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

With forecasts predicting strong winter storms generated by El Niño, the City of Oakland is taking steps to prepare for above average rainfall and strong winds that may result in flooding, landslides and downed trees and power lines. The City is preparing for 24/7 response operations, but in severe storms, city, county, state and other regional agencies are likely to be overwhelmed. Residents and business owners are urged to be informed, prepare their property and have a plan, just as in an emergency.

While specific impacts cannot be predicted, we do know that preparations are key to recovery. Oakland Public Works crews are taking steps to help mitigate storm-related impacts to all other City facilities and to other agencies in the region, in coordination with other public agencies. With forecasters predicting strong El Niño this year, if it starts to flood, many resources may be unavailable, so preparing now can help. Sandbags can be purchased at a strong El Niño this year. If it starts to flood, many resources may be unavailable, so preparing now can help. Sandbags can be purchased at

Emergency Sandbags When Rain Forecasted

Preparation is critical to dealing successfully with possible flooding from winter storms generated by El Niño, and preparing now can help. Sandbags can be purchased at your local hardware or building materials store. When filling sandbags, fill them only half full, so they’re not too heavy to lift and will stack properly.

To help residents and business owners prepare, the City will provide limited quantities of free sandbags and plastic sheeting. When inclement weather is forecasted, the City’s Public Works Department will provide emergency sandbags and plastic sheeting to help keep small areas of public land.

Help Prevent Flooding: Adopt A Drain

Another important way to help prepare your neighborhood is by participating in the Public Works Adopt A Drain program. This volunteer program trains individuals to focus on critical storm-response activities. The City will provide supplies and debris bags. Remember: “Clear the drains before the rain.”

For storm-related emergency issues, call the Public Works Call Center (Monday to Friday, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.) at (510) 238-5000 or visit www.oaklandnet.com/opwcallcenter.

For life threatening emergencies, call 9-1-1 immediately and then call 9-1-1 again.

Additional workshops are being scheduled for January. Sign up now: visit www.adoptadrainoakland.com or call (510) 238-7200.

More information and resources about winter storm preparation are available on the City’s website at oaklandnet.com/ElNino. By keeping storm drains clear of prevent flooding of streets and sidewalks, Adopt A Drain participants will assist City crews to be better able to focus on critical storm-response activities. The City will provide supplies and debris bags. Remember: “Clear the drains before the rain.”

For storm-related emergency issues, call the Public Works Call Center (Monday to Friday, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.) at (510) 238-5000 or visit www.oaklandnet.com/opwcallcenter.

For life threatening emergencies, call 9-1-1 immediately and then call 9-1-1 again.

Additional workshops are being scheduled for January. Sign up now: visit www.adoptadrainoakland.com or call (510) 238-7200.

More information and resources about winter storm preparation are available on the City’s website at oaklandnet.com/ElNino. By keeping storm drains clear of prevent flooding of streets and sidewalks, Adopt A Drain participants will assist City crews to be better able to focus on critical storm-response activities. The City will provide supplies and debris bags. Remember: “Clear the drains before the rain.”

For storm-related emergency issues, call the Public Works Call Center (Monday to Friday, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.) at (510) 238-5000 or visit www.oaklandnet.com/opwcallcenter.

For life threatening emergencies, call 9-1-1 immediately and then call 9-1-1 again.