



# COUNTY OF MONTEREY CAO Weekly Report

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## SPECIALREPORT



*A sheriff's patrol comes upon flames as residents in the Palo Colorado area are evacuated.*

## County Aids Residents, Supports Fire Efforts During Soberanes Fire

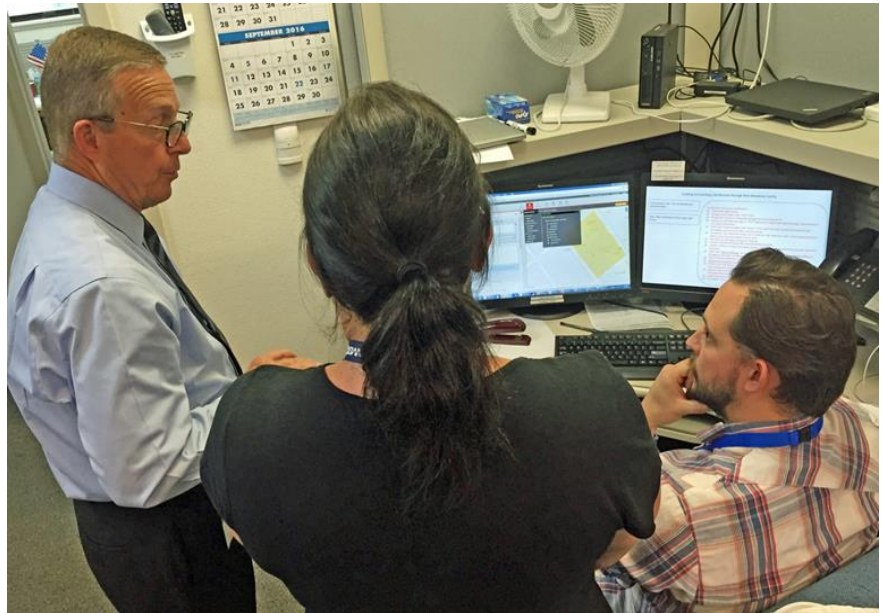
### County Notes

- > The [Office of Emergency Services facebook page](#) offers fire information and community news related to the fire.

July 22<sup>nd</sup> began as any other day, until staff at the Office of Emergency Services got word of a fire near Garrapata State Park. At first, all seemed ok, acreage was small.

But as the day turned into evening, the fire jumped in size and intensity and the County activated its Emergency Operations Center (EOC) to manage the crisis.

The call went out for staff and over a 12-hour period those responding included OES, Sheriff's Office, Information Technology (GIS), Resource Management Agency, Health, Social Services and the CAO's Office.



*(Clockwise I-r) Deputy Mike Smith shows how just how close patrols came to the fire during evacuations, 911 staff confer with Dan Bertoldi (right) about the process of sending out emergency messages, Public Works crews clear land to create a base camp for firefighters south of Carmel, Geographic Information Specialists Jacqueline Estrada and Darryl Tyler play a critical role in developing maps for use by emergency personnel and to determine evacuation areas.*



Approximately 35-45 people were in the EOC while more were in the field such as law enforcement and public works crews. And there was important support from departments who aren't always thought of in a crisis: finance and purchasing.

While some help on the frontline, those departments make sure important supplies are acquired and agreements are put into place quickly such as the one which moved CAL FIRE into Toro Park on short notice.

The role of the EOC in a disaster is to act as a central location from which local emergency efforts are coordinated, to work in collaboration with those responding to the disaster and plan for what those affected by the disaster will need to recover. Monterey's EOC worked closely with firefighting agencies in carrying out such critical tasks as alert and warning, evacuations, road closures, and with agency partners managing sheltering and companion animal rescue. As the fire situation evolved, health alerts and damage assessment became the next top priorities. Regular briefings make sure all sections have 'situational awareness' and are working together and effectively.

As the fire becomes contained, the role of the EOC will transition to recovery assistance for those affected, but there is still a lot of work to be done by the County to restore our community. Communicating regularly with those in the path of the fire has been a top priority, from emergency notifications to carefully coordinated site visits for those who lost everything.

State leaders will be visiting the EOC Friday, to find out more about the work that has been done protecting the county during this blaze and the next steps towards recovery.



*County staffers listen to comments from federal emergency representatives about the Soberanes Fire.*



*"FireNight5: Santa Lucia Preserve" by Chris Cleary @The Treadmill*

# County Gears Up to Help Residents Recover

Once the disaster is over, fire victims will need a different kind of help – support and services as they put their lives back together. A County-organized Local Assistance Center to help fire victims is ready to open its doors Saturday August 6<sup>th</sup>.

It is not too soon for those who have suffered losses to think about what they will need to recover and rebuild and can be a daunting process. The Local Assistance Center will offer a ‘one-stop shopping’ opportunity for information about such issues as tax relief, insurance and recovering documents.

Many county departments and employees are part of this recovery effort and will be on hand to help this coming weekend. Some of the agencies participating in the assistance center include:

- Monterey County Assessor’s Office
- Monterey County Clerk
- Department of Social Services
- Resource Management Agency
- Monterey County Health Department
- State Department of Insurance
- State Contractors Licensing Board
- Department of Motor Vehicles
- Employment Development Department
- Franchise Tax board
- Board of Equalization



*“FireNight2: Carmel Highlands” by Chris Cleary @The Treadmill*

# How to Help Fire Victims, Firefighters

For those wanting to donate to Soberanes fire victims and firefighting efforts, the [Office of Emergency Services website](#) has a list of reputable agencies working to help fire victims.

The fire is also generating lots of fundraisers within the community and requests for donations. It feels good to give, but do check out organizations before giving donations: are they a non-profit or a well-known community group with clear ties to the affected area? What is the percentage of donations going directly to those affected? These are just some of the ways you can be sure your gift is going to the right place.

As to giving to firefighters, there are many agencies working together to battle the blaze, each with their own restrictions on accepting donations or gifts. Before donating, be sure to check with these agencies as to what they can accept. Some accept food and personal items, some do not. For instance, our friends at CAL FIRE say they have sufficient supplies and sleep spots for firefighters and prefer thank you cards, letters and online posts and hope donors will redirect their donations to fire victims.



*"FireNight3: Smoke and Marine Layer at Sunset" by Chris Cleary @The Treadmill*