



NEWS RELEASE

16-001

Date: Friday, January 8, 2016**District:** 8 - San Bernardino**Contact:** Terri Kasinga**Phone:** (951) 232-4268 (cell)**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

CALTRANS ADVISES MOTORISTS TO PREPARE BEFORE MOUNTAIN TRAVEL

SAN BERNARDINO – The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), District 8 has partnered with multiple agencies throughout Riverside and San Bernardino counties, including the National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) to provide information and prepare the public for an El Niño this winter. And it has arrived - and will continue until early spring.

Caltrans District 8 Director, John Bulinski states, “As I stated before, Caltrans has taken the El Niño forecast seriously. The Caltrans crews have been working 24/7 to keep the roadways safe and open for the traveling public. Although there have not been any major closures during these recent storms, I want to remind everyone that we cannot predict how our environment will respond to the magnitude of the storms that are forecasted. Be assured that Caltrans has and will continue to respond.”

This week has produced large amounts of not only rain, but snow. Caltrans wants you and your family and friends to be prepared before you travel to mountain or desert areas, especially with more rain and snow forecasted this weekend and next week.

Emergency officials are urging the public to Plan, Prepare, Practice....and Ready Set Go. For more information go to <http://www.sbcounty.gov/uploads/sbcountyfire/content/oes/pdf/familydisasterplan.pdf> and <http://www.rvcfire.org/ourDepartment/OES/Pages/Citizen-ReadinessPreparedness.aspx>

Below are some helpful tips and important reminders before you get on the road:

- If you are going to mountain areas – **BRING CHAINS!** Weather changes rapidly and just because chains aren't required when you go up – doesn't mean they won't be when you come down (***see chain control chart on next page***).
- Plan ahead and check weather and road conditions before traveling – **know before you go.** Check Caltrans Quickmap for chain controls at <http://quickmap.dot.ca.gov/> and listen to local weather reports. Go to NOAA at <http://www.noaa.gov/>.
- Prepare your vehicle before you leave: check wipers, tires, fluids, heater, and make sure you fill up the gas tank and that your tire chains fit your tires properly.
- Be advised that rock fall and black ice exist in mountain areas on roadways. Reduce your speed and always be vigilant.
- Reduce vehicle speed and allow a safe following distance from other vehicles.
- Bring supplies – water, snacks, charger with cell phone, kitty litter for traction, warm clothing and blankets, sturdy shoes/boots, necessary medications, a flashlight, and other emergency items in case you become stranded for long periods of time.
- Always follow directions from road workers, emergency responders, and law enforcement – they are there to help you and may save your life!
- Keep a safe distance away from equipment working to clear the roads – don't assume they can see you and **NEVER** pass them.
- If you encounter standing to running water – **TURN AROUND, DON'T DROWN!**

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Be advised that road closures due to accidents or other unforeseen events can occur at any time. Traffic breaks or escorts may become necessary. Always be prepared for long delays due to high volumes of traffic on mountain roadways to resort locations. The United States Forest Service (USFS) has also provided some important information for forest visitors on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/sanbernardinof>.

CHAIN CONTROL REQUIREMENTS

- R-1** Chains or snow tread tires required. Snow tires must have a tread depth of 6/32" with a "M & S" imprint on the tire's sidewall.
- R-2** Chains required on all vehicles except four-wheel drives or all-wheel drives with snow tread tires on all four wheels. Four wheel drives must carry chains. If you have four-wheel drive – engage it. Use the "4-high" range only. Use "4-low" only if your vehicle becomes stuck.
- R-3** Chains required on all vehicles - **no exceptions!**

Follow Caltrans on Twitter for important road information 24/7 at <https://twitter.com/Caltrans8>.

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