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PIN 23-01-CCLD

TO: ALL COMMUNITY CARE LICENSED PROVIDERS

FROM: ***Original signed by Kevin Gaines***
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SUBJECT: WINTER STORM PREPAREDNESS

Provider Information Notice (PIN) Summary

PIN 23-01-CCLD provides information and resources related to post-fire flooding, debris flows, mudflows, flash flood advisories, and other winter storm impacts. If within burn scar zones, facilities should remain vigilant for evacuation orders in the rainy months.

Please post/keep this PIN in the facility where all persons in care and facility staff as well as families and representatives of persons in care in the facility can easily access it and distribute the PIN to persons in care and/or, if applicable, their representatives.

The California Department of Social Services (CDSS) Community Care Licensing Division (CCLD) Disaster Response Unit (DRU) reminds all licensees that individuals with compromised immune systems may be more susceptible to temperature extremes, hypothermia, and possible dehydration. Providers should monitor weather predictions for heavy rain, flood, debris flow, or snow, and potential power outage incidents, and take extra precautions to be sure appropriate equipment (like a generator) is well maintained and operating effectively.

Post-Fire Flooding and Debris Flow

Fast-moving, highly destructive [debris flows](#) triggered by intense rainfall are one of the most dangerous post-fire hazards. The risk of floods and debris flows increases after a fire event due to vegetation loss and soil exposure in the burn scar area. Cases of sudden and deadly debris flows are well documented in California, particularly in Southern California. These flows are a risk to life and property because they can occur with little warning, can exert great forces on objects in their path, and may strip

vegetation, block drainage ways, and damage infrastructure.

Wildfire-related flooding and increased runoff may continue to cause impacts for several years in a burn area, but it is unusual for post-fire debris flows to occur beyond the second rainy season. Some of the largest debris-flow events happen during the first post-fire storm season. It takes much less rainfall to trigger debris flows from burned basins than from unburned areas.

Mudflow vs. Debris Flow

- Debris flows can take homes off their foundations; mudflows generally cannot.
- Mudflows are mostly made of water and soil.
- Debris flows carry things like vegetation, trees, large boulders, and vehicles.
- Mudflows can become debris flows.
- Debris and mud flows can occur up to five years after wildfires. Both happen fast, so heed evacuation warnings immediately!

Understanding the National Weather Service (NWS) Alerts

Flash Flood Advisory

Be aware and continue monitoring conditions when the NWS issues a Flash Flood Advisory.

A Flash Flood Advisory is issued when a forecasted weather event may cause trouble and require action. You should continue monitoring local news outlets and your local NWS office for updates as conditions develop. A Flash Flood Advisory is issued when flooding is not expected to be bad enough to issue a warning. Take appropriate actions to safeguard your family and property and consider modifying travel plans.

Flash Flood Watch

Be prepared for a flash flood when the NWS issues a Flash Flood Watch.

A Flash Flood Watch is issued to indicate that current or developing conditions may result in flash flooding. However, flash flooding or debris flows are not imminent, and there may be some uncertainty about the location or timing. In areas where ground conditions have been changed by wildfire, a watch is typically issued within several hours to days ahead of forecasted thunderstorms and rain events that could possibly generate flash flooding or debris flows

Flash Flood Warning

Take action to keep your family and community safe when the NWS issues a Flash Flood Warning.

A Flash Flood Warning is issued when a flash flood or debris flow is imminent or occurring. If you are in the warning area, take action immediately, as these conditions

are often life threatening. Debris flows result from short duration, high intensity rain events, particularly over ground that has been altered by a wildfire. Impacts from flash flooding and debris flows can occur many miles away from the burn scar area.

Do not drive into flooded areas. If floodwaters rise around your car, abandon the car and move to higher ground if you can do so safely. Six inches of water will reach the bottom of most passenger cars causing loss of control and possible stalling. Two feet of rushing water can carry away most vehicles including sport utility vehicles (SUV's) and pick-ups. Additional tips and information can be found on the [NWS Flood Safety Information](#) page.

Licensees can follow current warnings and watches through the [National Weather Service \(NWS\) CA Hazards Summary](#).

Avalanches

Be Prepared for an Avalanche

An avalanche is a large amount of snow moving quickly down a mountain, typically on slopes of 30 to 45 degrees. When an avalanche stops, the snow becomes solid like concrete and people are unable to dig out. For more information, please view the [Avalanche Facts Sheet](#).

Quick Facts

- Conditions leading to avalanches include slope, precipitation, wind, and temperature. Common triggers include people, new snow, and wind.
- Avalanches tend to occur in mountainous locations and areas with significant snow.
- Avalanches cause economic losses by disrupting recreational facilities, blocking transportation routes, and occasionally destroying property.

Avalanche Safety Messages

- Stay away from avalanche areas.
- If in an avalanche-prone area, keep moving until you are out of the area.
- Evacuate if told to do so and bring clothing and gear necessary to survive in the winter environment.
- Have the proper equipment to support rescue, mitigate head injuries, and create air pockets (avalanche beacon, portable shovel, avalanche probe in backpack, helmet, and avalanche airbags).
- Learn about local avalanche hazards and check current avalanche conditions in your area.
- Take training before a possible avalanche event to learn how to identify hazardous conditions, avoid locations, and properly use safety and rescue equipment.

- Sign up to receive emergency notifications for information on current avalanche danger, snowpack, and mountain weather conditions to avoid the hazard.

Downed Power Lines

Safety Near Downed Power Lines

Downed power lines could occur with heavy winter storms and are dangerous. Never touch them. For safety, always assume that a fallen power line is live, and follow these guidelines:

- Keep residents/clients away from and avoid touching a downed power line with your hand or any object.
- Avoid touching anything, including a car, object, equipment, or anyone who is in contact with a fallen power line.
- Avoid driving over a fallen powerline.
- If you encounter a fallen or dangling power line, call 9-1-1.

If your vehicle comes in contact with a downed power line, follow these safety rules:

- Stay inside your car. The ground around your car may be energized.
- Sound the horn, roll down your window, and call for help.
- Warn others to stay away. Anyone who touches the equipment or ground around your car can be injured.
- Use your mobile phone to call 9-1-1.
- Please wait until the fire department, police, or utility workers tell you it is safe to get out of your car before exiting the vehicle.

If your car is in contact with a fallen power line and a fire starts, follow these guidelines when exiting your vehicle:

- Remove loose items of clothing.
- Keep your hands at your sides and jump clear of the vehicle so you are not touching the car when your feet hit the ground.
- Keep both feet close together and shuffle away from the car without picking up your feet.
- Stay away from fallen or dangling power lines. Do not touch the cables.

Emergency Plan Updates, Reporting Requirements, and CCLD Assistance

CCLD reminds providers to review their facility's emergency disaster plan to ensure it complies with applicable statutes and regulations. CCLD also reminds providers to update their Regional Office with any changes to their contact information, including any changes to their telephone number or email address (see below for Regional Office contact information).

Incidents/occurrences such as injuries, illnesses, or deaths related to the topics in this PIN must be reported to the local Regional Office. Providers are encouraged to review

their facility's applicable reporting requirements.

While implementing these measures, facilities should continue to follow the latest Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Additional Resources

- [CDC - Natural Disasters and Severe Weather](#)
- [NWS – CA Hazards Summary](#)
- [California Department of Water Resource Flood Plain maps](#)
- [Active Weather Warnings, Watches and Advisories by County](#)
- [Burn Scar Flash Flood & Debris Flow Risks](#)
- [Power Outage Tips](#)
- [FEMA Flood Information Sheet](#)
- [Sierra Avalanche Center Information](#)
- [Ready.gov Winter Preparedness](#)

If you have any questions regarding this PIN, please contact your local CCLD Regional Office:

- [Adult and Senior Care Regional Offices](#)
- [Child Care Regional Offices](#)
- [Children's Residential Regional Offices](#)