



COUNTY OF INYO
ADMINISTRATOR'S OFFICE/OFFICE OF
EMERGENCY SERVICES/SHERIFF'S OFFICE

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JOINT PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Power Outages Possible, Continued Preparation Encouraged

Southern California Edison announced this afternoon, Thursday, March 9, that it is pre-deploying crews to prepare for the storm expected to impact the Eastern Sierra through Sunday.

According to SCE, that work includes pre-staging equipment in areas potentially impacted by outages as well as evaluating whether scheduled maintenance outages during the storm period should be canceled. Notice of the cancellations would be limited as weather conditions continue to change.

"We understand outages during severe weather can be a hardship and we have crews positioned to respond to any potential outages and restore power as quickly as safety allows," SCE Government Relations Manager Matthew Paruolo stated.

The National Weather Service, Las Vegas, Nevada has forecast a warm atmospheric river storm to arrive this evening, with another one projected to begin early next week. Both storm systems will impact Inyo County with rain on snow which can trigger avalanches and flooding at lower elevations. Downed power lines are another possible hazard.

SCE cautions that downed power lines or dangling wires are not to be touched – even if they appear not to be alive – and should be reported immediately to 9-1-1.

In the event of power outages, SCE recommends the following:

- Watch for traffic signals that may be out. Approach those intersections as four-way stops.
- Freeze water and transfer to your refrigerator if the power goes out to keep perishables cold.
- Install surge protectors to help safeguard valuable electronic equipment, such as computers and home entertainment systems.
- Always back up important work and files on your computer.

- If you have an automatic garage door or gate, learn how to open them manually (without power).
- Consider keeping at least one car at least half full with fuel.
- Portable gasoline generators should never be used inside homes, garages, office buildings or other enclosed spaces.
- Make a safety preparedness plan for your family that includes a list and location of the above items. Be prepared to meet the special needs of infants and elderly or disabled family members. Also plan how you will care for pets and livestock.

Customers may report outages at 1-800-611-1911, <https://www.sce.com/outage-center/report-an-outage> or through the SCE Outages app.

A Winter Storm Warning is in effect for the Sierra above 7,000 feet from 4 p.m. today through 5 a.m. Sunday. A Flood Watch is also in effect for the Owens Valley from 4 p.m. today through 5 a.m. Sunday. Finally, a wind advisory for the Owens Valley is in effect from 6 a.m. to 10 p.m. Friday. Winds may gust up to 50 MPH in lower elevations and 65 MPH in higher areas.

The Eastern Sierra snowpack is well above average, and the rain will add to the runoff and increase the flooding potential in the Owens Valley. In higher elevations, rain may mix in with the snow resulting in heavy wet snow causing high snow load on buildings and increasing the risk of roof collapse.

All Inyo County residents and business owners are encouraged to prepare for the incoming weather by stocking up on essentials – food, water, medicine, firewood, flashlights, etc. – in the event of impeded travel, power outages, road closures, and limited emergency resources, and by deploying sandbags in flood-prone areas. Sandbags are available at the Bishop, Big Pine, Independence, Lone Pine, and Olancho-Cartago volunteer fire departments.

Current information as well as links to key resources can be found at the Office of Emergency Service's new website, <https://ready.inyocounty.us>. Incident managers will be posting regular updates on the status of the weather event and key actions/activities including road conditions, sheltering, and other details to this site.

Individuals who do not have access to the internet and ability to use the Ready Inyo website are encouraged to call 2-1-1. This non-emergency phone service will provide information similar to what is maintained on the Ready Inyo website, as well as the ability to access other County resources via phone. Anyone seeking more information about the storm and storm response is urged to call this number – NOT 9-1-1, which is intended for life safety issues only.

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