

Brian S. Marshall
Fire Chief & Director of Emergency Services



KERN COUNTY EMERGENCY OPERATIONS CENTER
2601 PANORAMA DRIVE, BUILDING B • BAKERSFIELD, CA 93306 • WWW.KERNCOUNTYFIRE.ORG
TELEPHONE 661-873-2602 • FAX 661-873-2699

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: June 27, 2016
CONTACT: Captain Mike Nicholas, Kern EOC Public Information Officer
PHONE: 661-330-0158

MEDIA ADVISORY

June 27, 2016 – Repopulation Effort

As of noon today, the evacuation recommendations for the Erskine Fire have been modified in order to facilitate the repopulation of displaced citizens. The evacuation recommendations remain in effect for the areas of Squirrel Valley and South Lake. Road closures continue at McCray Rd and Dogwood, and at Entrada and Hwy 178.

The areas of Yankee Canyon and Mountain Mesa are open to repopulate with the Public Health warning that there is no power to these areas. However, bottled water will be made available.

The areas East of South Lake along Hwy 178 will be available for repopulation including: Larson Tract, Navajo, Hillview Acres, Bella Vista, and Weldon. These areas have electrical power, however, water safety guidelines should be followed for compromised water systems.

Tomorrow, 6-28-16, at 12 noon a transition center will be opened to support the repopulation effort. Normal hours of operation will be from 0900-1800. The location of the center is Wallace Elementary School at 3240 Erskine Creek Rd. in Lake Isabella. The preliminary function of this transition center is to support the needs of the most recently repopulated citizens. Supplies like water, household goods, personal hygiene items, etc. will be available for citizens during this transition period. As new areas open for repopulation operations, the transition center will evolve to meet the needs of our citizens. The local call center at our EOC will be a primary source for new information regarding the status of structures in the fire affected areas. The call center will be operational from 0800-2000 each day. The number to call is 661-873-2660.

Public Health: There are Public Health Assessment Teams working in conjunction with the Building Inspection Department to ensure that areas affected by the fire are safe to repopulate. As findings are made, information will be released and repopulation efforts will be modified. Public health and safety concerns are still the driving force for the maintenance of restricted areas.

Health concerns include: Contaminated drinking water, inhalation hazards from toxic building materials like asbestos and lead, and disposal of hazardous materials from fire debris.

Utilities: As per Southern California Edison (SCE), service has been restored to approximately 2300 homes and businesses in portions of the South Fork Valley, mostly South Lake and Weldon North of the intersection of Kelso Valley Rd and Kelso Creek Rd. Approximately 700 customers remain without power. SCE has connected generators to 3 priority locations in the affected area of Mountain Mesa Market, Mesa Clinical Pharmacy, and Rural Health Clinic which will serve as a temporary Urgent Care Facility.

As of today 116 of more than 200 distribution poles, and 11 of 30 transmission poles, damaged due to the Erskine Fire have been replaced. Equipment is still being assessed for damage.

Donations: Monetary donations are being encouraged for the local chapter of the Red Cross and for the United Way of Kern County.

Non-monetary donations (non food) should be directed to Good Will locations throughout the county, mostly in Bakersfield, between 8-5. Also, Houchin Community Blood Bank is accepting these type of donations at both donor locations, contact Peggy Smith 661-616-2505. Do not send donations to the emergency shelters.

Non-perishable food donations should be directed to the Lake Isabella Food Pantry at 4621 Lake Isabella Blvd attention Steve or Phillis. Donations here are accepted 24/7. The Elks Lodge at 7608 Wofford Blvd in Wofford Heights is in need of non-perishable food donations, contact Jadeen. The Elks Lodge is no longer accepting non-food donations.

Animal related donations should be directed to Lake Isabella County Animal Shelter at 14891 Hwy 178 Monday-Friday from 8-5.

We appreciate your cooperation and patience as new information is acquired and repopulation efforts continue.