



City of Malibu News

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City of Malibu Prepares Emergency Information Distribution System in Preparation for Potential Power and Cell Service Outages

(Malibu CA) – On Saturday, July 20, City staff along with members of the Malibu Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) practiced setting up an emergency information station as part of community-wide emergency preparedness efforts. It will be part of the City's emergency supplies Points of Distribution (POD) program in anticipation of needing a system to distribute public information across Malibu in the event of a long-term power outage.

A POD is a location where community members can obtain basic emergency supplies. Since the Woolsey Fire, Public Safety staff and CERT Team members have been evaluating the City's emergency supply bins and restocking them. As part of this effort, it was determined that additional equipment and supplies were needed to set up emergency information stations.

"Electronic communications have given us many powerful tools, but society's ever-increasing dependence on them has also created vulnerabilities, so we need to have practical, low-tech solutions that will work without electricity, computers and cell phones," said Mayor Jefferson "Zuma Jay" Wagner. "We can't anticipate every challenge in a disaster, but we already know about the problems that power and cell phone outages pose and we are working on strategies to address them."

The emergency information stations are part of a broad effort by the City Manager and Public Safety Manager to develop capabilities for distributing critical emergency information to the Malibu community during disasters if electricity and cell phone services are out, as occurred during the Woolsey Fire in November 2018. This strategy may also be needed if Southern California Edison (SCE) implements their Public Safety Power Shutoff (PSPS) plan meant to prevent power lines from sparking wildfires. Under the PSPS program, SCE may cut off power in high fire-risk areas, such as Malibu, during extremely hazardous fire conditions. The City objects to the PSPS plan, but it is likely that it will be implemented at some point during fire season.

On Saturday, July 20, the CERT Team leaders and City staff trained other CERT volunteers on procedures and protocols for setting up a POD with an emergency information station. The bins include bullhorns, pop-up tents, "Disaster Information" signage, and bulletin boards for displaying printed material. During a long-term power outage, printed public information will be brought out to the boards one or more times a day. These locations will be publicized once they are finalized.

In addition to the bulletin boards, the City will put out emergency information on KBUU 99.1 FM, Malibu's only locally operated radio station. Anyone with an FM radio, whether battery, solar or crank powered, or in a car, could tune in to get emergency information. The City will also record emergency information on the Emergency and Traffic Hotline, which anyone can call in to at 310-456-9982.

On September 14, as part of National Preparedness Month, the City and the CERT team will conduct a public demonstration of the PODs with the emergency information station as a drill for the Team and to raise community awareness of the system.

To sign up for the City's disaster and evacuation alerts through Everbridge, visit www.MalibuCity.org/DisasterNotifications. For more information or assistance with signing up for Everbridge, call Public Safety Manager Susan Dueñas at 310-456-2489 ext. 313 or email SDuenas@MalibuCity.org.

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