



News from: **City of Oakland**

## **IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Oakland residents and business owners urged to prepare for El Niño and strong winter storms**

**Oakland, CA** – With forecasters predicting strong winter storms generated by El Niño, the City of Oakland is taking steps to prepare for above-average rainfall and strong winds. Residents and business owners also are urged to prepare in advance – before heavy rains begin!

#### **What to Expect**

While the rain is welcome given current drought conditions, we also need to prepare for significant rainfall and strong winds – the kind of conditions that may result in flooding, landslides, fallen trees and branches, power outages and traffic delays throughout the city.

Weather forecasters are also predicting high tides, often referred to as “King Tides.” Due to the natural characteristics of Oakland’s geography, low-lying areas and properties adjacent to creeks, the estuary or Bay may flood in heavy rains, or during high tides even without rain.

#### **The City of Oakland is Preparing for Storms**

Oakland Public Works crews are making advance preparations to help mitigate storm-related impacts and to allow City crews to respond as effectively as possible to any storm-related impacts. Public Works is in the process of:

- Cleaning storm drains, inlets, culverts, and drainage structures
- Reviewing and revising emergency response plans for 24/7 response
- Inspecting more than 200 City facilities for pre-storm maintenance
- Coordinating planning efforts with other agencies in the region, including Alameda County.

During big storm events, our crews and emergency personnel will be working around the clock, but they – along with crews around the region – may be overwhelmed, so you should plan ahead to have the supplies you would need in any emergency.

#### **Preparedness Tips**

Simple preparation steps taken now can go a long way toward lessening the impact of weather emergencies. Review emergency plans and prepare your family, home and vehicle. Follow these simple steps:

- Clear your gutters and downspouts; ensure downspouts are working and draining away from your house
- Keep your curbs and sidewalk gutters clear of leaves and debris
- Check the storm drains near your house and use a rake to keep them clear of debris
- Trim trees to help them handle strong winds and rain; call a certified arborist to inspect your trees if you have concerns about unusual leaning or dead branches

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- Take a look at your property and make any needed repairs
- Check out your local hardware store for home flood prevention tools and techniques for using sandbags to divert water away from your property or prevent it from coming in through doors and basement windows
- Review your property insurance; if you don't have flood insurance, consider getting it now – it takes 30 days to take effect
- Know the emergency procedures and evacuation plans at your children's schools
- Make sure you have emergency supplies to last for at least three days, including enough water, food, medicine and other supplies for family members and pets

More information and resources for winter storm preparedness is available on the City of Oakland website at [oaklandnet.com/ElNino](http://oaklandnet.com/ElNino). For those without Internet access, preparation tips are available by calling (510) 444-CITY. While on the website, subscribe to receive the City's emergency email and text alerts so you can stay informed.

You can help minimize flooding in your neighborhood by participating in the City's **Adopt A Drain** program. Join our volunteer program to keep a storm drain near your home or business free of debris. The City's storm drain system includes more than 10,000 storm drains, 370 miles of drain pipe, seven pump stations and 40 miles of open creeks on public land. By keeping storm drains clean, you help prevent flooding of streets and sidewalks, allowing City crews to focus on critical storm-response activities. The City will provide supplies and debris bags. Remember: "Clear the drain before the rain." Sign up now by visiting [adoptadrainoakland.com](http://adoptadrainoakland.com) or call (510) 238-7630.

### **How to Report Storm-Related Problems**

Keep these numbers handy for emergencies. Share them with family, neighbors and friends.

**For storm-related emergency issues on public property and in the public right-of-way** (e.g., flooding, mudslides and landslides onto streets and sidewalks), contact the Public Works Call Center directly:

- Phone: (510) 615-5566

For other non-emergency requests for services please also contact the Call Center:

- Email: [opwcallcenter@oaklandnet.com](mailto:opwcallcenter@oaklandnet.com)
- Online: [oaklandpw.com](http://oaklandpw.com)
- Mobile app: [SeeClickFix](#)

**For downed power lines** or if you smell natural gas, leave the area immediately and then call 9-1-1 or PG&E at 1-800-743-5000.

**For water service emergencies** (e.g., no water service, broken hydrants, broken water main pipes), contact EBMUD at 1-866-403-2683.

**For life threatening emergencies**, call 9-1-1 from a land line or (510) 777-3211.

For more information and ongoing updates, please visit [oaklandnet.com/ElNino](http://oaklandnet.com/ElNino). Please join us in being ready for a wet and windy winter.

