

NEWS

From the County of San Bernardino
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County warns residents: "Turn Around ... Don't Drown"

The death Monday night of a 51-year-old woman who apparently tried to drive through running water near the San Bernardino County community of Big River served as a tragic reminder of the dangers posed by flash flooding.

"Turn Around Don't Drown" is the message from San Bernardino County. Despite repeated warnings, some people continue to risk their lives by driving through running water.

This time of year brings active sudden thunderstorms and showers to areas throughout the county. The rain can sometimes be intense resulting in flash floods. Flash floods can develop quickly, sometimes in just a few minutes and can sometimes occur in washes and creeks far downstream from where the rain is falling. Flash floods often have a dangerous wall of roaring water that carries rocks, mud, and other debris and can sweep away most things in its path.

Be aware of flood hazards no matter where you live, but especially if you live in a low-lying area, near water or downstream from a dam. Even very small streams, gullies, creeks, culverts, washes, dry streambeds, or low-lying ground that appears harmless in dry weather can flood. Never attempt to drive through running water.

The mountain communities are reminded of the dangers of possible debris flows in and below the areas recently burned by the Slide and Grass Valley wildfires. Rainfall that is usually absorbed into the hill slope soils can run off almost instantly after vegetation has been removed by wildfire. The San Bernardino Department of Public Works wants to keep the public safe and nothing on the other side of flowing water is worth risking you or your family's lives. More information on flooding is available at www.sbcounty.gov/dpw/floodcontrol.

