

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT STATE OF CALIFORNIA

EXECUTIVE ORDER N-5-25

WHEREAS on January 7, 2025, I proclaimed a State of Emergency to exist in Los Angeles and Ventura Counties due to fire and windstorm conditions that have now caused multiple fires, including the Palisades, Eaton, Hurst, Lidia, Sunset, and Woodley Fires; and

WHEREAS these fires have collectively burned over 40,300 acres, and these fires and windstorm conditions have devastated communities across the Greater Los Angeles Area and destroyed or damaged more than 12,300 structures, including homes and businesses, with initial estimates placing this disaster among the most destructive in California history; and

WHEREAS I am committed to helping families and individuals who have lost their homes and businesses rebuild and recover without facing unnecessary costs and delay; and

WHEREAS I issued Executive Order N-4-25 earlier today suspending the application of the California Environmental Quality Act and permitting requirements under the Coastal Act to efforts to rebuild or repair properties or facilities destroyed or substantially damaged by these fires and directing other action to remove barriers to rapid rebuilding efforts; and

WHEREAS rebuilding efforts cannot begin on impacted property until hazardous and other debris is removed from that property; and

WHEREAS I issued Executive Order N-2-25 on January 8, 2025, to bolster the emergency response, including authorizing the suspension of statutes, regulations, rules, and requirements to expedite the removal and cleanup of debris from this emergency; and

WHEREAS even with these legal suspensions, removing the debris generated by these devastating fires, with thousands of destroyed or damaged structures located in disparate parts of Los Angeles County, presents a monumental challenge, underscoring the urgent need to expeditiously develop a comprehensive plan for debris removal and execute the contracts and take other actions necessary to expeditiously implement that plan; and

WHEREAS coordination with impacted local governments and the Federal Emergency Management Agency will be critical to effectively implement a comprehensive debris removal plan for the impacted communities; and

WHEREAS these devastating fires also created burn scars that will pose additional risks to surrounding communities if significant winter storms impact the area, because rainfall on burned soil is not absorbed at normal rates and can lead to run off, causing flash floods, mudslides, and debris flows in waterways that lead to additional flooding; and

WHEREAS after the Thomas Fire devastated Santa Barbara and Ventura Counties in December 2017, mudslides caused by a series of winter storms in January 2018 caused significant damage, tragically resulting in 23 confirmed deaths and displacing tens of thousands of residents in the town of Montecito and surrounding communities; and

WHEREAS historical data indicate that significant winter rainstorms are likely to impact the Greater Los Angeles Area in the next few months,

compounding the peril posed to communities impacted by these devastating fires, as well as neighboring communities downhill and downstream; and

WHEREAS it is critical that the State remain vigilant and prepare now for the potential threat to lives and property that flash flooding, mudslides, and debris flows would pose, even while the firefights remain active.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GAVIN NEWSOM, Governor of the State of California, in accordance with the authority vested in me by the State Constitution and statutes, do hereby issue the following Order to become effective immediately:

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED THAT:

1. The Office of Emergency Services, in consultation with the California Environmental Protection Agency and other agencies and departments, as appropriate, shall immediately engage the County of Los Angeles, the Cities of Los Angeles, Malibu, Pasadena, and Sierra Madre, as well as other impacted communities and the Federal Emergency Management Agency, to develop a comprehensive plan for expeditiously removing debris from impacted properties to allow the rebuilding process to commence as quickly as possible, including the prompt execution of contracts with debris removal vendors with a proven track record of successfully delivering services on a timely and cost-effective basis.
2. The Office of Emergency Services, the Department of Water Resources, the California Geological Survey, the California Conservation Corps, the California Department of Fire and Forestry (CAL FIRE), the State Water Resources Control Board, and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife shall immediately develop a plan to mitigate the risks of flash floods, mudslides, and debris flows in the burn scar areas created by the fires covered by this emergency and other recent fires in Southern California and to respond promptly to any flooding, mudslides, or debris flows that may occur if significant winter storms hit the Greater Los Angeles area in the coming weeks and months.

I FURTHER DIRECT that as soon as hereafter possible, this Order be filed in the Office of the Secretary of State and that widespread publicity and notice be given of this Order.

This Order is not intended to, and does not, create any rights or benefits, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or in equity, against the State of California, its agencies, departments, entities, officers, employees, or any other person.




IN WITNESS WHEREOF I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of California to be affixed this 12th day of January 2025.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gavin Newsom', is written over a horizontal line.

GAVIN NEWSOM
Governor of California

ATTEST:



SHIRLEY WEBER, PH.D
Secretary of State