

San Diego Newsline

Downtown San Diego news — the budget, public safety, business, and the civic life of America's Finest City

WHAT'S NEWS

COUNTY
First Big Rains on the Way, Sandbags Available

COUNTY
How to Stay Safe in Rainy Conditions

COUNTY
Give Yourself the Gift of Furr Ever Love

COUNTY
County Encourages Flu Vaccines for Children and Teens

BUSINESS
Member Spotlight: San Diego Automotive Museum

BUSINESS
2025 State Legislative Outlook

INSIDE
Downtown, City & County — 2
Business — 3
Cartoon — 3
Commentary — 4

COUNTY

First Big Rains on the Way, Sandbags Available



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With the National Weather Service predicting the first heavy rains across San Diego County this week, the County and CAL FIRE are offering advice and free sandbags to residents and businesses in the unincorporated areas.

To date, San Diego County’s winter has been relatively dry but that is expected to change this week with potentially heavy rains.

County emergency services and public works road crews say people should stay alert and take precautions and drive carefully on the roads and offered the following tips:

Avoid driving in heavy rain conditions but if the trip is necessary:

Slow down to avoid getting into an accident. It takes longer to stop when roads are wet. Allow yourself at least an extra 15 minutes or so to arrive at your destination to adjust for slower traffic.

Turn on your headlights to see better and make it easier for other drivers to see you. It’s the law.

Try to drive toward the middle lanes as water tends to gather in outside lanes.

Defog your windows for better visibility. Rain can cause windows to fog up. Along the same lines, check your windshield wipers preferably before it rains again and replace them as needed.

Avoid driving through deep water because it can affect your brakes. If you cannot avoid it, test your brakes afterward to make sure they’ve dried out and are working properly.

Turn around, don’t drown. In heavy rains, never drive through a flooded roadway if you cannot see the pavement. Even a few inches of water running at the right velocity can sweep a car, and even a truck, and its occupants off the roadway and downstream. You should not walk or swim across a flooded roadway either.

Give the cars in front of you extra distance. The spray from their vehicles — particularly from larger trucks and buses — can hamper your vision. And giving extra space to the guy in front of you also gives you more time to brake or adjust if you need to do so.

Keep calm, don’t oversteer or stomp on the brakes if you start to hydroplane or skid when your tires lose traction with the wet road. The Department of Motor Vehicles says keep the steering wheel straight and take your foot off the accelerator so your vehicle can slow down slowly.

Stay focused. Remember, it’s illegal, and dangerous, to try to text or use a hand-held cell phone when you’re driving.

Slow down for the cone zone if you see highway or road workers ahead or to your side. Watch out for public works crews and equipment.

As they have in the past, the County and CAL FIRE are providing free bags and/or sand at numerous fire stations for people who live in the unincorporated areas.

Rain can cause flooding and erosion, particularly in areas that are

not covered by plants, landscaping, grass and trees. Rain runoff can sweep topsoil, mud, plant material and debris off land and downstream where it can damage homes, clog culverts and storm drains, and flood and damage roadways.

Sand and bags, or bags alone, will be available for unincorporated residents at the fire stations located below.

People should call ahead to double-check availability and remember to bring a shovel to fill the bags. Some stations may have a limited supply.

Bonita: Bonita-Sunnyside Fire Station #38: 4900 Bonita Road, Bonita, CA 91902, P: 619-479-2346

Boulevard: Boulevard Fire Station #47: 40080 Ribbonwood Road, Boulevard, CA 91905, P: 619-390-2020

De Luz: De Luz Fire Station #16: 39431 De Luz Road, Fallbrook, CA 92028 P: 760-728-2422

Dulzura: Dulzura Fire Station #30: 17304 Highway 94, Dulzura, CA 91917, P: 619-468-3391

Fallbrook: Pala Mesa Fire Station #4, 4375 Pala Mesa Drive, Fallbrook, CA 92028, P: 760-723-2005

Palomar Mountain: Palomar Mountain Fire Station #79, 21610 Crestline Road, Palomar Mtn., CA 92060, P: 760-742-3701

Potrero: Potrero Fire Station #31 25130 Highway 94, Potrero, CA 91963 P: 619-478-5544

Ramona: Ramona Fire Station

Continued on page 2

DOWNTOWN, CITY & COUNTY

Courts · Transit · Public safety

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

First Big Rains on the Way, Sandbags Available

#81, 24462 San Vicente Road, Ramona, CA 92065 P: 760-789-9465

Ramona: Ramona Fire Station #82, 3410 Dye Road, Ramona, CA 92065, P: 760-789-0107

Rincon: Rincon Fire Station #70: 16971 Highway 76, Pauma Valley, CA 92061, P: 760-742-3243

Valley Center: Valley Center Fire Station #2, 28205 N. Lake Wohlford Road, Valley Center, CA 92082, P: 760-751-7605

Warner Springs: Sunshine Summit Fire Station #59, 35227 Highway 79, Warner Springs, CA 92086, P: 760-782-9113

Alpine: Alpine Fire Station #17 1364 Tavern Road Alpine, CA 91901 P: 619-445-2635

Borrego Springs: Ocotillo Wells Fire Station #61 5841 Highway 78, Borrego Springs, CA 92004 P: 760-767-7430

Borrego Springs: Borrego Springs Station #60, 2324 Stirrup Road, Borrego Springs, CA 92004, P: 760-767-5436

Campo: Campo Fire Station #40 31577 Highway 94, Campo, CA 91906 P: 619-478-5516

Campo: Lake Morena Fire Station #42 29690 Oak Drive, Campo, CA 91906 P: 619-478-5960

Descanso: Descanso Fire Station #45 24592 Viejas Grade Road, Descanso, CA 91916 P: 619-445-7508

El Cajon: Harbison Canyon Fire Station #24 551 Harbison Canyon Road, El Cajon, CA 92019 P: 619-445-5001

Escondido: Deer Springs Fire Station #11 8709 Circle R Drive, Escondido, CA 92026 P: 760-749-8001

Escondido: Miller Fire Station #15 9127 W. Lilac

Road, Escondido, CA 92025 P: 760-728-8532

Flinn Springs: Flinn Springs Fire Station#21 9711 Flynn Springs Road, El Cajon, CA 92021 P: 619-443-7121

Jacumba: Jacumba Fire Station #43 1255 Jacumba St., Jacumba, CA 91934 P: 619-766-4535

Jamul: Jamul Fire Station #36 14024 Peaceful Valley Ranch, Jamul, CA 91935 P: 619-669-6580

Jamul: Deerhorn Fire Station #37 2383 Honeysprings Road, Jamul, CA 91935 P: 619-468-3030

Julian: Julian-Cuyamaca: Fire Station #56, 3407 Hwy 79, Julian, CA 92036, P: 760-765-2885

Julian: Shelter Valley Fire Station #62, 7260 Great Southern Overland, Julian, CA 92036 P: 760-765-0155

Laguna: Mt. Laguna Fire Station #49 33947 Mt. Laguna Drive, Mt Laguna, CA 91948 P: 619-473-8281

Mount Woodson: Mount Woodson Fire Station #86 16310 State Highway 67, Ramona, CA 92065 P: 760-789-1150

Pine Valley: Pine Valley Fire Station #44 28850 Old Highway 80, Pine Valley, CA 91962 P: 619-578-6621

Ranchita: Ranchita Fire Station #58 37370 Montezuma Valley Road, Ranchita, CA 92066 P: 760-782-3467

Ramona: Intermountain Fire Station #85, 25858 Highway 78, Ramona, CA 92065 P: 760-789-3710

San Pasqual: San Pasqual Fire Station #84 17701 San Pasqual Valley Road, Escondido, CA 92025 P: 760-480-9924

Warner Springs: Warner Springs Fire Station #52 31049 Highway 79, Warner Springs, CA 92086 P: 760-782-3560

Residents are encouraged to visit AlertSanDiego.org for information on what to do

during an emergency.

Youhttps://www.alertsandiiego.org/en-us.html may also want to check out this how-to video, “You’ve Got Your Sandbags, Now What?” that explains how to properly fill and use sandbags to protect your property.

County of San Diego news release · Feb 10, 2025

COUNTY

How to Stay Safe in Rainy Conditions

With rainy weather in the forecast, including the chance of flooding in some low-lying areas, emergency officials offer seven safety tips.

If you must drive during heavy squalls, allow yourself extra time, turn on headlights even in the day, and give plenty of space between your vehicle and the one in front of you.

When approaching a flooded roadway with moving water, do not attempt to drive through it. It only takes a few inches of water to get a vehicle to float away, and there’s no guarantee the roadway below hasn’t been washed out. You can report flooded roadways or other unsafe road issues in the unincorporated area by calling (877) 684-8000.

The same caution is true for pedestrians, if moving water can sweep a car away, it can easily do the same to people. Do not try to wade through a flooded roadway.

If your home gets an evacuation warning, or if you feel unsafe, evacuate.

Stay informed on adverse weather conditions, with official information from the National Weather Service or news outlets.

Visit AlertSanDiego.org for disaster preparedness tips including flooding.

To receive emergency alerts for your area, download the Genasys Protect app or in the App Store or Google Play.

For information on how to use sandbags to divert water from your homes or businesses or where to get them, and additional driving tips, see First Big Rains on the Way, Sandbags Available .

County of San Diego news release · Feb 11, 2025

COUNTY

Give Yourself the Gift of Furr Ever Love

Looking for love that lasts a lifetime? This Valentine’s season, open your heart and home to a shelter pet in need.

County Animal Services is offering up some “Sweet Deals” on all its super loveable pets. From now until Feb. 16, all adoptions, excluding puppies under a year old, are just \$14 at the County’s shelters in Bonita and Carlsbad.

Come meet some of the available pets on the Animal Services website like Shia an Akita or Mowgli a Kelpie mix, both at the Carlsbad shelter. Or Desie, a Siberian Husky and Cindy, a Doberman Pinscher, both at the Bonita shelter. You can even take

dogs out for a fun outing to get to know their personality better. You can learn more about Dogs Day Out here, just scroll down.

Walk-in hours are from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tuesday through Sunday at the South Shelter, 5821 Sweetwater Road in Bonita and the North Shelter, 2481 Palomar Airport Road in Carlsbad.

All adoption fees include spaying or neutering, a microchip, updated vaccinations and a one-year dog license for those in the service area.

To adopt, you just need a photo identification card. Adoptions are on a first-come, first-served basis.

Pets who have been at the shelter for 30+ days

If you’re unsure, considering fostering a pet to see if it is a good fit, or just to give him or her a break from the shelter environment. Pets benefit tremendously from being in a home environment and learning how to be part of a family. All basic care supplies such as food, leash, and bedding, are included as part of the program.

For more information on fostering animals , making pet food donations, or volunteering for the shelter , call (619) 767-2675 or visit the Animal Services main website .

County of San Diego news release · Feb 7, 2025

COUNTY

County Encourages Flu Vaccines for Children and Teens

County public health officials are reminding everyone,

particularly families with children and teenagers, that it is not too late to get the flu vaccine.

This flu season, which is between fall and winter, three teenagers have died from the flu. None were vaccinated.

“These recent flu deaths among our youth are tragic and concerning as we head into what historically is the peak of flu season,” said Dr. Ankita Kadakia, Interim Public Health Officer. “The flu vaccine is the best protection against getting seriously sick and preventing death. This has been a particularly long and difficult flu season compared to recent years and it’s not over yet. I highly encourage the flu vaccine, it’s not too late.”

In San Diego County, nearly 80 percent of 5- to 17-year-olds have not received this flu season’s vaccine.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends that everyone 6 months and older get a flu shot yearly since the components of the vaccine change year to year to match the circulating strains.

The influenza vaccine is available at doctors’ offices and retail pharmacies and is covered by medical insurance. People with no health care coverage can get vaccinated at one of the County’s six public health centers or a local community clinic. To find the nearest location, visit the County’s Flu Vaccine Locations page, myturn.ca.gov , or call 2-1-1 San Diego.

In addition to getting vaccinated, people should also do the following to avoid getting sick:

Use hand sanitizers, if unable to wash hands

Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth

If you are sick, stay home and avoid contact with others

County Health and Human Services Agency publishes the Respiratory Viruses Surveillance report, which tracks key flu, COVID-19, and RSV indicators and summarizes respiratory virus surveillance in the region.

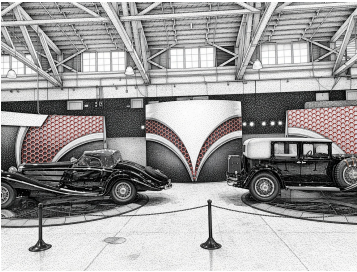
In total, there have been 73 people who have died from the flu this flu season. Most were people 50 years and older.

County of San Diego news release · Feb 6, 2025

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BUSINESS

San Diego commerce & the regional economy



BUSINESS
Member Spotlight: San Diego Automotive Museum

Located in the heart of Balboa Park, the San Diego Automotive Museum celebrates the artistry, history, and innovation of the automotive world. Through captivating exhibits, community events, and transformative educational programs, we foster a culture of connection and belonging that unites car enthusiasts and the community across generations.

Our award-winning IGNITE Academy is changing the lives of underserved San Diego youth with hands-on technical training, mentorship, and pathways to high-paying careers in the automotive industry and beyond. From monthly workshops on brake installation, car

detailing, and tire maintenance to lessons in financial literacy and resume creation, students gain valuable skills and confidence. Partnering with 26 local businesses, we place qualified students in internships and apprenticeships, creating a pipeline of talent for industries in need and setting students up for lasting career success.

For San Diego’s business leaders, partnering with the Museum is a chance to make a tangible impact while connecting with a passionate community. By sponsoring or underwriting our events, you’ll help us preserve automotive history, empower local youth, and strengthen our city’s vibrant car culture. Upcoming opportunities include our Shifting Gears Rally on March 29 and Cruising for Drivers Golf Tournament on May 19—two exciting platforms to showcase your brand and values while supporting a great cause.

Looking for another way to drive change? Your dream car awaits in our 2025 sweepstakes. Enter today for a chance to win a Porsche Taycan RWD with Performance Package or

\$90,000 in cash. Visit sdautomuseum.org/win to see Official Rules and use promo code SDCHAMBER to receive 25% more entries ! Proceeds directly support the Museum, including our educational programs and exhibits.

For sponsorships, underwriting opportunities, or to discuss how your business can collaborate with San Diego Automotive Museum, contact Caitlin Fahey, Director of Development, at Caitlin@sdautomuseum.org or 619-398-0302. Together, we can drive innovation, education, and connection across our community. www.sdautomuseum.org

San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce news release · Jan 29, 2025

BUSINESS
2025 State Legislative Outlook

We may only be a few weeks into the new year, but the California legislature has already begun introducing bills for the 2025 session. As we look forward to the 2025 legislative session, we can expect a mix of policy priorities that both continue some efforts from the Assembly, Senate, and the Governor

during 2024, and new priorities.

The cost of living and the cost of doing business are growing issues in California. We can expect legislators to bring forth policies to lower the cost of living, from housing to job creation. The Chamber will focus on policy efforts that help reduce the cost of establishing and operating businesses across California, including opposing overly burdensome regulations which affect the ability of California’s industries to thrive.

AI and tech innovation will continue to be a hot-button issue for the state, from potential regulations impacting autonomous vehicles to public harm testing of AI products. San Diego is a hub for technology and innovation, and the Chamber will continue to advocate for policies that bolster the innovation economy and against regulations that would stymie the industry as a whole.

Public safety will also continue to be a topic of debate in the legislature. While the Senate and Assembly passed theft bill packages last year,

voters spoke clearly in support of Prop 36, which took effect last month. The Chamber was a strong supporter of the bill package and Prop 36 and will continue to advocate for public safety that allows San Diego’s businesses to thrive.

Electrification and zero emission efforts are also at the table. While CARB recently dropped their waiver request for their Advanced Clean Fleets rule from the EPA, we expect California to continue to position itself as a leader in clean energy policy. Chamber staff will continue to monitor the evolving dialogue between the state and the federal government on this issue, and will continue to advocate for regulations that truly take into consideration the economic realities of our region.

More to come from our policy team in the next few months! In the meantime, we hope you can join us in Sacramento next week as we elevate our region’s priorities with state officials.

San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce news release · Jan 24, 2025

THE NEWSLINE CARTOON

Opinion



Give yourself the gift of furr-ever love

THE NEWSLINE CARTOON

COMMENTARY

COMMENTARY

California Fires Offer No Excuse for Targeting Oil Producers, Policy Group Says

The California Policy Center contends that Senator Scott Wiener's bill to let wildfire victims sue fossil fuel firms is merely the newest tactic in the state's long campaign against energy companies.

As devastating wildfires continue to rage across Los Angeles, the California Policy Center argues that politicians are wrongly using the disaster as justification to attack private energy businesses.

According to the Center, State Senator Scott Wiener has introduced Senate Bill 222, known as the Affordable Insurance and Climate Recovery Act. The legislation would encourage those affected by large-scale climate events to pursue court claims against oil and gas producers.

Wiener stated that major fossil fuel companies "intentionally misled the public for decades about the impacts of their products" and that Californians are now suffering consequences including wildfires, mudslides, sea level rise and soaring insurance costs. He added that the measure would let homeowners and businesses recover damages from the fossil fuel

companies responsible for the disasters.

The Center writes that the bill's true aim is to aid the state's troubled insurance sector by pitting it against oil firms in court. Insurers face roughly \$35 billion in claims from the recent fires, while total damages could reach ten times that figure.

California's insurance troubles began in 1988 with the creation of an elected insurance commissioner, the Center explains. Successive commissioners, including current leader Ricardo Lara, have capped rates and blocked companies from factoring in reinsurance costs or using their own risk models.

As a result, the Center notes, insurers lose \$1.09 for every dollar collected in premiums. Many have halted new policies or exited the state. The state's backup FAIR Plan holds only \$700 million in reserves against \$458 billion in potential liabilities.

Wiener's proposal would compel insurers and the FAIR Plan to sue oil companies, while legally declaring that fossil fuel producers materially contributed to the state's wildfires, the Center contends.

The group points out logical flaws in the senator's reasoning. Wiener cited data showing California led the

nation in acres burned and homes lost from 2018 to 2022, but the Center argues this statistic highlights unique problems within the state rather than proving a global climate crisis.

Instead, the Center claims the real causes include poor forest management, misguided environmental rules and incompetent governance by elected officials and their allies.

This bill represents only the latest episode in what the Center calls California's ongoing war on oil producers. It recalls Governor Gavin Newsom's 2035 ban on new gasoline car sales, restrictions on new oil wells near homes, and the Air Resources Board's plan to prohibit natural gas appliances in new homes by 2030.

The Center notes that Attorney General Rob Bonta has filed multiple lawsuits against major oil companies including ExxonMobil, Shell, Chevron, ConocoPhillips and BP, accusing them of causing climate damage and misleading the public.

These policies have driven up fuel costs, the Center writes. California requires special seasonal fuel blends that force refiners to retool operations, creating shortages and price spikes. Officials then blame Big Oil for price fixing and respond

with new regulations, including inventory mandates and carbon limits that could add 65 cents per gallon.

The Center reports that ConocoPhillips has closed its Los Angeles-area refinery, while Chevron relocated its headquarters from California to Texas. Chevron CEO Mike Wirth said, "We believe California has a number of policies that raise costs, that hurt consumers, that discourage investment and ultimately we think that's not good for the economy in California and for consumers."

Current gasoline prices in California stand at \$4.45 per gallon, the highest in the nation except for Hawaii.

The Center further describes how Bonta recently sued ExxonMobil over its plastics recycling efforts, calling them greenwashing. In response, ExxonMobil filed a January 6 lawsuit in Texas accusing California leaders of a defamatory campaign aimed at damaging its business.

At the heart of these efforts, the Center argues, is Governor Newsom's ambition for national office. It claims he has aligned California with China, the world's top carbon emitter, by pursuing climate deals with President Xi Jinping and relying on Chinese-processed rare earth minerals for batteries.

Newsom's approach, the Center writes, has left the state vulnerable, as evidenced by China's recent halt on rare earth exports. Meanwhile, a massive battery storage fire in Moss Landing has released toxic metals, raising new environmental concerns.

The Center predicts that after targeting oil, environmental activists will eventually turn against so-called clean energy sources as well.

Ultimately, the California Policy Center maintains that the state's wildfires stem from a mix of natural forces, flawed land management and political failures, not solely from fossil fuel companies. It warns that continuing this regulatory assault will only harm consumers, drive away business and weaken California's economy.

San Diego Newsline · Based on commentary published by the California Policy Center · Feb 7, 2025

ABOUT THIS PAPER

San Diego Newsline covers downtown San Diego first — City Hall, the Gaslamp Quarter, East Village, Little Italy, Barrio Logan and the waterfront — and the county around it. Every item names its source; read the originals and our standards at sandiegonewsline.com.

MORE NEWS

COUNTY

Five Minutes Could Save Your Life, Know Your Blood Pressure Numbers

The County's Love Your Heart campaign is celebrating 14 years of spreading awareness about the silent dangers of heart disease. San Diegans are invited to get a free blood pressure screening at locations throughout the county and Mexico.

Heart disease is the leading cause of death in the United States and Mexico, and the second leading cause of death in San Diego County. In 2022, nearly 5,000 people died in San Diego County from heart diseases.

A person's blood pressure numbers are key indicator for heart health, and they are often one of the only signs of heart disease. This year Love Your Heart offers screenings starting Feb. 10 through Valentine's Day, Feb. 14. People can search their

nearest location at LoveYourHeartSD.org .

“ Too many of our loved ones—our parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, brothers, and sisters—are still being lost to a disease that we can prevent, ” said County Board Supervisor Monica Montgomery Steppe. “ It's so important for all of us to take action, get our blood pressure checked, and encourage our families and communities to do the same. A simple check today could save a life tomorrow. Let's take charge of our health because the time to act is now! ”

In 2022, 43 African Americans died from heart failure in our region. The number of these preventable deaths has nearly doubled compared to a decade ago, with 25 deaths in 2012.

County data shows the age-adjusted death rate for heart failure in the non-Hispanic Black community was higher than the overall San Diego

County age-adjusted death rate for heart failure in 2022.

“This year, as in years past, we are focusing on the areas disproportionately affected by heart disease, setting up free blood pressure screening sites for anyone to visit,” said Kimberly Giardina, DSW, County deputy chief administrative officer. “Knowing your blood pressure numbers and learning what they mean is a great first step to becoming more heart healthy.”

In the past several decades, data shows that three behaviors contribute to four chronic conditions resulting in nearly half of all deaths in San Diego County, also known as the 3-4-50 principle .

“For most people, a normal blood pressure is under 120/80. The first step is to know your numbers and know your risk factors,” said Dr. Jennifer Tuteur, the County's Chief Medical Officer. “The second step is to

talk with your trusted health provider about ways you can reduce your risk of dying from heart disease. Many are in your control, like walking after meals and stopping smoking.”

Knowing your numbers and making small changes to your daily life, including diet and exercise, are important in the prevention of heart disease, cardiac arrest and stroke. Learn more about what your numbers mean, and resources to get healthy at LoveYourHeartSD.org .

County of San Diego news release · Feb 10, 2025

COUNTY

County Offices to Close for Presidents Day Holiday

To commemorate the Presidents Day holiday, all San Diego County offices, family resource centers, libraries and animal shelters will be closed to the public Monday, Feb. 17.

Downtown, City & County

Law enforcement, emergency animal control response, and other essential services will continue through the holiday.

County parks, campgrounds and neighborhood day-use parks remain open 365 days a year. However, the following locations will be closed Monday:

4S Ranch Recreation Office only (all parks will be open)

Valley Center Community Hall and Adams Park Pool

Camping reservations can always be made online at the County's Online Camping Reservations web page , but the Department of Parks and Recreation's reservation phone line will not be staffed during the holiday.

All County public health clinics will be closed Monday.

All County offices will resume normal business hours Tuesday, Feb. 18.

County of San Diego news release · Feb 12, 2025

The news, every day. sandiegonewsline.com