

# ORANGE COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

EXTERNAL MEMO  
RECEIVED

To: Leon Page, County Counsel  
 From: Michelle Anderson, County Emergency Manager *MLA*  
 Date: April 3, 2025  
 RE: Status Report, Item 20 for April 8, 2025 Agenda: Review the Need for Continuing the Local Emergency

2025 APR -3 PM 3:18

CLERK OF THE BOARD  
COUNTY OF ORANGE  
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS



The Airport Fire began on September 9, 2024 and was deemed 100% contained on October 5, 2024.

## County Proclamations and Ordinance Status

- The Orange County Board of Supervisors proclaimed a Local Emergency on September 10, 2024, and continued the local emergency proclamation at the November 5, 2024, December 17, 2024, and February 11, 2025 meetings.
- The Orange County Health Officer proclaimed a Local Health Emergency on September 13<sup>th</sup> and renewed it on 20<sup>th</sup>. The Board of Supervisors ratified the health emergency proclamation on September 24, 2024, and continued the local health emergency on November 5, December 3, December 17, January 14, February 11, and March 11<sup>th</sup>. The continuation of the local health emergency will be considered by the Board of Supervisors on the April 8<sup>th</sup> agenda Item 11.
- On October 8, 2024, the Orange County Board of Supervisors adopted an Urgency Ordinance for the Airport Fire Debris Removal Program.

## Costs

The costs in the table below do not include all costs for contracts established for asbestos testing, debris monitoring, or debris removal as these activities are ongoing. Estimated response costs and damages for public agencies include:

| City/District                            | Estimated Response Costs & Damages Reported 2/5/25 | Estimated Response Costs & Damages Reported 4/3/25 | Change             |
|--|--|--|--------------------|
| Orange County Fire Authority* (OCFA)     | \$1,130,000  | \$1,130,000  | 0                  |
| Orange County CEO                        | \$45,640   | \$45,640   | 0                  |
| Orange County Community Resources (OCCR) | \$19,269   | \$19,269   | 0                  |
| OCCR - OC Animal Care                    | \$42,840   | \$42,840   | 0                  |
| OCCR - OC Parks                          | \$152,825  | \$152,825  | 0                  |
| Orange County Counsel                    | \$47,778   | \$47,778   | 0                  |
| Orange County Health Care Agency (HCA)   | \$51,412   | \$51,412   | 0                  |
| Orange County Public Works (OCPW)        | \$12,612,329                                       | \$20,533,449                                       | \$7,921,120        |
| Orange County Sheriff-Coroner (OCSD)     | \$1,934,877  | \$1,934,877  | 0                  |
| Orange County Social Services Agency     | \$46,657   | \$46,657   | 0                  |
| Orange County Waste and Recycling        | \$6,592  | \$6,592  | 0                  |
| Rancho Santa Margarita                   | \$36,338   | \$36,338   | 0                  |
| Trabuco Canyon Water District            | \$1,001,000  | \$1,001,000  | 0                  |
| <b>Operational Total</b>                 | <b>\$17,127,557</b>                                | <b>\$25,048,677</b>                                | <b>\$7,921,120</b> |

\* OCFA entered into a cost share agreement with the United States Forest Service (USFS), the State of California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (Cal Fire), and the Riverside County Fire Department for costs related to this incident. Because they are a separate government entity, no additional information is included here; it can be obtained through a request to OCFA.

In January, the OCFA Fire Chief and Orange County Sheriff-Coroner submitted a joint letter to the Director of the California Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES) requesting reconsideration of eligibility for the Fire Management Assistance Grant. Supporting documentation submission is being coordinated through OCFA.

The OCSO Emergency Management Division continues to facilitate the submission of County costs and supporting documentation to the Cal OES Recovery Unit in pursuit of FMAG-alternative funding through the California Disaster Assistance Act or Federal Emergency Management Agency Public Assistance. No eligibility determination has been made at the time of this status report submission.

**Recovery Efforts**

Phase 1 (Hazardous Debris Removal): Completed; no change from previous report.

Phase 1.5 (Watershed Protection): Completed; no change from previous report.

Phase 2 (Private Property Debris Removal [PPDR]): Direct assistance was not available through Cal OES so the County has proceeded with County resources, including contractors and coordinating with volunteer organizations. Below please find statistics on the debris removal program.

| Airport Fire Debris Removal Program by the Numbers   | Riverside  | Orange     |
|--|------------|------------|
| Parcels participating in the program   | 119        | 31         |
| Families participating in the program  | 45         | 30         |
| Parcels cleared before the program was available   | 14         | 0          |
| Unreachable/unresponsive property owners with unknown parcel cleanup status  | 5          | 0          |
| Fire-affected parcels with structures reported by Cal OES/DTSC and Riverside County EMD  | 52         | 32         |
| All fire-affected parcels reported by Cal OES/DTSC, Riverside County EMD and residents   | 138        | 33         |
| Fire-affected parcels that will be cleared when the debris program ends  | 133        | 31         |
| <b>Percentage of all fire-affected properties that will be fully remediated when the program ends, including parcels cleared through private insurance</b> | <b>96%</b> | <b>94%</b> |

- **Orange County Debris Removal**
  - Debris removal is ongoing in Long Canyon. The contractor (DRC) has removed 927 tons of debris to date. A separate contractor (Encorp) continues to perform asbestos testing concurrently.
  - Work in the Holy Jim area is on hold pending clearing of landslides on Trabuco Creek Road.
  - Work in the El Cariso area will be scheduled after completion of Long Canyon and pending asbestos testing. Due to limited resources state-wide, it has been a challenge to secure asbestos testing services. Contract modifications are underway to allow for subcontractors to be used.

- **Riverside County Debris Removal by Orange County**
  - The deadline for property owners to respond was extended to March 14, 2025.
  - Staff is preparing a Board of Supervisor's Agenda Staff Report (ASR) for additional contract capacity for DRC and TetraTech to complete debris removals in Riverside County.
    - The ASR will amend TetraTech's contract to include asbestos testing.
    - The ASR will request approval to perform debris removals on private property due to debris flows from rainfall over the burn scar.
  
- **Other**
  - The Emergency Operations Center (EOC) and Unified Command activated according to the Airport Fire Post-Fire Debris-Flow Plan on February 12-14 and March 12-14.
  - Following the March storm, OCPW staff inspected all Values at Risk from the Watershed Emergency Response Team (WERT) report; no major issues were noted.
    - Photos from inspections were uploaded to tracking map:  
<https://ocpw.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=63e019de8a364c56bcc032ddd754f08f>
  
  - On March 18th, OCPW received repair recommendations for Trabuco Creek Road landslides from a geotechnical consultant. OCPW Maintenance and Engineering is currently reviewing the recommendations and anticipates finalizing repair plans in early April.

**Recommended Action**

Approve continuation of Local Emergency for the Airport Fire; and order review to determine need for continuing local emergency for May 20, 2025, 9:30 a.m. and every 60 days thereafter until terminated.

cc: Interim County Executive Officer Michelle Aguirre  
Clerk of the Board Robin Stieler  
Undersheriff Jeff Hallock, Sheriff-Coroner Department