

DAMAGE SURVEY SUMMARY REPORT

DISASTER CA23-4

AUGUST 2023 TROPICAL STORM HILARY

FRESNO, IMPERIAL, INYO, KERN, LOS ANGELES, MONO,
ORANGE, RIVERSIDE, SAN BERNARDINO, SAN DIEGO,
SISKIYOU, TULARE, AND VENTURA COUNTIES

COMMENCING AUGUST 18, 2023

Prepared by:
California Department of Transportation
Division of Budgets
Federal Resources Office

Introduction

This Damage Survey Summary Report (DSSR) has been prepared for submission to the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) in response to a Tropical Storm Hilary impacting Fresno, Imperial, Inyo, Kern, Los Angeles, Mono, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, San Diego, Siskiyou, Tulare, and Ventura counties, which first began on August 18, 2023. According to FHWA's Emergency Relief Manual (May 2013), the purpose of this DSSR is to "summarize the damage assessment and provide information and documentation for the FHWA Division Administrator to make a finding that a natural disaster or catastrophic failure has occurred within the intent of 23 U.S.C. 125." The DSSR also "provides the Division Administrator with a basis to make a finding that the disaster is eligible for funding under the FHWA ER program."

Damage Description

Beginning on or about August 18, 2023, a Tropical Storm Hilary struck the State of California, bringing substantial precipitation, damaging winds, and flooding, and storms continue to impact significant portions of the state, across Fresno, Imperial, Inyo, Kern, Los Angeles, Mono, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, San Diego, Siskiyou, Tulare, and Ventura counties. This Tropical Storm Hilary damaged and forced the closure of federal and state highways and roads, continued to threaten critical infrastructure, and caused trees and tree limbs to fall, damaging structures and obstructing major highways and local roads. This Tropical Storm Hilary resulted in and continue to threaten power outages, have forced evacuations, and have stranded residents and motorists in impacted counties. This Tropical Storm Hilary have resulted in the threat of mud and debris flows, particularly on burn scars from recent wildfires, necessitating the repositioning of emergency response resources.

On August 19, 2023, August 20, 2023, and September 12, 2023, Governor Gavin Newsom proclaimed the State of Emergency for the Tropical Storm Hilary event. A copy of the Governor's State of Emergency Proclamations, including supplemental proclamations, are included in this Damage Survey Summary Report.

Damage Estimate

To date, the estimated cost to repair or reconstruct the damage to federal-aid highways in accordance with the provisions of 23 U.S.C. 125 is \$77 million for State facilities and an additional \$69.65 million for Local facilities.

Additional Information

The following attached information describes the statewide storm damage in additional detail:

- Governor's Proclamations including supplemental proclamation (executed August 19, 2023, August 20, 2023, and September 12, 2023,).
- State and Local damage estimates (to date).
- Sampling of newspaper articles.
- Pictures of reported damage.

DISASTER CA23-4

AUGUST 2023 TROPICAL STORM HILARY

FRESNO, IMPERIAL, INYO, KERN, LOS ANGELES, MONO,
ORANGE, RIVERSIDE, SAN BERNARDINO, SAN DIEGO,
SISKIYOU, TULARE, AND VENTURA COUNTIES

GOVERNOR'S PROCLAMATIONS

**EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT
STATE OF CALIFORNIA**

PROCLAMATION OF A STATE OF EMERGENCY

WHEREAS on August 18, 2023, Hurricane Hilary began bringing heavy rain, flooding, lightning, and gusty winds to Southern California, necessitating the repositioning of significant resources, including swift water rescue teams and the California National Guard, to protect health and safety and preserve the lives and property of the people of the State of California; and

WHEREAS the National Weather Service issued a Tropical Storm Warning on August 18, 2023, for portions of the Southern California coast, which are forecast to experience increased swells and life-threatening surf and rip current conditions; and

WHEREAS the National Weather Service issued a series of Flood Watches on August 18, 2023, warning of potential significant flooding between August 19, 2023, and August 22, 2023, in Alpine, Fresno, Imperial, Inyo, Kern, Los Angeles, Mono, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, San Diego, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, Tulare, and Ventura Counties; and

WHEREAS the National Weather Service issued a series of Flash Flood Warnings on August 18, 2023, for San Bernardino County, and on August 19, 2023, for Kern County; and

WHEREAS threats of lightning and significant wind impacts with gusts up to or exceeding 70 miles per hour are anticipated in mountainous areas throughout Southern California and are likely to exacerbate fire conditions; and

WHEREAS the National Weather Service has warned that Hurricane Hilary may bring the potential for isolated tornadoes across portions of Southern California; and

WHEREAS the Los Angeles County Emergency Management Department advised residents and visitors evacuate Catalina Island as of 12:00 a.m. on August 19, 2023; and

WHEREAS numerous wildfires over the last several years have caused massive burn scars, exacerbating the potential for precipitation to cause dangerous and potentially catastrophic flooding and debris flows, and Hurricane Hilary is forecast to bring 3 to 6 inches of rain within a short period of time in Southern California, including over the Apple and El Dorado burn scars in Riverside and San Bernardino Counties, the Fairview and Bonny burn scars in Riverside County, and the Bobcat, Bond, Lake, and Fish burn scars in Los Angeles County; and

WHEREAS Hurricane Hilary is expected to prompt widespread evacuations and shelter-in-place orders; to threaten, damage, or destroy homes and critical infrastructure, including power and water lines, businesses, and roads; and to necessitate the deployment of search and rescue teams in areas impacted by significant debris flow; and

WHEREAS Hurricane Hilary, including associated debris flows, is expected to damage or destroy roads in Southern California; and

WHEREAS under the provisions of Government Code section 8558(b), I find that conditions of extreme peril to the safety of persons and property exist due to Hurricane Hilary in Fresno, Imperial, Inyo, Kern, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, San Diego, Tulare, and Ventura Counties; and

WHEREAS under the provisions of Government Code section 8558(b), I find that the conditions caused by Hurricane Hilary, by reason of their magnitude, are or are likely to be beyond the control of the services, personnel, equipment, and facilities of any single local government and require the combined forces of a mutual aid region or regions to appropriately respond; and

WHEREAS under the provisions of Government Code section 8625(c), I find that local authority is inadequate to cope with the magnitude of the extreme peril posed by Hurricane Hilary; and

WHEREAS under the provisions of Government Code section 8571, I find that strict compliance with various statutes and regulations specified in this Proclamation would prevent, hinder, or delay the mitigation of the effects of Hurricane Hilary.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GAVIN NEWSOM, Governor of the State of California, in accordance with the authority vested in me by the State Constitution and statutes, including the California Emergency Services Act, and in particular, Government Code section 8625, **HEREBY PROCLAIM A STATE OF EMERGENCY** to exist in Fresno, Imperial, Inyo, Kern, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, San Diego, Tulare, and Ventura Counties.

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED THAT:

1. All agencies of the state government shall utilize and employ state personnel, equipment, and facilities for the performance of any and all activities consistent with the direction of the Office of Emergency Services and the State Emergency Plan. Also, all individuals are to obey the direction of emergency officials with regard to this emergency in order to protect their safety.
2. The Office of Emergency Services shall provide assistance to local governments, if appropriate, under the authority of the California Disaster Assistance Act, Government Code section 8680 et seq., and California Code of Regulations, Title 19, section 2900 et seq.
3. As necessary to assist local governments and for the protection of public health and the environment, state agencies shall enter into contracts to arrange for the procurement of materials, goods, and services necessary to quickly assist with the response to and recovery from the impacts of Hurricane Hilary. Applicable provisions of the Government Code and the Public Contract Code, including but not limited to travel, advertising, and competitive bidding requirements, are suspended to the extent necessary to address the effects of Hurricane Hilary.

4. Any fairgrounds the Office of Emergency Services determines suitable to assist individuals impacted by Hurricane Hilary shall be made available to the Office of Emergency Services pursuant to the Emergency Services Act, Government Code section 8589. The Office of Emergency Services shall notify the fairgrounds of the intended use and may immediately utilize the fairgrounds without the fairground board of directors' approval.
5. The California National Guard may be mobilized under Military and Veterans Code section 146 to support disaster response and relief efforts, as directed by the Office of Emergency Services, and to coordinate with all relevant state agencies and state and local emergency responders and law enforcement within the impacted areas. Sections 147 and 188 of the Military and Veterans Code are applicable during the period of participation in this mission, exempting the California Military Department from applicable procurement rules for specified emergency purchases, and those rules are hereby suspended.
6. Any state-owned properties the Office of Emergency Services determines are suitable to address the impacts of Hurricane Hilary shall be made available to the Office of Emergency Services for this purpose in accordance with Government Code section 8570.
7. The provisions of Unemployment Insurance Code section 1253 imposing a one-week waiting period for unemployment insurance applicants are suspended as to all applicants who are unemployed as a direct result of Hurricane Hilary and apply for unemployment insurance benefits during the time period beginning August 19, 2023, and ending on the close of business on February 20, 2024, in Fresno, Imperial, Inyo, Kern, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, San Diego, Tulare, and Ventura Counties, and who are otherwise eligible for unemployment insurance benefits.
8. Vehicle Code sections 9265(a), 9867, 14901, 14902, and 15255.2, requiring the imposition of fees, are suspended with regard to any request for replacement of an identification card, driver's license card, vehicle registration certificate, certificate of title, or registration stickers, by any individual who loses such records as a result of Hurricane Hilary in Fresno, Imperial, Inyo, Kern, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, San Diego, Tulare, and Ventura Counties. Such records shall be replaced without charge.

9. The provisions of Vehicle Code sections 4602 and 5902, requiring the timely registration or transfer of title, are suspended with regard to any registration or transfer of title by any individual who is unable to comply with those requirements as a result of Hurricane Hilary in Fresno, Imperial, Inyo, Kern, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, San Diego, Tulare, and Ventura Counties. The time covered by this suspension shall not be included in calculating any late penalty pursuant to Vehicle Code section 9554.
10. Health and Safety Code sections 103525.5 and 103625, and Penal Code section 14251, requiring the imposition of fees, are suspended with regard to any request for copies of certificates of birth, death, marriage, and dissolution of marriage records, by any individual who loses such records as a result of Hurricane Hilary in Fresno, Imperial, Inyo, Kern, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, San Diego, Tulare, and Ventura Counties. Such copies shall be provided without charge.
11. The California Department of Transportation shall formally request immediate assistance through the Federal Highway Administration's Emergency Relief Program, United States Code, Title 23, section 125, in order to obtain federal assistance for any local road and highway repairs or reconstruction that are needed due to Hurricane Hilary.
12. Drivers may exceed the hours-of-service limits specified in California Vehicle Code section 34501.2 and California Code of Regulations, Title 13, section 1212.5 while operating a vehicle engaged in fuel transportation in support of Hurricane Hilary emergency relief efforts, subject to the following conditions:
 - a. Motor carriers or drivers currently subject to an out-of-service order are eligible for the exemption once the out-of-service order expires or when they have met the conditions for its rescission.
 - b. In accordance with Section 1214, Title 13, California Code of Regulations, no motor carrier operating under the terms of this Proclamation will require or allow an ill or fatigued driver to operate a motor vehicle. A driver who notifies a motor vehicle carrier that they need immediate rest shall be given at least ten consecutive hours off-duty before being required to return to service.
 - c. Drivers shall maintain a driver's record of duty status, regardless of number of hours worked each day. These records shall be prepared, submitted, and maintained as required by Section 1213, Title 13, California Code of Regulations.

13. Consistent with Parts 390 and 395, Title 49, Code of Federal Regulations, drivers may exceed the hours-of-service limits specified while operating a vehicle engaged in fuel transportation in support of Hurricane Hilary emergency relief efforts. These waivers shall be in effect for the duration of the driver's direct assistance in providing emergency relief, or thirty (30) days from the date of this Proclamation, whichever is less.

14. In order to allow out-of-state contractors and other utilities driving their own vehicles to provide mutual aid assistance for the restoration of electrical power within the counties impacted by Hurricane Hilary, applicable provisions of the Vehicle Code including, but not limited to, Vehicle Code section 34620 requiring a motor carrier permit [licensing] and imposition of certain fees, are suspended for motor carriers providing such assistance. Also, the requirements for motor carriers and drivers in Vehicle Code sections 1808.1 [pull-notice program that checks for driver's license violations], 27900 [display name on vehicle], 27901 [size and color of display name on vehicle], 34505.5 [requirement to have been inspected within 90 days], and 34501.12 [requirement to set up home base in California] are suspended while providing mutual aid assistance for the emergency restoration of services.


I FURTHER DIRECT that as soon as hereafter possible, this Proclamation be filed in the Office of the Secretary of State and that widespread publicity and notice be given of this Proclamation.

This Proclamation is not intended to, and does not, create any rights or benefits, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or in equity, against the State of California, its agencies, departments, entities, officers, employees, or any other person.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of California to be affixed this 19th day of August 2023.


GAVIN NEWSOM
Governor of California

ATTEST:


SHIRLEY N. WEBER, Ph.D.
Secretary of State



**EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT
STATE OF CALIFORNIA**

PROCLAMATION OF A STATE OF EMERGENCY

WHEREAS on August 19, 2023, I proclaimed a State of Emergency to exist in Fresno, Imperial, Inyo, Kern, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, San Diego, Tulare, and Ventura Counties as a result of the extreme peril posed by Hurricane Hilary, now called Tropical Storm Hilary; and

WHEREAS confidence remains high that Tropical Storm Hilary, despite being downgraded to a tropical storm, will bring a rare and dangerous rainfall and wind event with dangerous to catastrophic flooding and debris flows expected in the proclaimed counties, as well as in Mono County; and

WHEREAS the National Weather Service issued a Flood Watch on August 20, 2023, for Mono County, warning of the potential for flash flooding caused by excessive rainfall; and

WHEREAS swift water rescue resources have been prepositioned in Mono County to assist with potential life-saving efforts resulting from anticipated flooding and debris flows; and

WHEREAS local governments in several proclaimed counties have issued evacuation orders and warnings to numerous communities due to anticipated impacts from Tropical Storm Hilary; and

WHEREAS at least one care facility has already been evacuated, and the closure or evacuation of health and other care facilities will increase pressure on those facilities that continue to provide much needed care; and

WHEREAS under the provisions of Government Code section 8558(b), I find that conditions of extreme peril to the safety of persons and property exist due to Tropical Storm Hilary in Mono County; and

WHEREAS under the provisions of Government Code section 8558(b), I find that the conditions caused by Tropical Storm Hilary, by reason of their magnitude, are or are likely to be beyond the control of the services, personnel, equipment, and facilities of any single local government and require the combined forces of a mutual aid region or regions to appropriately respond; and

WHEREAS under the provisions of Government Code section 8625(c), I find that local authority is inadequate to cope with the magnitude of the extreme peril posed by Tropical Storm Hilary; and

WHEREAS under the provisions of Government Code section 8571, I find that strict compliance with various statutes and regulations specified in this Proclamation would prevent, hinder, or delay the mitigation of the effects of Tropical Storm Hilary.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GAVIN NEWSOM, Governor of the State of California, in accordance with the authority vested in me by the State Constitution and

statutes, including the California Emergency Services Act, and in particular, Government Code section 8625, **HEREBY PROCLAIM A STATE OF EMERGENCY** to exist in Mono County.

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED THAT:

1. All operative provisions contained in my August 19, 2023, Proclamation of a State of Emergency continue to have effect and are hereby incorporated and applicable to Mono County as a result of Tropical Storm Hilary.
2. In order to ensure hospitals, clinics, and other health facilities remain open, the Director of the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) may waive any of the licensing requirements of chapters 1, 2, 8, and 8.5 of division 2 of the Health and Safety Code and accompanying regulations with respect to any hospital, clinic, other health facility, home health agency, or hospice agency identified in Health and Safety Code sections 1200, 1250, 1727, or 1746 that is impacted by Tropical Storm Hilary. Any waiver shall include alternative measures that, under the circumstances, will allow the facilities to remain open while protecting public health and safety. Any health facilities or agencies being granted a waiver shall be established and operated in accordance with their disaster and mass casualty plan or emergency preparedness plan. Any waivers granted pursuant to this paragraph shall be posted on the CDPH website and shall be in effect only so long as necessary to address the direct impacts of Tropical Storm Hilary in Mono County and in the counties identified in my August 19, 2023, Proclamation.
3. In order to directly respond to the needs of impacted adult and senior care facilities, child care facilities, children's residential facilities, resource family homes, home care organizations, and other similar care facilities and care providers within the California Department of Social Services' (CDSS) jurisdiction, the Director of CDSS may waive any provisions of the Family Code, Health and Safety Code, or Welfare and Institutions Code, and accompanying regulations or written directives, with respect to the use, licensing, certification, registration or approval of care providers, facilities, or homes within CDSS jurisdiction set forth in the California Community Care Facilities Act (Health and Safety Code section 1500 et seq.), Child Care Provider Registration (Health and Safety Code section 1596.60 et seq.), the California Child Day Care Facilities Act (Health and Safety Code section 1596.70 et seq.), Residential Care Facilities for Persons With Chronic Life-Threatening Illness (Health and Safety Code section 1568.01 et seq.), the California Residential Care Facilities for the Elderly Act (Health and Safety Code section 1569 et seq.), Continuing Care Contracts (Health and Safety Code section 1770 et seq.), the Home Care Services Consumer Protection Act (Health and Safety Code section 1796.10 et seq.), and the Resource Family Approval Program (Welfare and Institutions Code section 16519.5 et seq.). Any waivers granted pursuant to this paragraph shall be posted on the CDSS website and shall be in effect only so long as necessary to address the direct impacts of Tropical Storm Hilary in Mono County and in the counties identified in my August 19, 2023, Proclamation.

4. In order to directly respond to the needs of behavioral health programs and facilities impacted by the storm, including alcohol and other drug programs, adult alcoholism or drug abuse recovery or treatment facilities, driving-under-the-influence programs, narcotic treatment programs, psychiatric health facilities, mental health rehabilitation centers, social rehabilitation programs, skilled nursing facilities with special treatment programs, Lanterman-Petris-Short Act designated facilities, community treatment facilities, short term residential therapeutic programs, and children's crisis residential programs, the Director of the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) may waive any licensing, certification, or approval requirements for such programs under its jurisdiction set forth in Welfare and Institutions Code, divisions 4, 5, and 9 and in Health and Safety Code, divisions 2 and 10.5 and accompanying regulations, written standards, or information notices. Any waivers granted pursuant to this paragraph shall be posted on the DHCS website and shall only be in effect so long as necessary to address the direct impacts of Tropical Storm Hilary in Mono County and in the counties identified in my August 19, 2023, Proclamation.

I FURTHER DIRECT that as soon as hereafter possible, this Proclamation be filed in the Office of the Secretary of State and that widespread publicity and notice be given of this Proclamation.

This Proclamation is not intended to, and does not, create any rights or benefits, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or in equity, against the State of California, its agencies, departments, entities, officers, employees, or any other person.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of California to be affixed this 20th day of August 2023.



GAVIN NEWSOM
Governor of California

ATTEST:



SHIRLEY N. WEBER, Ph.D.
Secretary of State



**EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT
STATE OF CALIFORNIA**

PROCLAMATION OF A STATE OF EMERGENCY

WHEREAS on August 19, 2023, and August 20, 2023, I proclaimed a State of Emergency to exist in 12 counties, cumulatively, as a result of the extreme peril posed by Hurricane Hilary, now called Tropical Storm Hilary; and

WHEREAS the impacted counties are still assessing and recovering from the damage caused by Tropical Storm Hilary; and

WHEREAS Tropical Storm Hilary produced heavy rain over Siskiyou County that caused localized flash-flooding, mudslides, landslides, and debris flows that damaged Everitt Memorial Highway, roadways, storm drains, and culverts; and

WHEREAS under the provisions of Government Code section 8558(b), I find that conditions of disaster exist due to Tropical Storm Hilary in Siskiyou County; and

WHEREAS under the provisions of Government Code section 8558(b), I find that the conditions caused by Tropical Storm Hilary, by reason of their magnitude, are or are likely to be beyond the control of the services, personnel, equipment, and facilities of any single local government and require the combined forces of a mutual aid region or regions to appropriately respond; and

WHEREAS under the provisions of Government Code section 8625(c), I find that local authority is inadequate to cope with the magnitude of the damage caused by Tropical Storm Hilary; and

WHEREAS under the provisions of Government Code section 8571, I find that strict compliance with various statutes and regulations covered by this Proclamation would prevent, hinder, or delay the mitigation of the effects Tropical Storm Hilary.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GAVIN NEWSOM, Governor of the State of California, in accordance with the authority vested in me by the State Constitution and statutes, including the California Emergency Services Act, and in particular, Government Code section 8625, **HEREBY PROCLAIM A STATE OF EMERGENCY** to exist in Siskiyou County.

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED THAT:

All operative provisions contained in my August 19, 2023, and August 20, 2023, Proclamations of a State of Emergency continue to have effect and are hereby incorporated and applicable as appropriate to Siskiyou County as a result of Tropical Storm Hilary.

I FURTHER DIRECT that as soon as hereafter possible, this Proclamation be filed in the Office of the Secretary of State and that widespread publicity and notice be given of this Proclamation.

This Proclamation is not intended to, and does not, create any rights or benefits, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or in equity, against the State of California, its agencies, departments, entities, officers, employees, or any other person.




IN WITNESS WHEREOF I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of California to be affixed this 12th day of September 2023.





GAVIN NEWSOM
Governor of California

ATTEST:



SHIRLEY WEBER, Ph.D.
Secretary of State

DISASTER CA23-4

AUGUST 2023 TROPICAL STORM HILARY

FRESNO, IMPERIAL, INYO, KERN, LOS ANGELES, MONO,
ORANGE, RIVERSIDE, SAN BERNARDINO, SAN DIEGO,
SISKIYOU, TULARE, AND VENTURA COUNTIES

STATE & LOCAL
DAMAGE ESTIMATES

State Damage Estimate CA23-4:

District	Date of Incident	EA #	Reporting Code(s)	County	Route	FHWA ER-Cost Estimate
11	8/20/2023	TBD	CA23-4	TBD	TBD	\$4,500,000
8	8/20/2023	08-1P640	CA23-4	SBD	2	\$7,695,000
8	8/21/2023	08-1P630	CA23-4	RIV	10	\$6,075,000
9	8/21/2023	TBD	CA23-4	INY	VAR	\$3,000,000
9	8/21/2023	09-40100	CA23-4	INY	190	\$16,875,000
9	8/21/2023	09-40110	CA23-4	INY	190	\$13,750,000
9	8/23/2023	TBD	CA23-4	INY	190	\$3,000,000
8	8/23/2023	08-1P650	CA23-4	SBD	38	\$14,000,000
8	8/25/2023	08-1P670	CA23-4	SBD	62	\$1,070,000
8	8/28/2023	08-1P680	CA23-4	VAR	62	\$5,715,000
8	8/31/2023	08-1P690	CA23-4	RIV	10	\$1,320,000
Total						\$ 77,000,000

Local Damage Estimate CA23-4:

District	County	Federal-Aid Roadway	Federal Aid Roads Estimate
8	Riverside	YES	\$17,080,000
8	Riverside	YES	\$99,050
8	Riverside	YES	\$14,981,760
8	Riverside	YES	\$1,295,000
8	Riverside	YES	\$5,740,000
8	Riverside	YES	\$2,815,240
8	Riverside	YES	\$160,000
7	Los Angeles	YES	\$7,511,000
9	Inyo	YES	\$9,460,000
8	San Bernardino	YES	\$7,820,000
8	San Bernardino	YES	\$2,000,000
8	Riverside	YES	\$687,000
		Total	\$69,649,050

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COUNTIES

SAMPLING OF NEWS ARTICLES

'We're not built for this.' Tropical Storm Hilary batters California with heavy rain and catastrophic floods



By Nouran Salahich, Gene Norman, Christina Maxwell and Dakin Andone, CNN
Updated 1:36 PM EDT, Mon August 21, 2023



Video

Editor's Note: Our coverage of the storm [continues here](#).

(CNN) — After making landfall in Mexico earlier Sunday, Tropical Storm Hilary has crossed into California, where it is unleashing heavy rain and turning roads into gushing streams as officials warn of potentially deadly floods.

"We are not used to this level of precipitation, generally. Certainly not in the middle of summer," San Diego Mayor Todd Gloria told CNN's Jim Acosta Sunday afternoon, saying he was worried about potential power outages from the wind as well as flooding. "We're not built for this kind of rainfall."

Authorities across southern California pleaded with residents not to drive, warning of mudslides, road deterioration and dangerous debris flows and flooding, as some communities declared emergencies to respond to the storm. One California official has warned Hilary could be among the most devastating storms to hit the state in recent years.

The National Weather Service said parts of Los Angeles and Ventura counties were already experiencing "dangerous flooding" Sunday evening, writing on social media, "THIS IS LIFE THREATENING FLOODING!"

Cars were getting stuck in floodwaters and local authorities were conducting rescues, the service said.

Hilary's core – in other words, its center – crossed into Southern California Sunday evening, but the state began feeling the storm's effects much earlier in the day and rain totals have added up. Parts of Palm Springs saw more than 2 inches of water in just six hours Sunday – nearly half of what they average over an entire year, the weather service said.

And with the day not yet over, there were multiple other rainfall records broken Sunday, including in downtown Los Angeles, Burbank and Palmdale.

In Palm Springs, the city manager declared a local emergency due to "unprecedented rainfall and flooding," with city officials saying there had already been one swift water rescue by Sunday afternoon.

[Live updates: Tropical Storm Hilary to bring major flooding risk to California](#)

Though the storm is expected to weaken, it will continue lashing the region with severe weather as it moves further into the US.

Storm is 'unprecedented' event, LA mayor says

Parts of California, Nevada and Arizona that are unaccustomed to rain could suddenly receive a year's worth or more. And along the coast, large swells generated by Hilary are likely to create life-threatening surf and rip current conditions.

Death Valley saw triple its average August rainfall in just a few hours Sunday morning. Nearly a month's worth of rain fell in one hour on Sunday. It normally receives an average of 0.21 inches of rain the entire month of August, but the Furnace Creek observation site reported 0.63 inches since Sunday morning.

Roads within Death Valley National Park were expected to eventually become "impassable," the park said on Instagram, sharing photos that showed floodwaters flowing over roads.



Concern for deserts and recent burn areas

California has been particularly focused on preparing residents in areas that typically receive the least rain, or that were most recently scorched by wildfires, authorities said.

"We're keeping a very close eye on our desert regions, east of San Diego and Los Angeles. Some parts of these areas may receive double their yearly amount of water in just a single day," said Brian Ferguson, the deputy director of the California Governor's Office of Emergency Services.



Tropical Storm Hilary Made Historic Trek Through Southern California, With Record Rain Into Nevada (RECAP)

By weather.com meteorologists · August 24, 2023

At a Glance

- Hilary's rainfall and strong winds are extending from California into much of the interior West.
- It poses a life-threatening, potentially catastrophic flash flood risk.
- Hilary is the first tropical storm to enter the state in more than a quarter century.

NEW: Get breaking news delivered straight to your [desktop](#) or [mobile phone](#).

Hurricane Hilary made a historic trek as a tropical storm into California and Nevada with record rainfall, flash flooding, rockslides and gusty winds.


Hilary was born as a tropical storm on August 16 well off the coast of southwest Mexico. Its

explosive, rapid intensification into a [Category 4 hurricane](#) in less than 48 hours was eye-popping.


But it was its unusual path into Southern California and soaking rain penetrating into the Great Basin that will be the ultimate legacy of this storm.

California's highest rainfall total was 11.74 inches at Mt. San Jacinto.

This heavy rainfall led to numerous road closures and [a few washouts](#) in the Mojave Desert and in parts of the mountains of the L.A. Basin due to flooding and/or landslides.



Caltrans District 9
@Caltrans9 · [Follow](#)



Current road closures in [@Caltrans9](#):

- ⊘ State Route 190 ⊘
- ⊘ State Route 136 ⊘
- ⊘ State Route 178 from [@DeathValleyNPS](#) to Shoshone
- ⊘
- ⊘ State Route 58 from Towerline Road to Exit 165 ⊘
- ⊘ State Route 127 from Baker to Tecopa Hot Springs ⊘
- ⊘ State Route 14 from Cal City to SR 178 W ⊘

DISASTER CA23-4

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PHOTOGRAPHS



This Photograph Shows: Damaged Mission Creek Bridge on SR62

District -8: SBD County, Route 62



This Photograph Shows: Storm damage on SR62

District -8: SBD County, Route 62



This Photograph Shows: Flooded yard

District -8: Riverside County, Route 10



This Photograph Shows: wind damaged canopy

District -8: Riverside County, Route 10



This Photograph Shows: Embankment Erosion at PM 30.40

District -8: SBD County, Route 38



This Photograph Shows: Embankment Erosion and Roadway Collapse at PM 35.47

District -8: SBD County, Route 38



District -8: Riverside County, Route 62



This Photograph Shows: Storm damage on SR62

District -8: Riverside County, Route 62



This Photograph Shows: Debris over topped Sheep Creek Bridge (Br No 54 0360), PM 2.44

District -8: SBD County, Route 2



This Photograph Shows: Debris on SR-2

District -8: SBD County, Route 2



This Photograph Shows: I-10 mainline and Eastbound Exit Ramp

District -8: Riverside County, Route 10



This Photograph Shows: I-10 Eastbound Exit Ramp

District -8: Riverside County, Route 10