

COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE
STATE OF CALIFORNIA

PROCLAMATION OF A LOCAL EMERGENCY
BY THE DIRECTOR OF EMERGENCY SERVICES

WHEREAS, Ordinance 533.7 of the County of Riverside empowers the Director of Emergency Services to proclaim the existence of a "Local Emergency" when the Board of Supervisors is not in session and,

WHEREAS, the Director of Emergency Services finds that at the time of this proclamation, the Board of Supervisors is not in session; and,

WHEREAS, the County of Riverside experienced unappreciated rainfall due to the remnants from Hurricane Hilary causing widespread flooding of the Thermal, Mecca, Oasis, and North Shore areas.

WHEREAS, on September 1, the National Weather Service Phoenix, AZ, issued a series of Flash Flood Advisories, Warnings and Watches advising that conditions of damage and extreme peril to the safety of persons and property within the eastern portion of Riverside County.

WHEREAS, the significant flooding in the Eastern portion of Riverside County substantially impacted the county's unincorporated areas of Thermal, Mecca, Oasis, and portions of the Torres-Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indians' Reservation, overwhelming requests for resources, including, but not limited to, swift water rescue teams, mass care and shelter resources, transportation crews, and flood control on the affected communities.

WHEREAS, the area known as the Lawson Landfill received an estimated 2.86" of rainfall, which caused a failure of the protective berm surrounding the landfill, and a failure of the landfill's entombment covering, creating conditions of dangerous contaminated flows potentially containing dioxins and furans, necessitating the issuance of evacuation warnings to residents of the nearby local mobile home parks below the landfill area.

WHEREAS, emergency testing of the location's water and soil is being coordinated, and based on the results, there may be a need to contain and remove contaminated water and soil, and creating conditions that have rapidly exhausted all local resources to repair and mitigate the site and render it safe.

WHEREAS, due to the potential severity of the situation and to ensure a seamless response to the impacts of the abandoned landfill, multi-jurisdictional coordination between the County of Riverside, Torres-Martinez Desert Cahuilla Indian Tribal Government, State of California, Federal Government and Private/Non-Profits that must take place, in order to lessen the impacts to the whole community.

WHEREAS, the potential of the aforementioned conditions of extreme peril warrant and necessitate the proclamation of a "Local Emergency".

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY PROCLAIMED that a "Local Emergency" exists throughout the Eastern County of Riverside; and,


IT IS FURTHER PROCLAIMED AND ORDERED that during the existence of said "Local Emergency", the powers, functions and duties of the Director of Emergency Services and the Emergency Management Organization of this County shall be those prescribed by State law and the charter, ordinances, resolutions, and approved plans of the County of Riverside in order to mitigate the effects of said "Local Emergency"; and,

IT IS FURTHER PROCLAIMED AND ORDERED that said "Local Emergency" shall be deemed to continue to exist for the next seven (7) days, and thereafter by ratification of the Board of Supervisors, until its termination is proclaimed by the Board of Supervisors of the County of Riverside; and,

IT IS FURTHER PROCLAIMED AND ORDERED that the County of Riverside is requesting the Governor of the State of California assist in directing State Agencies in the repairing and mitigating of future breeches and requests that County of Riverside obtain Federal Agency assistance.

IT IS FURTHER PROCLAIMED AND ORDERED that a copy of this proclamation be forwarded to the Governor of California with the request to provide and request all eligible State and Federal financial assistance to the County and impacted local jurisdictions.

Dated: September 5, 2023



Jeff Van Wagenen
County Executive Officer
Director of Emergency Services
County of Riverside