

MOTION BY SUPERVISORS LINDSEY P. HORVATH  
AND KATHRYN BARGER

JANUARY 21, 2025

**Emergency Measures to Manage Debris and Debris Flows to Protect Life,  
Property, and the Natural Environment**

Coordinated recovery and response efforts for the 2025 Fires are underway and the County will lead inter-agency initiatives to maintain public safety, health, and chart a speedy and sustainable recovery. Nine working groups of federal, state, and local partners are being convened, all led by the County, to coordinate a rapid response to the crisis.

Two immediate needs necessary to protect property, public health, and the natural environment, are management of debris flows and removal of hazardous materials from fire-impacted property. As we expect rain in the coming week, we must move quickly to shore up burn areas to protect against dangerous debris flows and control pollutants. The County, through its watershed protection and debris management taskforces, is coordinating work with cities, our state, and federal partners to direct resources where most needed to protect those at risk. Emergency actions include:

1. Implementing temporary debris flow mitigation measures on streets and flood control infrastructure.
2. Removing debris and pollution and mitigating toxic runoff from burned areas to

**MOTION**

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protect local waterways, beaches, coastal waters, and groundwater basins that serve as drinking water sources.

3. Conducting sediment removal and additional debris flow mitigation measures in cities and unincorporated County areas impacted by the fires until the threat to public health and safety has abated.

At the County's request, on January 20, 2025, Governor Newsom issued Executive Order N-13-25 to expedite cleanup and debris flow efforts. The Executive Order provides several temporary emergency powers and waives certain permitting requirements to deploy these extraordinary measures to allow the LA County Public Works to take this action in unincorporated areas, on Flood Control District infrastructure, and where necessary, on behalf of the cities of Los Angeles, Malibu, Pasadena, and Sierra Madre. Debris flow efforts will be supported by the California Department of Emergency Management and municipal public works departments.

In tandem, Phase One of debris removal on private property is underway, being led by the US Environmental Protection Agency. This required first step of debris removal will identify, remove, and remediate environmental hazards such as household hazardous waste from damaged private property. Details for Phase Two debris removal is being coordinated, also under the leadership of LA County Public Works. Expediting this work will reduce the risks these pollutants pose to human health and water quality.

BASED UPON THE FOREGOING, AND PURSUANT TO GOVERNMENT CODE SECTION 54954.2(b)(2), **WE, THEREFORE, MOVE** that the Board of Supervisors determine that:

1. There is a need to take immediate action; and

2. That the need to take this action came to the attention of the Board after the posting of the agenda for today's meeting.

**WE, FURTHER, MOVE** that the Board of Supervisors delegate authority to the Director of Public Works to enter into memoranda of understanding with cities, districts, and other state and federal partners regarding extraordinary flood control, debris flow, and debris removal efforts to protect life, property, and the environment from immediate hazards.

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