



PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Ojai's Community Disaster Guides Helps Prepare Residents and Visitors for Major Emergencies

OJAI, CA (December 16, 2022) Through a collaboration with dozens of public safety partners and with input from the local community, the City of Ojai is distributing its new community disaster guide. This 16-page booklet will provide residents and visitors know at a glance what to do and where to get trusted information in case of a major disaster affecting Ojai.

"It has been five years since the Thomas Fire and in that time we have continually worked to improve our emergency preparedness and local response," says City Manager James Vega. "Now the focus is on getting information out to the community."

Over the past few years, the City has purchased back-up systems for the local radio station AM1610, launched the MyOjai app, which provides local alerts and information to supplement VC Alert, purchased mobile emergency messaging trailers with battery backup, and launched a solar-powered micro-grid that can keep City Hall running.

Division Chief Barry Parker explains how Ventura County Fire is leveraging the latest fire weather technology to increase prediction capacity and allow targeted response.

"We are now using real-time infrared feed from aircraft showing fire direction," says Parker. "And we have models that can predict potential fire growth based on weather conditions over a one-15-hour period. That's technology that was not in place five years ago."

Last year, the City's Disaster Council recommended an Ojai-focused disaster guide to address the unique needs of the community. The City pulled together Police, Fire, Red Cross, County OES, Ham Radio operators, schools, Humane Society, healthcare, media and policymakers. In addition, the City hosted community workshops to refine content and address information gaps. After an Ojai Day short-run release, the Guide has been reprinted for mass distribution.

The Community Disaster Guide is currently available at City Hall, Ojai Police Station, the Ojai Library, and a growing number of businesses throughout Ojai. A down-loadable e-book version is accessible at www.ojai.ca.gov/staysafeguide. Businesses, neighborhood groups, and residents who would like batch copies of the Community Disaster guide can email robin.godfrey@ojai.ca.gov or call 805-646-5581, x100.

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