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, California Highway Patrol, Cal Trans, and numerous other agencies, worked face-to face with their counterparts in the EOC to plan, manage, and coordinate the overall response of their agencies. This coordination is what makes the Emergency Operations Center an irreplaceable component of any well-managed emergency response. Eligible costs are shared by federal, State, and local governments.

The Monterey County Office of Emergency Services is coordinating the reimbursement process for all public agencies, special districts, and private non-profit organizations that incurred eligible costs as a result of the Basin Complex Fire (FEMA-3287-EM-CA). An "applicant's briefing" will be conducted by the Governor's Office of Emergency Services on August 7 in the Monterey County Government Center. This will launch the reimbursement process. Meanwhile, local agencies are tabulating the cost of this disaster.

For further information contact Phil Yenovkian, Monterey County Office of Emergency Services,
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