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One Year Since Record-Breaking Storm, City of San Diego Encourages Flood Preparedness and Prevention

CONSISTENT MAINTENANCE IN STORMWATER CHANNELS PERFORMED AS RESIDENTS WORK TO REPAIR AND REBUILD THEIR HOMES

SAN DIEGO – One year ago, on Jan. 22, 2024, a historic rainstorm hit the San Diego region, bringing 2.73 inches of rain in a 24-hour period, making it the highest level of precipitation since 1850. The storm caused significant flooding in several neighborhoods of the city along Chollas Creek and in other jurisdictions, causing devastating damage to homes and businesses.

During the storm, San Diego Fire-Rescue and San Diego Police Department teams [responded to rescue multiple people](#) who were trapped in their homes or vehicles due to the flooding. More than 200 water rescues were performed.

“A year ago, parts of San Diego were hit by an extraordinarily rare storm that devastated some of our communities, and many San Diegans are still living with its impacts every day,” Mayor Todd Gloria said. “I am extremely proud of our first responders who saved lives that day, as well as all the City employees and nonprofit partners who worked tirelessly in the storm’s aftermath to help residents rebuild their lives. With climate change creating ever more intense weather events, the City is working with the people of San Diego to be ready as possible for anything Mother Nature sends our way.”

Immediately following the storm, Mayor Todd Gloria declared a State of Emergency in the city of San Diego and worked with federal officials, including then-Vice President Kamala Harris, to secure a Federal Disaster Declaration, which allowed San Diegans to receive Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) funding and resources.

According to data provided by FEMA, 4,856 structures across the county sustained damage from the storm, that includes those in the City of San Diego, National City, Spring Valley and other areas. FEMA provided approximately \$27 million dollars to residents for damage to their homes and businesses, for rental assistance and for housing.

As residents have worked to repair their properties and rebuild, the City has offered support through several programs to assist them.

- In collaboration with the County of San Diego, the Emergency Temporary Lodging Program was established to provide safe housing options for people whose homes were damaged.
- Following the end of the Temporary Lodging Program, more than 300 families who haven't been able to return home are receiving ongoing support through the San Diego Housing Commission's Flood Recovery Program.
- With assistance available through the Virtual Local Assistance Center, and in person at the Mountain View/Beckwourth Library, those impacted by the storm were able to access to resources.
- By waiving permit fees for construction, the City has helped residents save approximately \$80,000 on rebuilding. So far, 87 permits have been processed with guidance from the Development Services Department.
- Under the Debris Assistance Program and household debris removal, more than 6,870 tons of storm-related trash, debris and hazardous waste were collected and removed. The City also replaced and delivered 1,650 trash and recycling containers for free.
- A total of 106 small businesses and nonprofits were approved to receive \$365,000 in funding through the Business Emergency Response & Resilience Grant.

Under the State of Emergency, following the storm, crews were able to perform emergency maintenance for 18 miles of stormwater channels citywide -- roughly 10 years' worth of productivity -- including 12 miles in the Chollas Creek watershed.

Last year, Mayor Gloria and the City of San Diego co-sponsored Assembly Bill 3227, the Streamlining Storm Water Channel Maintenance Act, authored by Assemblymember David Alvarez (D-San Diego). As a result of AB 3227, the City has been able to expedite maintenance on the two key stormwater channels in the impacted areas: the Alpha channel and the Ocean View channel.

The City also sponsored Assembly Bill 2501, another bill authored by Assemblymember Alvarez, which allows for improved staffing levels at local water boards to enable more efficient review of permits.

"The devastating floods in San Diego one year ago highlighted the urgent need for action to streamline maintenance efforts," said Assemblymember David Alvarez. "Together with the City, I authored and passed Assembly Bills 2501 and 3227 last September to empower local governments to better maintain stormwater channels and protect our communities from flooding. I am pleased to have worked with Mayor Gloria on these two important state laws and thank him for his leadership."

Additionally, the Stormwater Department is working on two Capital Improvement Projects:

- The Jamacha Drainage Channel Upgrade, which focuses on improving stormwater infrastructure to enhance flood protection and environmental resilience.
- The Beta Street Storm Drain Improvements project, which focuses on upgrading aging stormwater infrastructure to enhance drainage capacity and reduce flood risks in the surrounding area.

The City of San Diego is taking proactive steps to ensure the safety of residents living in floodplain areas by distributing educational pamphlets with vital information on how to prepare for potential future flooding. The informational brochures, which were sent to about 10,000 residents who live in or own

property in a [floodplain](#), contain essential guidelines on emergency preparedness, evacuation plans, flood insurance and other critical flood-related resources.

Property owners are also reminded that they may qualify for a [15% discount on flood insurance](#) premiums.

For more information and resources on how to properly prepare before a storm, please visit the [City's Storm Preparedness](#) webpage.



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