TOPANGA COMMUNITY

WILDLAND FIRE

EVACUATION PLAN

7/9/09
# Contents

## I. Background

1. Community Evacuation Plan and Hazard Identification 2
2. Operational Area Emergency Response Plan 4
3. Law Enforcement in Times of Emergency and Evacuation 7
4. Local Fire Agencies and EMS 8
5. Animal Services 9
6. Regulatory Compliance 10

## II. Public Education and Outreach

1. Publications Addressed to Residents 11
2. Communications Addressed to Residents 12
3. Web Information 13

## III. Community Wildland Fire Evacuation Plan

1. Overview 14
2. Collaboration 16
3. Approval by EMC 18
4. Community Wildfire Overview and History 20
5. Community Wildfire Risk Assessment 22
6. Fire Agencies 23
7. Law Enforcement 24
8. Medical Field Response 26
9. Animal Services 27
10. Community Resources 28
11. Evacuations 29
12. Shelters 30
13. Training, Certification, and Exercises 31
14. Communication Plan 32

## Appendixes

A. Contacts 33
B. Maps 35
C. Glossary of Terms and Acronyms 49
I Background

1 Community Evacuation Plan and Hazard Identification

Community Evacuation Plan Objective
To ensure, in cooperation with public agencies, a safe and effective community response to a wildland fire evacuation.

Hazard Description
The Topanga community is part of the urban-wildland intermix and is subject to wildland fires that have caused and can cause loss of life and property. The Topanga community’s limited ingress and egress complicates evacuation planning by responding agencies.

Fire Behavior and History
The last major fire in Topanga Canyon occurred November 2, 1993, at 1045 hours and was a wind-driven fire. The fire consumed approximately 1,200 acres per hour, with a total of 16,500 acres, and lasted until November 7. At 1132 hours, the Emergency Coordination Center (ECC) was filling the first request for 20 strike teams and 10 hand crews ordered by the first arriving units. The first excess resources were released on November 4, 1993.

Losses
3 Fatalities
373 Homes
12 Mobile homes
92 Vehicles

Fuel-driven fires typically do not grow to the size of a wind-driven fire. The fire will typically run to a ridgetop, stall out, and be picked up with aircraft, hose lines, and hand crews.

In a wind-driven fire consuming approximately 2 square miles per hour, as seen in the Topanga Canyon fire of 1993, evacuation is imperative. With the limited ingress and
egress it is essential to have as many as possible of the residents in the threatened community evacuate immediately.

The fire behavior witnessed in the 1993 Topanga fire included reported firebrand spotting ½ mile in front of the flaming front. The heavy fuels in this area primarily consist of chaparral—a generic term comprising sage, buckwheat, yucca, sumac, chamise, scrub oak, ceanothus, and toyon. When these fuels are in alignment with slope, wind, and topography, there may be flames in excess of 40–50 feet. There can be some flame lengths in excess of 200 feet on steep slopes with flashy fuels.

Most of the residents have not lived in the community long enough to remember the type of fire behavior witnessed during the 1993 fire. After many years of significant drought we have similar or worse fire conditions. Annual rainfall produces a large amount of grass and flashy fuels. These dry out during the summer months and leave a fuel bed that is highly receptive to flying brands.

Planning History

- 2000—County Strategic Plan for Municipal Services for Unincorporated Areas.
- Survival Guide to be developed that would be customized to the needs and unique characteristics of the community.
- 2002—Steering Committee formed and composed of community leaders; County Departments of Fire, Sheriff, Public Works, and Animal Care; and governmental agencies. The committee determined three phases for Survival Guide to address: response, preparedness, and recovery.
- 2003—Workshop conducted by Steering Committee resulted in 2 work groups: Planning and Response; and Communication, Education, and Collaboration.
- 2005—The Topanga Disaster Survival Guide completed and distributed to Topanga residents.
- 2006—Planning and Recovery Work Group formed to address remaining disaster information: Preventing and Preparing for Disaster (brush clearance, freeze information, and community organizations), Pet Preparedness and Evacuation, Recovery, and Hard-to-Reach Groups.
2
Operational Area Emergency Response Plan

Overview
Day-to-day emergency response within the unincorporated area of Los Angeles County is governed by the Incident Command System (ICS) and the operational plans and protocols of the responding agencies. Should an emergency go beyond day-to-day response capability, the Los Angeles County Operational Area Emergency Response Plan (OAERP) will be activated. The OAERP addresses how the County will carry out centralized emergency management to ensure the successful coordination of the response and the initiation of recovery operations among County departments in response to incidents in the unincorporated areas and/or the incorporated areas of the County Operational Area (OA). The OAERP also addresses interagency coordination of information, operations, and mutual aid among the local governments within the OA and between the OA and the Regional Level as defined in the state's Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS).

The Los Angeles County OAERP is in compliance with SEMS, which incorporates the principles of the National Incident Management System (NIMS).

Emergency Organization
Upon activation of the County Emergency Operations Center (CEOC), the Sheriff becomes the Director of Emergency Operations for the response. The Sheriff's Department, the Office of Emergency Management, and designated County departments will staff the CEOC, carry out emergency response coordination, and initiate recovery operations under the OAERP and its procedures. The Chief Executive Officer is responsible for recovery operations and will ensure coordination with the Sheriff during the response phase. Then the CEO takes charge following the transition from response to recovery, transforming, as needed, the CEOC organization into a recovery organization, including activation of the Recovery Coordination Center (RCC) if needed.

Mutual Aid
The foundation of California's emergency planning and response is a statewide mutual aid system designed to ensure that adequate resources, facilities, and other support are provided to jurisdictions whenever their own resources prove to be inadequate to cope with a given situation. The basis for the system is the California Disaster and Civil Defense Master Mutual Aid Agreement, as provided for in the California Emergency Services Act. This agreement was developed in 1950 and has been adopted by the state, all 58 counties, and most incorporated cities in the State of California. The Master Mutual Aid Agreement creates a formal structure wherein each jurisdiction retains control of its own facilities, personnel, and resources, but may also receive or render assistance to other jurisdictions within California. State government is obligated to provide available resources to assist local jurisdictions in emergencies. Local jurisdictions may negotiate, coordinate, and prepare additional mutual aid agreements. The State has adopted mutual aid plans for law enforcement, fire services and rescue, coroners, and emergency managers. Additional statewide mutual aid plans for medical
health, public works, and care and shelter are under development. Regardless of the existence of a mutual aid plan, all public agency resources are coordinated under the principles of SEMS.

A statewide mutual aid system, operating within the framework of the Master Mutual Aid Agreement, allows for the progressive mobilization of resources to and from emergency response agencies, local governments, operational areas, regions, and state with the intent to provide adequate resources to requesting agencies.

The adoption of SEMS does not alter existing mutual aid systems. These systems work through local government, operational area, regional, and state levels consistent with SEMS.

Mutual aid may also be obtained from other states. Interstate mutual aid may be obtained through direct state-to-state contacts, pursuant to interstate agreements and compacts, or may be coordinated through federal agencies.

**Mutual Aid and Topanga**
While the community of Topanga and the community organizations that operate in Topanga are not signatories to the Master Mutual Aid Agreement and accordingly may not make or respond to mutual aid requests, the public agencies serving Topanga are part of the statewide system. When local resources have been reasonably committed and additional resources are required, requests for mutual aid will be initiated through the Los Angeles County Operational Area. Fire and law enforcement agencies will request or render mutual aid directly through established channels. Any action that involves financial outlay by the jurisdiction, or a request for military assistance, must be authorized by the appropriate local official.

Depending on the severity of the emergency, a Los Angeles CEOC may be activated and a local emergency may be proclaimed by the County Board of Supervisors, the Chief Executive Officer, or the Sheriff. The Topanga Coalition for Emergency Preparedness (T-CEP, a community organization) may activate the T-CEP Volunteer Emergency Operations Center to ensure better community coordination with the Incident or Unified Command in charge of the field-level response. Upon activation of the CEOC, the State OES will activate the Region Emergency Operations Center (REOC) at the Joint Forces Training Base (JFTB), Los Alamitos. The State Operations Center (SOC) in Sacramento will also activate to support the REOC(s), state agencies, and other entities in the affected areas and to ensure the effectiveness of the state's SEMS.

If the governor requests and receives a Presidential Declaration of an Emergency of Major Disaster under Public Law 93-88, he will appoint a State Coordinating Officer (SCO). The SCO and an appointed Federal Coordinating Officer (FCO) will coordinate and control state and federal recovery efforts in supporting local operations. All state emergency response efforts and initial recovery support will be coordinated by the REOC. A Joint Field Office will be established to coordinate recovery and relief programs, and the County may determine the need for and establish Local Assistance Centers (LACs).

**Participation of Volunteer and Private Agencies**
Private and volunteer agencies may cooperate with the mutual aid system along with governmental agencies. For example, the disaster medical mutual aid system relies
heavily on private-sector involvement for medical/health resources. Some volunteer agencies such as the American Red Cross, Salvation Army, and others are an essential element of the statewide emergency response to meet the needs of disaster victims. These agencies mobilize volunteers and other resources through their own systems. They may also identify unmet resource needs that would be requested through the mutual aid system.

**Mutual Aid Policies and Procedures**
- Mutual aid resources will be provided and utilized in accordance with the California Master Mutual Aid Agreement.
- During a proclaimed emergency, interjurisdictional mutual aid will be coordinated at the County, Operational Area, or mutual aid Regional level.

**Authorities and References**
Mutual aid assistance may be provided under one or more of the following authorities:
- California Master Mutual Aid Agreement
- California Fire and Rescue Emergency Plan
- California Law Enforcement Mutual Aid Plan
- California Coroner's Mutual Aid Plan
- California Emergency Managers Mutual Aid Plan
- California State Emergency Plan
- California Emergency Services Act
- Los Angeles Operational Area Emergency Response Plan

**Relationship between the Topanga Community Wildland Fire Evacuation Plan and the OAERP**
Departmental operational plans and the OAERP govern all County agency responses. Additional community emergency plans are not necessary unless there are unique conditions that the responding agencies recognize as requiring community-specific planning. Such community-specific plans are incorporated into the OAERP as an annex. The Topanga Community Wildland Fire Evacuation Plan addresses the unique conditions of the Topanga community area and **describes directly or by reference the planning, preparedness, mitigation, response, and recovery actions** required to deal with a major wildfire demanding rapid evacuation.

**NOTE: Community plans may not constrain tactical decisions.** Nothing in the Topanga Community Wildland Fire Evacuation Plan shall constrain or limit the Incident Commander or the Unified Command and/or their subordinates in making or implementing tactical decisions to protect life, property, and the environment based on field conditions and their best judgment at the time.
3

Law Enforcement in Times of Emergency and Evacuation

The Role of the Sheriff’s Department in Emergencies
The Sheriff is the Director of Emergency Operations in Los Angeles County during and Emergency. The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) is the Director of Emergency Services well as recovery operations. Both the Sheriff and CEO will ensure the activation of the CEOC and the CEOC will coordinate the response of assets to support Incident Commanders in the field. The Sheriff’s Department Operations Center will coordinate the response of all law enforcement agencies within the OA and will coordinate with outside agencies for law enforcement support.

In the field, the Sheriff’s Department will deploy Station-level and Department-level Incident Management Teams (IMTs) and Incident Commanders to command law enforcement action at the scene of a disaster. Depending on the type of disaster, the Department team may form a single command or a unified command with other agencies.

Evacuation Coordination
The Sheriff’s Department, in conjunction with the Fire Department and all other concerned agencies, will plan, coordinate, and execute all evacuation plans in the affected area. The Department will maintain the security of the area and will grant access based on the conditions of the incident.
4
Local Fire Agencies and EMS

Fire Protection, Emergency Medical Services, and Resource Sharing
The Los Angeles County Fire Department provides fire protection and life safety services for the Topanga community.

Topanga is located in Battalion 5 of Division VII of the Los Angeles County Fire Department (refer to Battalion 5 map in Appendix B for jurisdictional boundaries) and is primarily served by Fire Station 69, located in Topanga. Additional resources from the battalion are available to the community on an as-needed basis, as determined by the Incident Commander. Once resources within the battalion are exhausted, resources from other parts of the County will be dispatched to respond, if necessary.

The Los Angeles County Fire Department provides basic and advanced life-support services, but does not provide ambulance service; rather, the ambulance services are provided through a contract between the Los Angeles County Department of Health Services and WestMed/McCormick Ambulance Company. WestMed/McCormick is the only ambulance company authorized to transport patients from incidents responded to by the Fire Department. Ambulance(s) are dispatched simultaneously with the engine and paramedic squad by the Fire Department's Command and Control Dispatch Center.

Local Fire Agencies
• Los Angeles County Fire Department
• Los Angeles City Fire Department
• Ventura County Fire Department
5
Animal Services

Los Angeles County Department of Animal Care and Control (LACDACC), in coordination with the Incident Commander or Unified Command, provide the resources, emergency supplies, and evacuation assistance listed below:

LACDACC Personnel and Resources

Animal Control personnel
- Approximately 100 operational personnel
- 25 Animal Control trucks for small animals (dogs and cats)
- 2 dog trailers
- 6 trucks with horse trailers

LACDACC-ERT volunteers (large animal)
102 volunteers
10 to 20 trucks with horse trailers

Small animal volunteers (dog and cat)
360 volunteers

Emergency Sheltering

Small animal sheltering
- Primary: Agoura Animal Shelter
- Secondary: Baldwin Park Animal Shelter, Castaic Animal Shelter

Large animal sheltering
- Primary: Pierce College
- Secondary: Peter J. Pitchess (a.k.a. Wayside) Honor Ranch, Seaside Park (Ventura)
6

Regulatory Compliance

- Uniform Fire Code—Los Angeles County Code, Title 32, including but not limited to:
  - Brush clearance regulations—Sections 1117.2.2(3), 1117.2.3
  - Access issues—Sections 902.2.2.1, 1117.10
  - Brush clearance around propane tanks—Section 8209
  - Brush clearance around fire hydrants—Section 1001.7.2
- HFRA (Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003)
- California State Public Resources Code, Sections 4291–4299
- California Master Mutual Aid Agreement
- California Fire and Rescue Emergency Plan
- California Law Enforcement Mutual Aid Plan
- California Coroner’s Mutual Aid Plan
- California Emergency Managers Mutual Aid Plan
- California State Emergency Plan
- California Emergency Services Act
- Los Angeles Operational Area Emergency Response Plan
- Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (Public Law 93-288, as amended)
- Homeowners association/corporate landscaping regulations
II Public Education and Outreach

1 Publications Addressed to Residents

The Topanga Disaster Survival Guide
This guide is a publication developed by Topangans and local government to encourage residents to be proactive in developing their individual preparedness and evacuation plan. The guide can be downloaded at www.topangasurvival.org or www.t-cep.org.

Supplement to The Topanga Disaster Survival Guide
The Supplement builds on the information contained in The Topanga Disaster Survival Guide and is customized to Topanga. It covers the following areas: Preventing and Preparing for Disaster, Pet Preparedness and Evacuation, and Recovering from Disaster. It can be downloaded at www.topangasurvival.org or www.t-cep.org.

Emergency Survival Tips
This brochure was developed in both English and Spanish to show employees who work in Topanga where the nearest Community Safety Areas are and what steps to take toward preparedness.

Pet Brochure
Essential information about what needs to be done to prepare for the care, safety, and survival of pets. This material was distributed by various methods, including at veterinary offices and pet-related businesses and in the bimonthly customer bills of County Waterworks District no. 29.

Emergency Information Card
This foldout wallet-size card contains not only phone numbers that would be useful during recovery from a disaster but also a description of red flag weather.

Prevention Pull-out brochure
Material found in the Supplement to The Topanga Survival Guide will be reproduced separately and distributed in conjunction with Fire Department brush clearance notices.

NOTE Any materials developed by T-CEP are not approved by the County unless the County specifically approves them.
Communications Addressed to Residents

Topanga Tim Tips
Monthly vignettes about emergency preparedness are placed in the local paper, the Topanga Messenger. These vignettes are examples of unique situations and ways to handle them.

Emergency Preparedness Fairs
The Topanga Coalition for Emergency Preparedness (T-CEP, a community volunteer organization), in cooperation with Los Angeles County, puts on a Preparedness Fair approximately every 3 years. It brings together vendors, County agencies, and volunteer organizations to provide access to various products and services that will help members of the community to be better prepared for the next disaster.

Topanga Elementary School Disaster Preparedness Poster Contest
The poster contest is held annually and is sponsored by T-CEP. The purpose is to enlighten students and their families about the need for preparedness at home and at school. The contest winners (one per grade level) are given appropriate recognition.

T-CEP Hot Line (310) 455-3000
This hot line is staffed by trained local volunteers. They go through a refresher training at least once a year. Hot line volunteers give out only verified factual information.
3

Web Information

www.topangasurvival.org  This Web site is dedicated to The Topanga Survival Guide and its Supplement, which can both be downloaded here.

www.t-cep.org  The T-CEP Web site has information regarding preparedness, classes, and the organization, as well as links to other disaster organizations. During a disaster the Web site is activated and regularly updated to give pertinent incident information.

www.lacounty.info  The Los Angeles County Web site. Through this site, residents can access information about County departments and services, including emergency preparedness information.

zev.lacounty.gov  Third District Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky’s Web site has a page of emergency preparedness information, with links to further sites containing information in English and Spanish.

www.ESPFOCUS.org  The web page for the LA County OEM led regional Emergency Survival Program (ESP) provides all hazards preparedness information for individuals, families and businesses.
III Community Wildland Fire Evacuation Plan

1 Overview

Organization
During a wind-driven fire that will not be contained with first alarm resources, the Incident Command system will be initiated with the request for a Los Angeles County Fire Department Incident Management Team to manage the fire. There will be a Unified Command Post established to coordinate all of the resources and cooperating agencies:

- Los Angeles County Fire Department
- Los Angeles City Fire Department
- Los Angeles County Sheriff’s Department
- Los Angeles Police Department
- Ventura County Fire Department
- Ventura County Sheriff’s Department
- California Highway Patrol
- Los Angeles County Department of Public Works
- Los Angeles County Department of Animal Care and Control
- California State Parks
- National Park Service
- Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy/Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority
- Southern California Edison

Management Objectives
Unified Command will establish objectives for the incident. Examples of these may be:

- Protection of life, including the lives of first responders
- Protection of property
- Evacuation of community members
- Evacuation of large animals
- Protection of the environment

Evacuations
During this coordinated attack, with assisting resources, evacuation triggers will be established and executed with the assistance of law enforcement. In a fast-moving fire, it
may not be possible to evacuate all persons. At such a time it may be necessary to use Community Safety Areas (CSAs) and Neighborhood Survival Areas (NSAs) as temporary emergent survival locations for those who cannot evacuate in time.

Large animal rescue in Topanga will always be a challenge because of the large number and limited access. Time is always a major consideration, along with rate of the fire's spread. If time allows, evacuation from the area is always a consideration. Sheltering in place will always be a good choice if the animals can survive in their corrals. In the event that sheltering in place is not a viable option, then moving them to a safer location will be the next alternative.
2
Collaboration

Stakeholders
Although the Topanga Emergency Management Plan committee was originally envisioned as a community-County collaboration, the planning team grew to include state representatives because Topanga Canyon Boulevard is a state highway and much of the acreage in Topanga is a state park. Organizations and agencies involved include:

• American Red Cross
• Arson Watch
• Board of Supervisors—Third District
• California Highway Patrol
• California State Parks
• CalTrans
• Charter Communications
• Los Angeles County Chief Executive Office (CEO)
  Office of Emergency Management (OEM)
  Office of Unincorporated Area Services (OUAS)
• Los Angeles County Department of Animal Care and Control
• Los Angeles County Department of Health Services—Public Health
• Los Angeles County Department of Public Social Services
• Los Angeles County Department of Public Works
  Road Maintenance
  Building and Safety
  Waterworks District no. 29
• Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning
• Los Angeles County Fire Department
• Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department
• Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD)
• Resource Conservation District
• Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy (SMMC)/Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA)
• State Office of Emergency Services (OES)
• Topanga Animal Rescue
• Topanga Chamber of Commerce
• Topanga Coalition for Emergency Preparedness (T-CEP)
  Disaster Radio Team
  Equine Education Team
  Hot Line
  Neighborhood Networks
• Topanga Community Emergency Response Team (CERT)
• Topanga Elementary School
• Topanga Town Council
• Topanga Watershed Committee

7/9/09
Planning Process
Beginning in 2003, approximately 60 community members and personnel from County and State agencies worked together as a task force to develop a survival guide customized for Topanga. The following principles shaped the approach to this project:
• Engage the community with the appropriate public agencies in the planning and communication processes.
• Build on the assets already in place in the community.
• Solicit a strong commitment from all involved stakeholders.
• Provide the unincorporated areas with the same level of hazard and community-specific planning that the law mandates that cities provide for their residents.

Steps in the planning process:
• 1—Establish a joint Steering Committee of community and public agency members, who formed work groups to focus on Planning, Response, Recovery, and Communication/Education (completed).
• 2—Assess community and public agency needs (completed).
• 3—Develop The Topanga Disaster Survival Guide and supporting publications (completed).
• 4—Incorporate recovery information into the Supplement to The Topanga Disaster Survival Guide (completed).
• 5—Develop the Topanga Wildland Fire Evacuation Plan and obtain formal approval for it (in progress).
• 6—Develop and implement a public education and outreach plan for The Topanga Disaster Survival Guide and the Supplement (ongoing).
• 7—Continue to evaluate the plans through periodic tabletop drills, exercises, and incidents (ongoing).
• 8—Identify the best means to review and update plans (ongoing).
• 9—Produce updates (ongoing).
3. Approval by the County Of Los Angeles Emergency Management Council

The County of Los Angeles Emergency Management Council (EMC), created by Section 2.68.160 of the Emergency Ordinance, and comprised of key County departments, is responsible for overseeing the preparedness activities of County departments. This includes preparation of plans, emergency and disaster-related training of County employees, and related emergency preparedness activities.

The EMC has reviewed and approved the Topanga Community Wildland Fire Evacuation Plan and incorporates it into the Operational Area Emergency Response Plan (OAERP) as a Hazard Specific Annex. Significant revisions to this Annex will be submitted to the EMC for approval.

Signed: [Signature]
William T Fujioka
Chief Executive Officer
Chairman, Emergency Management Council

Date: 7-29-09
4
Community Wildfire Overview and History

Wildland-Urban Intermix (WUI) ZONE AND VEGETATION MAP
Refer to Appendix B, Cal Fire Fuels Map.

Planning Area Boundary
Topanga Canyon is located within Area B of Los Angeles County Disaster Management Areas A through H, Mutual Aid Region I of State Mutual Aid Regions 1 through 6, and the Southern Region of the three State Administrative Regions.

Topanga Canyon is located in the southwesterly corner of Los Angeles County, and its 18.2 square miles of unincorporated Los Angeles County are nestled in the Santa Monica Mountains. It consists of various canyons and valleys, with altitudes ranging from 85 feet to over 2,000 feet. Its unique shape and location can present many challenges during an emergency.

Topanga Canyon is bordered on the south by the Pacific Ocean and the City of Malibu, on the north by the Woodland Hills area of the City of Los Angeles and the City of Calabasas, on the east by the Reseda and Pacific Palisades areas of the City of Los Angeles, and on the west by unincorporated areas of Los Angeles County within the Santa Monica Mountains.

Community Information
The community located within Topanga Canyon has a population of approximately 12,000 residents. This number increases during weekdays because of incoming employees of local businesses.

The primary transportation route consists of a single two-lane state highway traversing Topanga from Highway 101 on the north to Highway 1 (Pacific Coast Highway) on the south. This highway is designated State Route 27 and is referred to as Topanga Canyon Boulevard.

Topanga has no heavy industry, and the vast majority of businesses are retail sales and services. There are no hospitals in Topanga; there are a few small medical clinics, along with body works and chiropractors. Major medical facilities are located in the nearby communities of Woodland Hills and Santa Monica.

Topanga is part of the Los Angeles Unified School District and has one elementary school in the canyon (Topanga Elementary). Middle and high schools are located in the nearby communities of Woodland Hills, Malibu, and Pacific Palisades. In addition, there are several private schools.

Topanga does not have its own police or fire department, but relies on the County of Los Angeles for provision of these services. The community also relies on local volunteer
organizations for assistance in emergency communications and other necessary emergency services.

**Fire History and Behavior**

The last major fire in Topanga Canyon occurred November 2, 1993, starting at 10:45 hours, and was a wind-driven fire. The fire consumed approximately 1,200 acres per hour, with a total of 16,500 acres, and lasted until November 7. At 11:32 hours, the ECC was filling the first request for 20 strike teams and 10 hand crews ordered by the first arriving units. The first excess resources were released on November 4, 1993.

**Losses**

3  Fatalities  
373  Homes  
12  Mobile homes  
92  Vehicles  

Fuel-driven fires do not typically grow to the size of a wind-driven fire. The fire will typically run to a ridgetop, stall out, and be picked up with aircraft, hose lines, and hand crews.

In the case of a wind-driven fire consuming approximately 2 square miles per hour, as seen in the Topanga Canyon fire of 1993, evacuation is imperative. With limited ingress and egress it is essential to have as many as possible of the residents in the threatened community evacuate immediately.

The fire behavior witnessed in the 1993 Topanga fire reported firebrand spotting ½ mile in front of the flaming front. The heavy fuels in this area primarily consist of chaparral—a generic term comprising sage, buckwheat, yucca, sumac, chamise, scrub oak, ceanothus, and toyon. When these fuels are in alignment with slope, wind, and topography, there may be flames in excess of 40–50 feet. There can be some flame lengths in excess of 200 feet on steep slopes with flashy fuels.
5
Community Wildfire Risk Assessment

Hazard
Fuel- and wind-driven fires in the wildland-urban intermix.

Ingress/Egress
The primary transportation route consists of a single two-lane state highway traversing Topanga from Highway 101 on the north to Highway 1 (Pacific Coast Highway) on the south. This highway is designated State Route 27 and is referred to as Topanga Canyon Boulevard. The distance between Highway 101 and Highway 1 is approximately 14 miles.

A secondary transportation route consists of a very narrow, winding two-lane road known as Old Topanga Canyon Road, which runs from Mulholland Highway to State Route 27 (Topanga Canyon Blvd.). The distance between Mulholland Highway and State Route 27 is approximately 4 miles.

Access to the residential neighborhoods of Topanga, with very little exception, is via streets feeding off State Route 27. In most cases, these various neighborhoods are “one way in, one way out.” As a result, during a major evacuation of the canyon, State Route 27 will become overly congested.
6
Fire Agencies

- Los Angeles County Fire Department
- Los Angeles City Fire Department
- Ventura County Fire Department
- California State Parks
- Cal Fire
- National Park Service
- Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy/Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority

The agencies listed above normally respond automatically through mutual or automatic aid agreements and/or the California Fire Assistance Agreement. Additional state and local responding agencies would be coordinated pursuant to the California Fire and Rescue Mutual Aid Plan.
7

Law Enforcement

Evacuation Coordination
The Sheriff’s Department, in conjunction with the Fire Department and all other concerned agencies, will plan, coordinate, and execute all evacuation plans in the affected area. The Department will maintain the security of the area and will grant access based on the conditions of the incident.

Resources
The Sheriff, through the Law Enforcement Mutual Aid Plan, may access resources as needed from other law enforcement agencies within the Los Angeles County Operational Area (OA) and the California Highway Patrol. If OA resources are not sufficient, then resources may be requested within Law Enforcement Region IA. If Regional law enforcement resources are not sufficient, then mutual aid from other regions and additional state resources will be coordinated through the State Operations Center (SOC).

Law Enforcement Agencies
- Los Angeles County Sheriff’s Department
- Los Angeles Police Department
- Ventura County Sheriff’s Department
- California Highway Patrol
- California State Parks
- Los Angeles County Unified School District
- Los Angeles County Police

Topanga-Specific Tactics
Topanga Canyon has been divided into nine Tactical Zones for purposes of evacuations. Responding personnel will be assigned to an area, evacuate and secure it, and report back to the Command Post for either relief or reassignment. The Tactical Zones will be evacuated based on the needs of the incident. Shelters-evacuation centers have been predesignated by the Red Cross, which will assist the Sheriff’s Department in planning for any evacuation.

Personnel conducting evacuations will give either an evacuation warning—meaning that the event is approaching and residents and employees should leave—or an evacuation order. An order is mandatory; however, if people choose to stay inside their home or business, the law is unclear as to the authority granted to police agencies to enforce the order. Therefore, responding personnel will record refusal and will move on to the next house or business.

The Department of Animal Care and Control will conduct animal evacuations with Sheriff escorts. CERT volunteers will coordinate with Sheriff’s Department personnel to
Topanga Wildland Fire Community Evacuation Plan 7/09/09

enhance the notification process and to provide information regarding the incident. T-CEP, through its hot line, Web site, DRT, and Neighborhood Networks, also serves to disseminate information.
8
Medical Field Response

The Los Angeles County Fire Department provides basic and advanced life support services, but does not provide ambulance service; rather, the ambulance services are provided through a contract between the Los Angeles County Department of Health Services and WestMed/McCormick Ambulance Company. WestMed/McCormick is the only ambulance company authorized to transport patients from incidents responded to by the Fire Department. Ambulance(s) are dispatched simultaneously with the engine and paramedic squad by the Fire Department's Command and Control Dispatch Center.

Patients are transported to hospitals designated by the Medical Alert Center, and distribution of medical resources and patients among hospitals is coordinated under the authority of the Los Angeles County Department of Health Services.
9
Animal Services

The Los Angeles County Department of Animal Care and Control will, in coordination with the Incident Commander or the Unified Command, ensure rescue and/or sheltering of animals consistent with the Incident Action Plan and, in the case of CECO activation, the OAERP. The Department will deploy its own resources as well as access, through mutual aid and/or agreement, volunteers and government agencies to assist them in carrying out their mission. Resources that would potentially be available to a response in Topanga are listed as follows:

- Area G Veterinary Disaster Team
- CART (County Animal Response Team)
- SCART (Surf City Animal Response Team)
- HSUS (Humane Society of the United States)
- Topanga Animal Rescue
10
Community Resources

Topanga Coalition for Emergency Preparedness (T-CEP)
310-455-3000; www.t-cep.org; P.O. Box 1708, Topanga, CA 90290
T-CEP is a nonprofit, volunteer organization whose purpose is to help the Topanga community prepare for and cope with disasters such as wildfires, floods, and earthquakes. T-CEP teams include Hot Line, Disaster Radio, Red Cross, Equine Education, Mental Health, and Neighborhood Networks.

Arson Watch
310-455-4244; www.arsonwatch.com; P.O. Box 197, Topanga, CA 90290
Arson Watch is a volunteer program of the Malibu–Lost Hills Sheriff's Station whose goal is to help prevent wildfires in the Santa Monica Mountains. On high fire danger days, volunteers patrol the area looking for fires or fire hazards and seeking to deter deliberate arson as well as careless behavior that might start a fire. Patrols are by car or on horseback, bicycle, or foot, and members communicate by two-way radios.

Los Angeles County Department of Animal Care and Control Equine Response Team (LACDACC-ERT)
Coordinating officer: 818-706-5883; Agoura Animal Shelter, 29525 Agoura Rd., Agoura, CA 93012
The LACDACC-ERT is a Countywide volunteer organization that originated in the Topanga/Malibu area after the 1993 firestorm. LACDACC-ERT's purpose is to assist with the safe evacuation of horses and livestock during large- and small-scale disasters. Team members must complete from 10 to 50 hours of training, which includes Fire Safety, First Aid, Horse Handling, and Tow Vehicle classes. The group also works to educate horse owners on disaster preparedness.

Topanga Community Emergency Response Team (CERT)
Topanga coordinator: Claire Davis, 310-455-9993; L.A. County Fire Department CERT coordinator: 323-881-3077
CERT is a program that has been developed nationwide to provide basic training to members of the public in safety and life-saving skills. The Topanga CERT's mission is to help the community by providing support in the event of a major emergency or catastrophe. CERT trainees learn about disaster preparedness, basic fire suppression, principles of light search and rescue operations, assessment of multiple victims (including triage and basic treatment of life-threatening injuries), and organization and management of volunteer response to a disaster (including disaster psychology). They provide general support for Los Angeles County first responders, as requested.

Topanga Animal Rescue
310-455-7268; www.topangaanimalrescue.com
Topanga Animal Rescue is a nonprofit organization that has the ability to mobilize a light veterinary field triage unit in the event of an emergency as well as provide ongoing animal education outreach programs for the community.
11
Evacuations

During the wildfire response the Unified Command will establish evacuation triggers, which will be executed with the assistance of Law Enforcement. Topanga Canyon has been divided into nine Tactical Zones for purposes of evacuations. Responding personnel will be assigned to an area, evacuate and secure it, and report back to the Command Post for either relief or reassignment. The Tactical Zones will be evacuated based on the needs of the incident. Evacuation centers have been predesignated by the Red Cross, which will assist the Sheriff’s Department in planning for any evacuation.

Personnel conducting evacuations will give either an evacuation warning—meaning that the event is approaching and residents and employees should leave—or an evacuation order. An order is mandatory; however, if people choose to stay inside their home or business, the law is unclear as to the authority granted to police agencies to enforce the order. Therefore, responding personnel will record the refusal and will move on to the next house or business.

The Department of Animal Care and Control will conduct animal evacuations with Sheriff escorts. CERT volunteers will coordinate with Sheriff’s Department personnel to enhance the notification process and to provide information regarding the incident. T-CEP—through its hot line, Web site, DRT, and Neighborhood Networks—also serves to disseminate information.

In a fast-moving fire, it may not be possible to evacuate all persons. At such a time it may be necessary to use Community Safety Areas (CSAs) and Neighborhood Survival Areas (NSAs) as temporary emergent refuge locations for those who cannot evacuate in time.

Large animal rescue in Topanga will always be a challenge because of the large number and limited access. Time is always a major consideration, along with rate of the fire’s spread. If time allows, evacuation from the area is always a consideration. Sheltering in place will always be a good choice if the animals can survive in their corrals. In the event that sheltering in place is not a viable option, then moving them to a safer location will be the next alternative.

Residents are to follow the direction of law enforcement in effecting an evacuation. Prior to evacuation, residents should refer to The Topanga Survival Guide, which describes the Tactical Zones and routes for purposes of evacuation, and the T-CEP Web site, which lists available CSAs and NSAs.
12

Shelters

The Red Cross has positioned a 50-person Red Cross Shelter supply trailer, which is located at the T-CEP Volunteer EOC. There is a shelter team of approximately 25 volunteers. The T-CEP Volunteer EOC manager has the authority to open any one of four predesignated shelter locations in time of an emergency. The shelters in Topanga are not equipped with showers, and if the shelter is to remain operational for several days, portable showers will need to be brought in.
13
Training, Certification, and Exercises

T-CEP offers Red Cross CPR/First Aid classes quarterly.

T-CEP has a Disaster Radio Team (DRT) with approximately 20 licensed HAM operators. HAM license classes are offered periodically in Topanga. The T-CEP Volunteer EOC has approximately 3 HAM base stations. Many members of the DRT are members of DCS at the Lost Hills Sheriff’s Station. Weekly radio nets and periodic exercises are part of the ongoing training required for all T-CEP/DRT volunteers. The weekly radio nets are used to check radios and repeaters on a regular basis.

T-CEP hot line, (310) 455-3000: T-CEP has a staff of approximately 20 volunteers who have received training on how to handle calls during a disaster. In addition to the training, they participate in tabletop exercises during the year. They give out only information that has been verified. The supervisor for the hot line is a licensed mental health professional.

T-CEP offers NIMS/SEMS training to volunteers of various community organizations.

Arson Watch trains its members to use mobile and handheld two-way radios and conducts periodic training of base station operators.

CERT training classes are taught several times per year in Topanga and Malibu; Topanga CERT conducts regular training enhancement exercises at its monthly meetings.

The LACDACC-ERT training course is offered on a limited basis through the Department of Animal Care and Control. Drills and brush-up classes are offered for ERT level 1, 2, and 3 volunteers.

Various County agencies also conduct periodic drills and exercises.
14
Communication Plan

Community Notification
A mass emergency notification system is in place that can disseminate real-time messages simultaneously and continuously by telephone to thousands of target recipients within minutes. The Sheriff's Department is the lead organization. Topanga Elementary School also participates in this program. Additionally, the Sheriff's Department will utilize the Emergency Alert System (EAS) to provide warnings and emergency notification to the public. A County Operational Area-wide mass notification system is under development.

Interagency Communications
Responding agencies will use existing department and mutual aid radio frequencies, augmented by other wireless means to communicate with their elements and one another and with their respective dispatch centers and/or headquarters.

Community Communications
T-CEP, through its hot line, Web site, DRT, and Neighborhood Networks, serves to disseminate information to members of the community. Arson Watch uses its network of two-way radios to relay information to relevant community organizations.
Appendix A
Contacts

Los Angeles County
Agricultural Commissioner’s Office
Weed Abatement
Board of Supervisors 3rd District Field Office
The Topanga Disaster Survival Guide
Department of Animal Care and Control
Agoura Hills Shelter
LADCACC-ERT
Fire Department
Emergency
Dispatch
Brush Clearance Unit
CERT Coordinator
Environmental Review Unit
Fire Prevention Unit
Malibu Forestry Unit
Station 69
Human Services Referral
Office of Emergency Management
Public Works
Building and Safety
Road Maintenance
Waterworks District no. 29
Registrar Recorder/County Clerk
Sheriff’s Department
Emergency
Lost Hills Station
State of California
CalTrans Road Conditions
Contractors State License Board (CSLB)
Highway Patrol
Dispatch
West Valley office
Roads Status
MRCA (Mountains Recreation & Conservation Authority)
local office
Office of Emergency Services (OES)
Poison Control System
Resource Conservation District of the Santa Monica Mts.
State Parks, Angeles District
626-575-5485 or 818-883-6647
818-880-9416
topangasurvival.org
818-991-0071
818-706-5883
911
310-456-6603
626-969-2375
323-881-3077
818-890-5719
818-880-0341
818-222-1108
310-455-1766
211 or 800-339-6993
323-980-2260
800-675-4357, dpw.lacounty.org
818-880-4150
310-456-8014
310-456-6621
800-815-2666 or 562-466-1310
911
818-878-1808
800-321-2752
800-321-2752
chp.ca.gov
323-906-3405
818-888-0980
cad.chp.ca.gov
323-221-9944
562-795-2900
800-876-4766
818-597-8627
818-880-0350
7/9/09
32
Other Regional/National
CDC (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention) 800-232-4636, bt.cdc.gov
City of Los Angeles Department of Water and Power 213-367-4211, ladwp.com

Schools: Public
L.A. Unified School District hot line 213-241-4500, lausd.net
   Pacific Palisades High School 310-230-6623, palihigh.enschool.org
   Parkman Middle School 818-348-8770
   Paul Revere Middle School 310-451-5789
   Taft High School 818-348-7171, tafthigh.org
   Topanga Elementary School 310-455-3711, topangaelementary.org
Las Virgenes Unified School District 818-880-4000, lvusd.k12.ca.us
   Calabasas High School 818-222-7177, calabasashigh.com
   A. E. Wright Middle School 818-880-4614
Santa Monica–Malibu Unified School District 310-450-8338, smmusd.org
   Malibu High School 310-457-6801, malibuhigh.smusd.org
   Santa Monica High School 310-395-3204, smmusd.org/samohi

Schools: Private
Children's Corner 310-455-2467
Montessori School 310-455-3373
Muse Elementary School 310-455-4400
Topanga Co-op Preschool 310-455-3155, topangacooppreschool.org
Topanga Elementary School 310-455-3711, topangaelementary.org
Topanga Mountain School 818-346-8355, topangamountainschool.org
Viewpoint School 818-889-1262, viewpoint.org

Private Sector: Utilities
Amerigas 310-455-2131, amerigas.com
Delta Liquid Energy 818-838-4400, deltaliquidenergy.com
Southern California Edison 800-655-4555, sce.com
   Line Clearing 661-257-8256
Suburban Propane 661-942-5117
Verizon California 800-483-2000, www22.verizon.com

Private Sector: Nongovernmental Organizations
American Red Cross of Greater Los Angeles 800-540-2000, redcrossla.org
Arson Watch 310-455-4244, arsonwatch.com
Equestrian Trails, Inc. 818-362-6819, etnational.com
Humane Society of the U.S. 202-452-1100, hsus.org
National Fire Protection Association 617-770-3000, nfpaprograms.org
PATCH (People Assisting Topanga Canyon with Helping Hands) 310-455-2894
T-CEP (Topanga Coalition for Emergency Preparedness) 310-455-3000, tcep.org
Topanga Animal Rescue 310-455-7288, topangaanimalrescue.com
Topanga CERT (Community Emergency Response Team) 310-455-9993
Topanga Creek Watershed Committee topangaonline.com/twc
Topanga Town Council 310-455-3001, topangatowncouncil.org
Appendix B
Maps

1. Fire Department Battalion 5 Map
2. Fire Department Station 69 Map
3. Fire Hazard History Map
4. Fire Hazard Severity Zone Map
5. Cal Fire Fuels Map
6. Tactical Zone Maps
Zone 1
Tactical Zone Maps
 Zone 2
Tactical Zone Maps
Zone 3
Tactical Zone Maps
Zone 4
Tactical Zone Maps
Zone 5
Tactical Zone Maps
Zone 6
Tactical Zone Maps
Zone 7
Tactical Zone Maps
Zone 8
Tactical Zone Maps
Zone 9
Appendix C
Glossary of Terms and Acronyms

ACCESS ROAD Any road the Fire Department might need to use to reach a fire. Depending on conditions, the Fire Department trucks require a minimum road clearance of from 15 up to 26 horizontal feet and vertical to the sky.

ADULT PROTECTIVE SERVICES (APS) A County program within CSS.

AERIAL FUELS All live and dead vegetation located in the forest canopy or above the surface fuels, including tree branches and crowns, snags, moss, and high brush.

AMERICAN RED CROSS (ARC) A nongovernmental organization with a congressional mandate to provide disaster relief assistance to individuals and families in emergencies, including temporary shelter, mass feeding, and the provision of other essential needs. The ARC works in cooperation with government agencies and other organizations.

APS See Adult Protective Services.

ARC See American Red Cross.

ARSON WATCH A volunteer program of the Lost Hills Sheriff's station whose goal is to assist in the prevention of wildfires in the Santa Monica Mountains.

B&S See Building & Safety Division of the Department of Public Works.

BOS Board of Supervisors of Los Angeles County.

BRUSH CLEARANCE UNIT A unit of the Los Angeles County Fire Department.

CACHE A predetermined complement of tools, equipment, and/or supplies stored in a designated location and available for incident use.

CALTRANS The California Department of Transportation; responsible for State Highway 27 (Topanga Canyon Boulevard).

CASUALTY COLLECTION POINT (CCP) A temporary facility or location operated by the County Department of Health Services to collect, triage, and provide austere treatment, stabilization, and transport or release of casualties to appropriate medical care.

CBET See County Building Evaluation Team of the Department of Public Works.

CBO Community-based organization, often a nonprofit.

CCP See Casualty Collection Point.

CDC See Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; County Community Development Commission.

CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION (CDC) A Federal agency.

CEO Chief Executive Office or Chief Executive Officer of the County.

CEOC County Emergency Operations Center.

CERT See Community Emergency Response Team.

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICE (CEO) A County department.

CHP California Highway Patrol.

CISD See critical incident stress debriefing.

COMMAND POST (ICP) Also called an Incident Command Post. A location at which primary incident command functions are executed; usually in the same place as the Incident Base.
COMMUNITY AND SENIOR SERVICES (CSS)  A County department.
COMMUNITY EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAM (CERT)  A citizen emergency response group.
COMMUNITY SAFETY AREA (CSA)  An area within Topanga Canyon designated by the Los Angeles County Fire Department for individuals to find refuge during a large wildland fire, to be used only if they are unable to evacuate. In the Wildfire Survival Chain, this is plan B.
CONFLAGRATION  A raging, destructive fire; often used to denote such a fire with a moving front, as distinguished from a firestorm.
COUNTY COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION (CDC)  An agency responsible for responding to housing needs during an emergency.
CRITICAL INCIDENT STRESS DEBRIEFING (CISD)  A term used in emergency management. In Los Angeles County CISD teams are provided by DMH.
CSA  See Community Safety Area.
CSP  California State Parks Department.
CSS  See Community and Senior Services.
DART  See Disaster Animal Rescue Team.
DCFS  See Department of Children and Family Services.
DEPARTMENT OF ANIMAL CARE AND CONTROL (LACDACC)  A County department.
DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES (DCFS)  A County department.
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES (DHS)  A County department.
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES (DHR)  A County department.
DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH (DMH)  A County department.
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION (DPR)  A County department.
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SOCIAL SERVICES (DPSS)  A County department.
DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS (DPW)  A County department.
  • Building & Safety Division (B&S); responsible for evaluating damage to private structures or property after a disaster.
  • County Building Evaluation Team (CBET); a group within the Architectural Engineering Division that evaluates County-owned or -leased buildings after a disaster.
  • Environmental Programs Division (EPD); responsible for investigating spills that might affect sewers or storm drains.
DEPARTMENT OF REGIONAL PLANNING (DRP)  A County department that deals with disaster-related land use and zoning issues.
DHR  See Department of Human Resources.
DHS  See Department of Health Services.
DISASTER ANIMAL RESCUE TEAM (DART)  A County initiative within LACDACC.
DISASTER MEDICAL ASSISTANCE TEAM (DMAT)  A Federal/State-sponsored team of locally based volunteers deployed to provide medical care in an emergency.
DISASTER RADIO TEAM (DRT)  A program of the Topanga Coalition for Emergency Preparedness (T-CEP).
DISASTER RECOVERY CENTER (DRC)  A facility established by the Federal government in cooperation with state and local governments to provide information on Federal, State, and local disaster recovery programs where other methods are not practical. The Federal government pays for most of the costs of these centers.
DISASTER SUPPLY KIT  A pre-assembled group of critical items that will greatly improve the health and safety of individuals during a disaster. The kit should contain, at a minimum: goggles, bottled water, medications, respiratory protection (filter mask),
glasses, personal items, flashlight, extra batteries, protective clothing (long-sleeved T-shirts, pants), cotton or wool blanket, important documents, etc.

**DISASTER VICTIM INQUIRY SYSTEM (DVIS)**  A County information system; in a disaster, Public Library employees help staff the DVIS.

**DITCH**  If you cannot reach a Regional Shelter, a Community Safety Area, or a Neighborhood Survival Area, a ditch or other low-lying area will provide more safety as a last resort than staying in your home or your car. In the Wildfire Survival Chain, this is plan D.

**DMAT**  See Disaster Medical Assistance Team.

**DMH**  See Department of Mental Health.

**DPR**  See Department of Parks and Recreation.

**DPSS**  See Department of Public Social Services.

**DPW**  See Department of Public Works.

**DRC**  See Disaster Recovery Center.

**DRP**  See Department of Regional Planning.

**DRT**  See Disaster Radio Team.

**DVIS**  See Disaster Victim Inquiry System.

**EAS**  See Emergency Alert System.

**ECC**  See Emergency Coordination Center.

**EDAP**  See Employee Disaster Assistance Program.

**EMC**  See Emergency Management Council.

**EMERGENCY ALERT SYSTEM (EAS)**  A voluntary, Federally sponsored cooperative system comprised of a Federal agency along with local and State governments working with private broadcasters to broadcast official alerts and warnings to local officials and the public.

**EMERGENCY COORDINATION CENTER (ECC)**  A County Fire Department expanded dispatch utilized when regional fire and rescue mutual aid is needed.

**EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL (EMC)**  The County's accredited Local Disaster Council, which provides emergency management and planning oversight.

**EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT MUNICIPAL ADVISORY COUNCIL (EM-MAC)**  A County-initiated advisory committee formed to advise the Board of Supervisors on specific local issues relating to emergency preparedness and planning.

**EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES AUTHORITY (EMSA)**  The State agency charged with prehospital care and emergency planning. EMSA cooperates with the state's Department of Health Services to support local EMS and hospitals in an emergency, and it staffs the Medical Health Branch at the Region EOC (REOC) and the State Operations Center (SOC).

**EMERGENCY NETWORK L.A. (ENLA)**  The Los Angeles County VOAD. ENLA works with the CEOC Care and Shelter branch coordinator during CEOC activations.

**EMERGENCY OAK TREE PERMIT (EOTP)**  Required for any activity affecting the health of an oak tree in Los Angeles County.

**EMERGENCY OPERATIONS CENTER (EOC)**  A facility established by an agency or jurisdiction to provide centralized management and multiagency coordination of jurisdictional response to an emergency. In accordance with California's SEMS, EOCs perform the function of the Multiagency Coordination Entity described in NIMS. See also T-CEP Volunteer EOC.

**EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLAN (ERP)**  A document detailing emergency response procedures. ERPs can be prepared for a single department or for an entire community; community and departmental ERPs must be coordinated.

**EMERGENCY SIGNAGE**  Portable signage used only during emergencies to indicate evacuation routes, road closures, etc.
EMPLOYEE DISASTER ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (EDAP)  A program within DHR intended to help County employee disaster victims.

EMS A  See Emergency Medical Services Authority.

ENLA  See Emergency Network L.A.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAMS DIVISION (EPD)  A division of DPW; responsible for investigating spills that might affect sewers or storm drains.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW UNIT  A unit of the Los Angeles County Fire Department.

EOC  See Emergency Operations Center.

EOTP  See Emergency Oak Tree Permit.

EPD  See Environmental Programs Division.

EQUINE RESPONSE TEAM  The Los Angeles County Department of Animal Care and Control Equine Response Team (LACDACC-ERT) is a Countywide volunteer organization that assists with the safe evacuation of horses and livestock during large- and small-scale disasters. The group also works to educate horse owners on disaster preparedness.

ERP  See Emergency Response Plan.

EVACUATION CENTER  A temporary facility or location where people displaced by a disaster can go until a more permanent solution is established or they can return to their homes. In most cases, the American Red Cross will manage Evacuation Centers.

EVACUATION ORDER  A directive by law enforcement to evacuate a designated area immediately for their safety and the safety of others. Failure to follow this order may result in endangerment to the lives of others, personal injury, or death. See also Immediate Evacuation.

EVACUATION REFUSAL  A formal, signed refusal by a resident to evacuate his or her home or business following an Evacuation Order. In this circumstance, adult residents assume responsibility for their own safety and acknowledge that they may be prosecuted under the California Penal Code.

EVACUATION ROUTES  Roads and highways identified by law enforcement to evacuate individuals out of harm’s way to a safe area or shelter. Evacuation Routes may be identified verbally during an Evacuation Order or predesignated in a written plan.

EVACUATION WARNING  A warning by law enforcement for individuals to either leave a designated area because of a possible threat or prepare to evacuate if an Evacuation Order is issued. This is the time to evacuate those in need of special assistance and large animals. The majority of Evacuation Warnings become Evacuation Orders.

FAIR PLAN ASSOCIATION  A group of property insurers designed to provide affordable fire insurance to property owners in high fire danger areas.

FCC  See Federal Communications Commission.

FCO  See Federal Coordinating Office.

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION (FCC)  A Federal agency.

FEDERAL COORDINATING OFFICER (FCO)  Appointed in a Federally declared major disaster to manage Federal recovery efforts.

FIREBREAK  (1) An area around a structure where the vegetation has been modified to create defensible space (see Fuel Modification Zone); (2) an area clear-cut by the Fire Department to halt the progress of a wildland fire.

FIRE SAFE COUNCIL  A partnership of public agencies, community groups, and corporations focusing on public outreach regarding fire prevention.

FRS RADIO  Family Radio Service radios are a relatively inexpensive means of communicating in the event of a major disaster when phone service will likely be interrupted. The Topanga Coalition for Emergency Preparedness (T-CEP) uses FRS radios to communicate with its Neighborhood Networks in a disaster.

FUEL LOAD  Oven-dry weight of fuel per unit area (usually expressed in tons per acre).
FUEL MODIFICATION ZONES  Also known as Brush Clearance Zones. The area around a structure, usually 200 horizontal feet, where vegetation needs to be managed for fire safety.

GROUND FUELS  All materials lying on or immediately above the ground, including needles or leaves, duff, grass, small dead wood, downed logs, stumps, hard-to-reach large limbs, and low brush.

HIGH HAZARD AREA  Geographic area prone to significant wildfire events owing to vegetation, topography, and weather. All of Topanga, Calabasas, Malibu, and the Santa Monica Mountains are in the Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone (VHFHSZ).

IC  See Incident Commander.

ICP  See Incident Command Post.

ICS  See Incident Command System.

IHSS  See In-Home Supportive Services.

IMMEDIATE EVACUATION  Law enforcement and/or Fire Department personnel may order an Immediate Evacuation when there is a threat to the health and safety of a community. An Immediate Evacuation is usually only verbal.

IMT  See Incident Management Team.

INCIDENT COMMANDER (IC)  The individual responsible for the management of all incident operations during an emergency.

INCIDENT COMMAND SYSTEM (ICS)  Standardized on-scene emergency management tool within SEMS/NIMS.

INCIDENT COMMAND POST (ICP)  A location at which primary incident command functions are executed; usually in the same place as the Incident Base.

INCIDENT MANAGEMENT TEAM (IMT)  The Incident Commander and appropriate general and command staff personnel assigned to an incident.

INFORMATION OFFICER  A member of the Incident Command staff responsible for interacting with the public and media or with other agencies obtaining information directly from the incident.

IN-HOME SUPPORTIVE SERVICES (IHSS)  A program of County social workers within DPSS.

INTERNAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT (ISD)  A County department addressing internal logistical needs.

ISD  See Internal Services Department.

JFTB  See Joint Forces Training Base.

JOINT FORCES TRAINING BASE (JFTB)  Location of the OES Region emergency operations center.

LAG  See Local Assistance Center.

LACDACC  Los Angeles County Department of Animal Care and Control.

LACDACC-ERT  See Equine Response Team.

LACOE  Los Angeles County Office of Education.

LACOFD  Los Angeles County Fire Department.

LACOSD  Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department.

LAUSD  Los Angeles Unified School District.

LOCAL ASSISTANCE CENTER  A local “one stop” multiagency center set up in case of a large local or regional disaster to provide local, State, Federal, and NGO recovery information and/or assistance to disaster victims.

LOLLIPOP  To limb up trees and shrubs by pruning the lower branches off, leaving one to three trunks, and removing dead wood, while keeping the canopy relatively intact. The purpose is to separate ground fuels from aerial fuels and reduce the fuel load.

MALIBU FORESTRY UNIT  A unit of the Los Angeles County Fire Department.

7/9/09 52
MASTER MUTUAL AID AGREEMENT  Also known as the California Disaster and Civil Defense Master Mutual Aid Agreement, a Statewide mutual aid agreement between the signatory public agencies and governments to provide voluntary and reciprocal assistance in emergencies without expectation of reimbursement. All 58 counties, the State, and most local agencies are signatories. Under a State of Emergency the Governor may make mutual aid mandatory.

METROPOLITAN TRANSIT AUTHORITY (MTA)  A special transportation district in Los Angeles County. During CEOC activation, MTA provides an agency representative to work with the CEOC Logistics Section.

MITIGATION  Actions taken before an emergency to eliminate or reduce the impact of a threat or hazard. Brush clearance and brush clearance ordinances are examples of mitigation.

MOUNTAINS RECREATION AND CONSERVATION AUTHORITY (MRCA)  A State agency.

MRCA  See Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority.

MTA  See Metropolitan Transit Authority.

MUTUAL AID AGREEMENTS  Voluntary and reciprocal agreements between public agencies to share personnel, services, materials, and facilities in an emergency without expectation of reimbursement.

NATIONAL INCIDENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (NIMS)  A nationwide set of protocols for emergency management, established pursuant to Presidential Directive Number 5.

NATIONAL VOLUNTARY ORGANIZATIONS ACTIVE IN DISASTER (NVOAD)  A national umbrella organization for NGOs providing relief and recovery services in a disaster. See also Emergency Network L.A.

NEIGHBORHOOD NETWORK  A Neighborhood Network is a group of residents, usually organized by street, who come together to devise a plan of action in the event of a disaster. The plan may include the rescue of pets, turning off utilities, retrieving items of value or sentiment, caring for children or neighbors in need of special assistance, and making sure everyone is safe in the Neighborhood Network area. A program of the Topanga Coalition for Emergency Preparedness (T-CEP).

NEIGHBORHOOD SURVIVAL AREA (NSA)  An area designated for individuals to find refuge during a large wildland fire. NSAs should be used only if residents cannot evacuate Topanga to a safe area (e.g., a Regional Shelter) or reach a Community Safety Area within Topanga Canyon. In the Wildfire Survival Chain, this is plan C.

NIMS  See National Incident Management System.

NSA  See Neighborhood Survival Area.

NVOAD  See National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster.

OA  See Operational Area.

OAAB  See Operational Area Advisory Board.

OAERP  See Operational Area Emergency Response Plan.

OEM  See Office of Emergency Management.

OES  See Office of Emergency Services.

OFFICE OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT (OEM)  An office of the CEO.

OFFICE OF EMERGENCY SERVICES (OES)  A State agency.

OFFICE OF UNINCORPORATED AREA SERVICES (OUAS)  An office of the CEO.

OFFICIAL INSPECTION REPORT (OIR)  A report issued by a Fire Department brush inspector on potential or existing hazards on private property. Failure to comply with an OIR will result in an administrative penalty and a special assessment on the property owner's tax bill.

7/9/09  53
OPERATIONAL AREA (OA) An Intermediate level of the State’s emergency services organizations, consisting of local governments within a county and all of the local governments (including Special Districts) within that county.

OPERATIONAL AREA ADVISORY BOARD (OAAB) A County emergency advisory group consisting of City and County agencies.

OPERATIONAL AREA EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLAN (OAERP) The County Emergency Plan, describing how the County is organized and how the County emergency organization will carry out a coordinated response to major emergencies and disasters within the OA and between the OA and the Region. This plan is coordinated with the State Emergency Plan and SEMS.

OUAS See Office of Unincorporated Area Services.

PATCH People Assisting Topanga Canyon with Helping Hands, a local nonprofit group providing assistance to hard-to-reach populations.

RAPID NOTIFY An automated alert system activated by the County that notifies residents by telephone in an emergency.

RCC See Recovery Coordination Center.

RECOVERY COORDINATION CENTER (RCC) An Operational Area-wide center established to coordinate recovery activity.

RECOVERY PLAN (RP) A document detailing steps for a community to take after a disaster.

RED FLAG WEATHER Weather conditions in which winds are blowing in excess of 25 mph and humidity is below 15 percent, often but not necessarily combined with high temperatures. A Red Flag Warning is issued before the weather conditions arise, and a Red Flag Alert is issued when the conditions are in effect.

REGIONAL SHELTER/RED CROSS SHELTER These facilities are usually pre-identified and are designed to shelter individuals in the event of a disaster. Facilities such as showers, sleeping areas, and kitchens may preexist or may have to be constructed during an incident. Regional Shelters are typically located away from the affected disaster area. In the Wildfire Survival Chain, this is plan A.

REGION EMERGENCY OPERATIONS CENTER (REOC) An EOC activated by the State to ensure regional coordination of mutual aid and state support within one or more Mutual Aid Regions.

REOC See Region Emergency Operations Center.

RP See Recovery Plan.

SAFETY ZONE A defensible area of at least a 400-foot circle that is clear of vegetation. There are no identified Safety Zones in Topanga; but see Community Safety Area.

SANTA MONICA MOUNTAINS CONSERVANCY (SMMC) A State agency.

SBA See Small Business Administration.

SCHOOL SHELTER A school that students will be transferred to or remain in for shelter during a large wildland fire or other disaster. School staff will supervise the students until they are reunited with their parents or guardians.

SCO See State Coordinating Officer.


SLOPE Determined by measuring rise divided by run (rise/run) as a percentage.

SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION (SBA) A Federal agency that issues recovery loans to homeowners and businesses based on meeting Federal requirements. SBA loans may be made available when, pursuant to a request by the Governor (or designee), an independent disaster determination is made by the SBA Director, or when the President declares a major disaster or emergency and includes the SBA in the declaration.
SMMC See Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy.
SOC State Operations Center.
STAGING AREA A location where incident personnel and equipment are assigned on
an immediately available status, usually able to respond within three minutes. Staging
areas are managed by the operations personnel.
STANDARDIZED EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (SEMS) California’s
Statewide emergency management system, codified in the Emergency Services Act and
in Title 19 of the California Code of Regulations. SEMS comprises the principles of the
Incident Command System, Interagency Coordination, Mutual Aid, and the Operational
Area concept. SEMS is consistent with the principles of NIMS.
STATE COORDINATING OFFICER (SCO) The person appointed by the governor to
act for the State in cooperation with the Federal Coordinating Officer.
STATE OPERATIONS CENTER (SOC) In Sacramento. Coordinates statewide
operations with SEMS/NIMS.
STEEP SLOPE A grade of at least 45 degrees or 50 percent, where erosion is a
significant consideration.
SWOT Acronym for strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats; a term referring
to an asset and planning analysis used as a tool in strategic planning.
TACTICAL OPERATIONS ZONE A pre-identified geographical area used by
emergency responders to improve coordination and span of control during a disaster.
Tactical Zone boundaries for Topanga are identified by Thomas Bros. map page and
alpha-numeric grid boxes. Topanga is divided into nine Tactical Operations Zones.
T-CEP See Topanga Coalition for Emergency Preparedness.
T-CEP VOLUNTEER EOC An Emergency Operations Center created and staffed by
local community volunteers for the Topanga Coalition for Emergency Preparedness.
TOPANGA ANIMAL RESCUE A nonprofit organization that has the ability to mobilize
a veterinary field triage unit in the event of an emergency in Topanga as well as
providing ongoing animal education outreach programs for the community.
TOPANGA COALITION FOR EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS (T-CEP) A nonprofit
group of community volunteers dedicated to emergency planning and communications.
TOPANGA CREEK WATERSHED COMMITTEE A citizen group addressing
environmental issues of the Topanga watershed.
TOPANGA DISASTER SURVIVAL GUIDE and SUPPLEMENT Publications to help
the Topanga community with disaster preparedness, response, and recovery. See
www.topangasurvival.org.
TOPANGA EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PLANNING (TEMP) PROJECT A
collaborative community effort with public service agencies to create and maintain an
emergency management plan for the Topanga community.
TOPANGA TOWN COUNCIL A nongovernmental citizens advisory group for the
Topanga area.
TRAFFIC CLOSURE LEVELS
• Level 1: Open to the public.
• Level 2: Open to Fire Department, law enforcement, critical resources, and
residents (critical resources include Municipal and Public Works, Edison, LASD,
volunteer workers, etc.).
• Level 3: Open to Fire Department, law enforcement, and critical resources; critical
resources may need to be escorted.
• Level 4: Open to Fire Department and law enforcement only.
• Level 5: Closed to all traffic; area blocked or not safe even for Fire Department and
law enforcement.
TRAFFIC CONTROL POINT  A geographical location determined by law enforcement to control access and entry to the area of an emergency incident.

TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT PLAN  A plan developed by first responder departments and agencies with jurisdiction over the roads to enable (1) rapid ingress to an area where a disaster has occurred and (2) efficient egress for the general public.

UNIFIED COMMAND  An Incident Command System management structure created to enhance interagency coordination by including all relevant jurisdictional agencies within the command structure where they jointly exercise command over resources dealing with an incident.

UNIFIED TACTICAL RESPONSE PLAN  A plan developed by all relevant responding County departments for coordinated response to a disaster.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE (USDA)  A Federal agency.

USDA  See United States Department of Agriculture.

VHFHSZ  Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone; see High Hazard Area.

VOAD  See Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster.

VOLUNTARY ORGANIZATIONS ACTIVE IN DISASTER (VOAD)  VOADs consist of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and voluntary organizations that provide emergency/disaster relief and recovery to individuals and families in an emergency.

WILDLAND-URBAN INTERFACE  A geographical area where structures and other human development meet with wildland fuels or vegetative fuels. Compare Wildland-Urban Intermix. Generally, there is a clear delineation at this interface, with varying degrees of defensible space between the wildland fuels (brush and chaparral) and the noncombustible structures. This term would apply to many newer subdivisions built in surrounding areas and in outlying communities. Few homes in Topanga meet this criterion.

WILDLAND-URBAN INTERMIX (WUI)  A term used to describe structures and other human development located and mixed within the wildland and vegetative fuels. Compare Wildland-Urban Interface. In areas considered to “intermix,” there is no clear delineation between the wildland fuels and the structures themselves. In these cases, structures may be isolated or built in clusters, often characterized by poor access roads, steep terrain, combustible construction, and heavy ground, ladder, and aerial fuel loading. Intermix areas are usually associated with isolated structures or with older communities, such as Topanga.

ZONE MAP  For purposes of emergency response, Topanga has been divided into nine Tactical Operations Zones (see map in The Topanga Disaster Survival Guide).