

DON'T WAIT. COMMUNICATE. MAKE YOUR EMERGENCY PLAN TODAY.



SEPTEMBER IS NATIONAL PREPAREDNESS MONTH!



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Prepare!

The Federal Emergency Management Agency is encouraging national preparedness. Two recurring risks for Sebastopol are flooding and earthquakes. This article focuses on flood issues.

For all disasters, you should make a plan for your family, and for pets and your neighborhood. You should maintain at least three days of emergency supplies, and have a plan for how you will communicate during disasters.

There are predictions of El Nino conditions for this rainy season. For some areas, this may translate into heavy rain and flooding. Two types of flooding experienced in Sebastopol are discussed below.

Flooding can occur slowly as rain continues to fall for many days. This type of flooding, called a *slow-onset flood*, can take days or weeks to develop and can last for days before floodwaters recede. The Sebastopol area has experienced numerous flood

events of this type related to the Laguna de Santa Rosa. Highway 12, Occidental Road, Morris Street, Laguna Park Way and Flynn Street have all had major flooding in past events. Atascadero Creek on the City's western boundary also sometimes covers the Bodega Highway bridge. Floods may cut access to homes and businesses, and structures may also experience flood damage.

Rapid-onset floods occur more quickly, typically developing within hours or days. These types of floods usually occur in smaller watersheds experiencing focussed, heavy rainfall. Neighborhoods of Sebastopol have experienced these types of situations, which overwhelm storm drain systems.

Some areas of Sebastopol have known flood risk. To avoid being trapped when floodwaters threaten, the best action is to evacuate before flooding starts. If you do not evacuate before the flooding occurs or you are trapped by flash flooding, do not enter flooded areas or moving water

either on foot or in a vehicle, including areas that appear to have only inches of water.

If you know your home or business is subject to flooding, your goal now should be to reduce the risk of damage to structures from flooding. This means elevating critical utilities, such as electrical panels, switches, sockets, wiring, appliances, heating systems, and waterproofing basements.

Clear debris from gutters and downspouts. Anchor any fuel tanks. If you are in a flood risk area and information indicates a flood is likely, move furniture, valuables and important documents to a safe place.

Purchasing flood insurance provides financial protection for the cost of repairs due to flood damage. Most insurance policies do not cover flooding, but flood insurance is available for homeowners, renters, and business owners through the National Flood Insurance Program.



City Employees Recognized

Every year the City recognizes employees who have made extraordinary efforts to serve the public.

The following City employees received awards in 2015:

Police Department Sergeant Greg DeVore was designated Employee of the Year. Greg consistently goes above and beyond the call of duty in the sometimes challenging world of public safety. He displays a high level of professionalism and dedication to the Police Department and the Sebastopol community.

Assistant Planner Jonathan Atkinson received the Inspiration Award for his can-do attitude, and patient, polite, and effective manner in working the public counter, processing development applications and serving as liaison to several City committees.

Building Technician Pattie Murphy received the Customer Service Award. As one of the City's 'front-line' staff persons, Pattie is helpful, friendly, and responsive both to fellow employees and the public, while consistently demonstrating a high level of customer service.

Keep Conserving!

In the face of the continuing drought, Sebastopol residents and businesses are doing a good job conserving water. Keep it up!

Climate Action Plan, Laguna Preserve Management Plan in the Works

Keep an eye on the 'Special Projects' Planning Department page of the City website for drafts of the proposed Climate Action Plan 2020 and the Laguna Preserve Management Plan.

Climate Action 2020 is a cooperative planning effort involving all of Sonoma County's cities as well as the County of Sonoma, and is intended to provide comprehensive data and set forth actions to reduce production of greenhouse gases that are spurring climate change. Each jurisdiction can custom-tailor its policies. There will be multiple opportunities to review and comment on the draft plan.

The City has also been working on a detailed Management Plan for its Laguna de Santa Rosa Wetlands Preserve. The Plan is intended to identify maintenance protocols and funding needed for Preserve upkeep, and also to identify major environmental restoration and other improvement needs. The draft Plan is expected to be released in early September.

Facts About Key Zoning Standards

- In residential areas, front-yard fence height is generally limited to 3 1/2 feet; side and rear yard fences can generally be 6 feet.
- The City has a Tree Ordinance which requires a Tree Removal Permit for removal of larger trees.
- Sebastopol allows 'granny units' (officially known as second dwelling units); check with the Planning Department regarding development standards and procedures.
- The Zoning Ordinance allows 'home stay' rentals—where you rent out a room in your house for visitors—through a simple permit process.
- Renting out a dwelling as a vacation rental is restricted to limited situations, and when allowed, requires a Use Permit.

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