

PUBLIC WORKS *DECEMBER STORM* *RECOVERY INFORMATION*



Dec. 29, 2025 Update

Understanding the Storm Impacts and the County's Role

The San Bernardino County Department of Public Works (DPW) would like to share information on our ongoing response and recovery efforts following the December 2025 storm that impacted Wrightwood, Lytle Creek, and surrounding communities.

This storm brought heavy historical rainfall that caused flooding, mudflows, debris, and damage to roadways and flood control facilities well beyond normal storm conditions. These impacts created serious safety concerns, damages, and access challenges for many residents.

Why the Flooding and Mudflows Occurred

Recent wildfires, including the Bridge Fire, burned large areas of vegetation in and around the San Gabriel Mountains. Vegetation normally helps absorb rainwater and stabilize hillsides. After a fire:

- Burned areas shed water much faster
- Ash prevents water from soaking into the ground
- Loose soil and debris are easily carried downhill during heavy rain

These conditions significantly increase the risk of flooding, erosion, and mudflows during storms.

About Emergency Proclamations and Assistance

The State emergency declaration allows for potential reimbursement for damaged government facilities. It does not automatically provide direct assistance to private property owners. If private assistance programs become available, the County will establish a Local Assistance Center where County, State, and Non-Profit agencies will be available to provide information and assistance to disaster related losses and recovery resources"

What Public Works Has Done and Continues to Do

Before, during, and after the storm, DPW crews have been actively working to protect public safety by:

- Deploying crews to respond to emergencies and hazardous conditions
- Clearing mud and debris from County-maintained roads, drainage systems, and flood control facilities prior to storm season
- Assessing damage to identify unsafe conditions and maintain access routes
- Coordinating closely with the Sheriff's Department, Fire Districts, Office of Emergency Services, National Weather Service, and other agencies
- Setting up road closures, detours, and traffic control where conditions are unsafe
- Remaining on standby for additional storms or secondary impacts

Why the County Cannot Work on Private Property

We understand how overwhelming this storm event has been, especially for residents facing damage to their own property. However, State law strictly limits what the County can do.

By law, San Bernardino County and DPW cannot perform work or spend public funds on private property.

- County road funding, including gas tax dollars, can only be used on County-maintained roads
- Flood Control funding can only be used on facilities that the Flood Control District owns and maintains
- The County is legally prohibited from repairing private roads, driveways, yards, or other private land, even during emergencies

These restrictions are set by State law. While we cannot directly perform work on private property, this does not mean the County is not working to support residents in other ways.

How the County Is Working to Support Residents

Because this storm affected both public and private areas, the County is actively coordinating with state and federal agencies to pursue additional assistance, including:

- California Department of Water Resources (DWR) for potential state recovery resources
- USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) for emergency watershed protection and erosion control
- California Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES) for disaster recovery coordination
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) for debris removal, hazard mitigation, and long-term recovery

While County efforts are legally limited on private property, these federal and state programs above may allow debris removal, protective measures, or technical assistance where there is a risk to public safety. Information will be shared as programs become available.

Options for Removing Mud and Debris from Private Property

- The County has identified nearby dump sites where property owners may dispose of soil and rock removed from private property. The county has also provided temporary dumpsters for residents for household waste other than soil and rock. Locations linked below. Please note: Rocks, soil, dirt, vegetation, and hazardous materials (including batteries and electronics) are not allowed in dumpsters.

Mud and Debris Dump Locations -

**Wrightwood
Location**



**Lytle
Creek
Location**



Dumpster Locations for Household Waste -

Wrightwood: 1299 Angeles Crest Highway, Wrightwood

Lytle Creek:

- Melody's Place - 551 Lytle Creek Rd, Lytle Creek
- Care and Reception Center - 497 Lytle Creek Rd, Lytle Creek

- NRCS is currently evaluating properties to determine whether assistance may be available
- Property owners are encouraged to contact their insurance providers to discuss coverage and recovery options

Our Commitment to the Community

We know this has been an incredibly difficult time for many residents. San Bernardino County and the Department of Public Works remain committed to:

- Keeping residents informed as conditions change
- Advocating for additional resources and recovery assistance
- Working closely with partner agencies and the community
- Working on repairing and reopening roads as quickly and safely as possible. Road closures updates can be found at <https://dpw.sbcounty.gov> Road Closure Map.

We sincerely appreciate the patience, cooperation, and resilience shown by our residents as recovery efforts continue. Additional updates will be provided as more information becomes available.

Additional Community Resources

The Office of Emergency Services has coordinated recovery resources for affected communities. For more information, visit Prepare.SBCounty.gov/RecoveryResources.



**Resource
Information**