



*"A Professional Service Agency"*

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

July 12, 2008  
11:30 p.m.

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**UPDATE ON MAJOR MUDSLIDES AND FLOODING**  
*Local Emergency Declared*

A local emergency was declared tonight as flooding and mudslides devastated areas of Inyo County.

Evacuations are in effect in the following areas:

- Oak Creek / West Fort Independence
- Fort Independence Camp Ground
- East Fort Independence flood-zone (voluntary)
- Grays Meadows area (voluntary)
- Whitney Portal Campground (voluntary)

An evacuation Center has been set up at the Owens Valley School on Clay Street in Independence. The Evacuation Center in Big Pine has been closed.

At this time, California Highway Patrol is escorting passenger vehicles around the effected area on highway 395 north of Independence.

Flash flood warnings are in effect until 12:45 a.m. and further rain is anticipated through Monday. "It is essential that citizens take an active role in their safety, no one should be entering flood-zones," said Inyo County Sheriff, Bill Lutze.

FEMA offers the following tips to stay safe during and after flooding:

During a flood:

- If flooding directly effects you, please remember to go to higher ground – get out of areas subject to flooding; this includes dips, low spots, canyons, and washes.

*Office of the*  
**SHERIFF**  
**INYO COUNTY, CA**



**WILLIAM R. LUTZE**  
*Sheriff*

**JOHN N. EROPKIN**  
*Undersheriff*

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- Avoid areas already flooded, especially if the water is flowing fast. Do not attempt to cross flowing streams.
- Roadbeds may be washed out. NEVER drive through flooded roadways. If your vehicle is suddenly caught in rising water, leave it immediately and seek higher ground.

After the Storm:

- Do not turn electricity back on in your home if you detect gas or if the electrical system has been flooded.
- Clean and disinfect everything that was touched by floodwaters or mudflows and throw out any such foodstuffs.
- Follow directions from local officials regarding the safety of drinking water.

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