

## PUBLIC ALERT AND WARNING SYSTEM

### THE BASICS

#### Why use warning over pre-evacuation or voluntary?

The types of wildfires we have that are devastating involve fast moving and escalating fires. The pre-evacuation or voluntary implies less urgency and that a second order or mandatory evacuation order is going to be made, in some cases the fire may be moving faster than information can be processed. If a resident receives only one alert it must elevate concern and if in doubt default to leaving the area does not create an opportunity to stay. Getting people out is the goal and leaving a fire area prematurely does cause an imposition or disruption but public alerts and warning cannot be customized to each and every resident. Our goal is making sure an evacuation order goes out and gets you moving, if possible we will warn you of a possible evacuation order coming soon but if you are feeling uneasy or slightly in danger this is your time to leave.

#### Categories of Notifications

- **Advisories** are used to share information about an emergency situation that is likely to impact community members.
- **Warnings** are used to prepare people to act if you need extra time to mobilize (for example, if you have transportation or mobility limitations, large animals that need to be evacuated, etc).
- **Orders** are used when action needs to be taken immediately due to an imminent life threat.
  - Examples of orders include Evacuation, Shelter in Place, Climb to Higher Ground.
- **All Clear**- When there is no threat present and prior orders, warnings and advisories expire.
- **Missing Endangered Person** is issued to alert the community and hopefully assist in locating the person.
- **Climb to Higher Ground Order** is issued during a flash flood.

#### An Evacuation Warning

An Evacuation Warning is when public safety officials issue a warning that there is a high possibility of an evacuation due to an imminent threat that poses a risk to life or property.

- **Instruction (Warning Goal):** The warning will be sent to allow residents to have time to get SET by preparing their method of transportation and gathering of their belongings.
- **Public Messaging:**
  1. Arrange transportation, confirm your evacuation plan, gather items from your home, be ready to leave and if you feel you are in danger leave immediately.
  2. People with access and functional needs or with large animals should act now.

#### Evacuation Order

**Evacuation Order:** Public safety officials are ordering residents to leave now if in the designated evacuation area.

- **Instruction (Evacuation Order Goal):** Residents will have to GO with plenty of time to get to a safe place.
- **Public Messaging:**
  1. The incoming wildfire poses an extreme risk for loss of life and property in designated areas. Persons who refuse to comply with an evacuation order will not be forcibly removed from their home.
  2. You should not expect rescue or lifesaving assistance after the onset of the emergency event.
  3. You may be stranded for several days.
  4. Authorities will return people home as soon as it is safe to do so.
  5. Arrange transportation, confirm your evacuation plan, gather items from your home and be ready to leave.

Information that will be in a warning or order includes the following:

ORDER	WARNING
1. Source	Identify who- agency / authority- the alert or warning is coming from. This should be a source that is familiar to and trusted by the community.
2. Hazard	Describe the threat and its impacts.
3. Location	Articulate the impact boundaries in common language, i.e. use street names, landmarks, neighborhood names, etc.
4. Protective Action	Say what protective action to take, the time to do it, how to accomplish it and how doing it reduces the impact.
5. Time	Expected duration, if know, or “until further notice”

**Remember:**

- Advisories are used to raise awareness of a possible evacuation situation and used in areas where the community is affected.
- Warnings are used to get residents to be ready to evacuate generally within a specified timeframe.
- Orders are used when the threat or hazard is imminent, and residents must go immediately, and the order should be issued as soon as possible for residents being immediately affected.
- Please remember to sign up for [NIXLE](#), our Emergency Alert System