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January 6, 2025

PIN 25-01-CCLD

TO: ALL COMMUNITY CARE LICENSED PROVIDERS  
REGISTERED HOME CARE AIDES

FROM: *Original signed by Kevin Gaines*  
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Community Care Licensing Division

SUBJECT: **WINTER STORM PREPAREDNESS**

**Provider Information Notice (PIN) Summary**

PIN 25-01-CCLD provides information and resources related to flooding, post-fire debris flows, mudflows, and other winter storm events that may disrupt the operational ability of licensed facilities/Home Care Organizations (HCOs) and Registered Home Care Aides (Registered HCAs).

Winter in California brings the potential for prolonged cold, heavy rain, flood, debris flow, snow, and power outages. This PIN is intended to help licensees and Registered HCAs providing home care services to persons in care to prepare for potential disasters caused by severe winter weather, and includes information about common winter emergency scenarios, safety tips and resources, and updated disaster reporting protocols.

**Post-Fire Flooding and Debris Flow**

According to [the U.S. Geological Survey](#), fast-moving, highly destructive [floods](#) and [debris flows](#) triggered by intense rainfall are some 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 and can continue to cause impacts for several years. Debris flows can occur with little warning and can exert great forces on objects in their path. They may strip vegetation, block drainage ways, and damage infrastructure.

It is a best practice for individuals in burn scar areas to monitor weather forecasts, be aware of any high intensity rainfall that may occur, sign up for [local emergency alerts](#), and heed the guidance of local authorities anytime severe weather events do occur.

### Understanding the National Weather Service (NWS) Alerts

The [NWS issues weather alerts](#) to provide authoritative information and instructions to communities about potentially impactful weather events. Additional tips and information on flood response can be found on the [NWS Flood Safety Information](#) page.

#### **Flood Advisory**

A [Flood Advisory](#) is issued when flooding is forecasted but is not expected to be bad enough to issue a warning. It is a best practice for individuals to continue monitoring local news, take action to safeguard persons in care, and consider modifying travel plans.

#### **Flood Watch**

A [Flood Watch](#) is issued when conditions are favorable for a flood event to occur, but floods or debris flows are not certain. Flood Watches are more often issued in burn scar areas where ground conditions have been changed by wildfire.

#### **Flash Flood Warning**

A [Flash Flood Warning](#) is issued when a flash flood is imminent or occurring. It is a best practice for individuals within the warning area or impacted burn scar area to take action to safeguard persons in care immediately, as these conditions are often life threatening.

#### **Winter Weather Advisory**

A [Winter Weather Advisory](#) is issued when any combination of snow, blowing snow, ice, or sleet is expected, but conditions are not hazardous enough to meet warning criteria. If individuals are within the advisory area, caution should be exercised.

#### **Winter Storm Watch**

A [Winter Storm Watch](#) is issued when conditions are favorable for a significant winter storm event (heavy sleet, heavy snow, ice storm, heavy snow and blowing snow or a combination of events). It is a best practice for individuals within the watch area to prepare for impacts.

#### **Winter Storm Warning**

A [Winter Storm Warning](#) is issued for a significant winter weather event including snow, ice, sleet or blowing snow or a combination of these hazards. It is a best practice for

individuals within the warning area to expect impacts, take immediate action to safeguard persons in care, and delay travel plans.

### Power Outages and Downed Power Lines

Winter storms bring the potential for downed power lines and power outages. In addition to disrupting daily activities, widespread or prolonged power outages can be life threatening by preventing access to communication devices, medical devices, or refrigerated medicine. Facility/HCO licensees and Registered HCAs should be proactive in preparing for potential power outages by creating a response plan.

### **Preparing for Power Outages**

Facility licensees can [prepare for prolonged power outages](#) in many ways. Facility licensees can keep a stock of nonperishable food and water on hand. They can also stock an emergency kit with flashlights, batteries, first aid supplies, etc. They can take inventory of the critical items in a facility/home that require electricity, such as medical devices, and keep them charged or find alternative power sources.

Facility licensees can consider utilizing backup power sources such as generators or portable batteries during prolonged power outages. [PG&E](#) and [Southern California Edison](#) both offer rebates for generators and portable power stations to qualifying customers. It is recommended that facility licensees contact their energy provider to see what options are available for discounted backup power sources.

### **Safety Near Downed Power Lines**

Downed power lines could occur with heavy winter storms and are very dangerous. Always assume a fallen power line is live and never touch them. If a fallen or dangling power line is encountered, it is suggested to call 9-1-1 and follow the instructions of first responders.

### Emergency Plan Updates, Reporting Requirements, and CCLD Assistance

Facility licensees and Registered HCAs have the responsibility to ensure the health and safety of persons in care and should prepare ahead of time to respond during winter emergencies. Facility licensees should review their facility's emergency disaster plan to ensure it complies with applicable law, and they should maintain a stock of the equipment and supplies required to fulfil their disaster plan.

CCLD also reminds licensees to update their Regional Office or the Home Care Services Branch, in accordance with applicable law, with any changes to their contact information, including any changes to their telephone number or email address (see below for Regional Office and the Home Care Services Branch contact information).

Facility licensees must report incidents/occurrences of operational impacts, injuries, illnesses, or deaths related to the topics in this PIN to the local Regional Office. Facility licensees are encouraged to review their facility's applicable reporting requirements.

#### Additional Resources

- [CDC - Natural Disasters and Severe Weather](#)
- [NWS Warnings and Advisories Map](#)
- [NWS Winter Weather Warnings, Watches, and Advisories](#)
- [California Department of Water Resource Flood Plain maps](#)
- [Burn Scar Flash Flood & Debris Flow Risks](#)
- [CalOES on Preparing for Mudslides and Debris Flows](#)
- [Power Outage Tips](#)
- [FEMA Flood Information Sheet](#)
- [Ready.gov Winter Preparedness](#)
- [CalOES MyHazards Tool](#)
- [CalOES Access and Functional Needs Library](#)

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](#)
- [Home Care Services Branch](#)