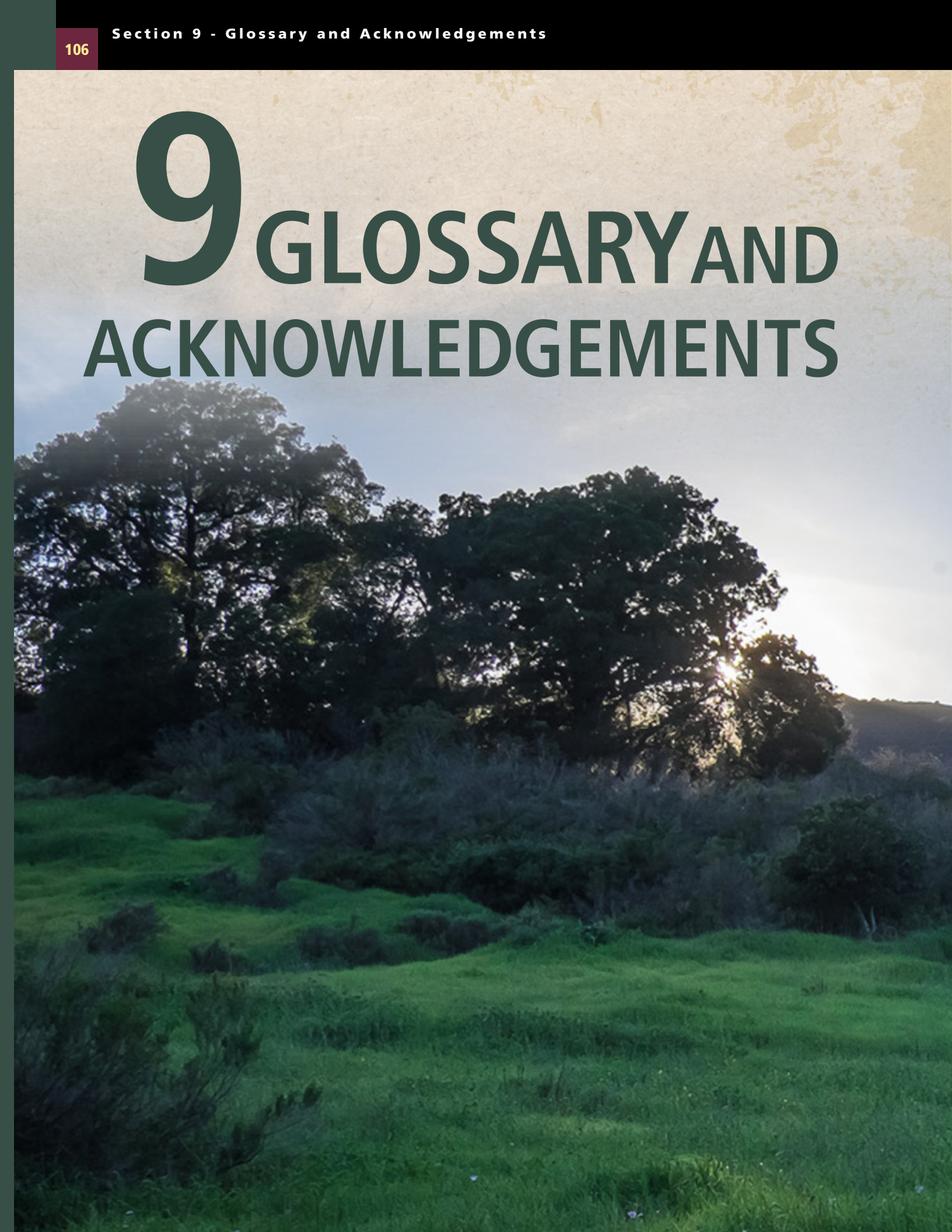


# 9 GLOSSARY AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



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## GLOSSARY

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**2-1-1 LA COUNTY:** Dial 2-1-1 to receive information and referral to human services agencies throughout the County.

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**ACCESS CARDS:** The Topanga Resident Access Card is a local program approved by the California Highway Patrol and Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department, allowing Topanga card holders an easier and faster re-entry into the canyon during a "resident only" road closure, when officers deem it safe to return. The card is issued annually through the Topanga Town Council and is available only to Topanga residents.

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**AERIAL FUELS:** All live and dead vegetation located in the forest canopy or above the surface fuels, including tree branches and crowns, snags, moss, and high brush.

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**ARSON WATCH:** A volunteer program of the Lost Hills Sheriff's station whose goal is to assist in the prevention of wildfires in the Santa Monica Mountains.

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**CACHE:** A predetermined complement of tools, equipment, and/or supplies stored in a designated location and available for incident use.

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**CERT - COMMUNITY EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAM:** A citizen emergency response group.

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**CONFLAGRATION:** A raging, destructive fire; often used to denote such a fire with a moving front, as distinguished from a firestorm.

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**DRT - DISASTER RADIO TEAM:** A program of the Topanga Coalition for Emergency Preparedness (TCEP).

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**DISASTER SUPPLY KIT:** A pre-assembled group of critical items that will greatly improve the health and safety of individuals during a disaster. The kit should contain, at a minimum: goggles, bottled water, medications, respiratory protection (filter mask), glasses, personal items, flashlight, extra batteries, protective clothing (long-sleeved T-shirts, pants), cotton or wool blanket, and important documents.

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**DITCH:** If you cannot reach a Regional Shelter or a Public Temporary Refuge Area, a ditch or other low-lying area will provide more safety as a last resort than staying in your home or your car. In "The Wildfire Survival Chain" on page 53, this is plan D.

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**EQUINE RESPONSE TEAM:** The Equine Response Team is a countywide volunteer organization that assists with the safe evacuation of horses and livestock during large- and small-scale disasters. The group also works to educate horse owners on disaster preparedness. The group is sponsored by the Los Angeles County Department of Animal Care and Control.

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**EAS - EMERGENCY ALERT SYSTEM:** A voluntary, federally sponsored cooperative system comprised of a federal agency along with local and state governments working with private broadcasters to broadcast official alerts and warnings to local officials and the public.

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**EOC - EMERGENCY OPERATIONS CENTER:** A facility established by an agency or jurisdiction to provide centralized management and multiagency coordination of jurisdictional response to an emergency. In accordance with California's Standardized Emergency Management System (SEMS), EOCs perform the function of the Multiagency Coordination Entity described in the National Incident Management System. See also Topanga Coalition for Emergency Preparedness Volunteer EOC.

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**EVACUATION CENTER:** A temporary facility or location where people displaced by a disaster can go until a more permanent solution is established or they can return to their homes. In most cases, the American Red Cross will manage Evacuation Centers.

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**EVACUATION ORDER (MANDATORY):** A directive by law enforcement to evacuate a designated area immediately. Failure to follow this order may result in endangerment to the lives of others, personal injury, or death.

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**EVACUATION REFUSAL:** A formal, signed refusal by a resident to evacuate his or her home following an Evacuation Order. In this circumstance, adult residents assume responsibility for their own safety and acknowledge that they may be prosecuted under the California Penal Code.

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**EVACUATION ROUTES:** Roads and highways identified by law enforcement to evacuate individuals out of harm's way to a safe area or shelter. Evacuation Routes may be identified verbally during an Evacuation Order or pre-designated in a written plan.

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**EVACUATION WARNING (VOLUNTARY):** A warning by law enforcement either to leave a designated area because of a possible threat or to prepare to evacuate if an Evacuation Order is issued. This is the time to evacuate those in need of special assistance and your horses. The majority of Evacuation Warnings become Evacuation Orders.

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**FAIR PLAN ASSOCIATION:** A group of property insurers designed to provide affordable fire insurance to property owners in high fire danger areas.

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**FIREBREAK:**

- (1) An area around a structure where the vegetation has been modified to create defensible space (see Fuel Modification Zone);
  - (2) an area clear-cut by the fire department to halt the progress of a wildland fire.
- 

**FIRE SAFE COUNCIL:** Fire Safe Councils are grassroots, community-led organizations that mobilize residents to protect their homes, communities, and environments from wildfire.

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**FUEL LOAD:** Oven-dry weight of fuel per unit area (usually expressed in tons per acre).

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**FUEL MODIFICATION ZONES:** Also known as Brush Clearance Zones. The area around a structure, usually 200 horizontal feet, where vegetation needs to be managed for fire safety.

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**FRS RADIO:** Family Radio Service radios are a relatively inexpensive (approximately \$30 per pair) means of communicating in the event of a major disaster when phone service will likely be interrupted. Using FRS radios, you can communicate with your immediate neighborhood to assess damage and injuries and determine where resources are needed. See section 12 for more information on the FRS radio system for Topanga Canyon.

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**GROUND FUELS:** All materials lying on or immediately above the ground, including needles and leaves, duff, grass, small dead wood, downed logs, stumps, large limbs, and low brush.

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**HAM RADIO:** A popular term for amateur radio. Radio amateurs are prohibited by law from accepting compensation of any kind for any activities they perform as radio operators. The sheriff's department manages ham operators responding to disasters.

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**HIGH HAZARD AREA:** Geographic area prone to significant wildfire events owing to vegetation, topography, and weather. All of Topanga Canyon, Malibu, and the Santa Monica Mountains are in the Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone (VHFHSZ).

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**LOLLIPOP:** To limb up trees and shrubs by pruning the lower branches off, leaving one to three trunks, removing dead wood, while keeping the canopy relatively intact. Purpose: to separate ground fuels from aerial fuels and reduce fuel load.

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**MITIGATION:** Actions taken before an emergency to eliminate or reduce the impact of a threat or hazard. Brush clearance and brush clearance ordinances are examples of mitigation.

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**NEIGHBORHOOD NETWORK:** A group of residents, usually organized by street, who come together to devise a plan of action in the event of a disaster. The plan may include the rescuing of pets, turning off utilities, retrieving items of value or sentiment, caring for children or neighbors in need of special assistance, and making sure everyone is safe in the Neighborhood Network area.

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**ONE TOPANGA:** Onetopanga.com is a community website featuring emergency information, local news, resources, directory, community calendar, and more.

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**PSR - PUBLIC SAFE REFUGE:** An area designated for individuals to find refuge during a large wildland fire. Individuals should first determine if they can evacuate the area to a safe location. A Public Safe Refuge will provide the safest area during a large wildland fire if individuals cannot evacuate the canyon completely. (Refer to the "Wildfire Survival Chain" diagram on page 53 for more information.)

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**PTRA - PUBLIC TEMPORARY REFUGE AREA:** An area designated for individuals to find refuge during a large wildland fire. PTRAs should be used only if residents cannot evacuate the canyon or reach a Public Safe Refuge (PSR) within the canyon. PTRAs are usually safer than sheltering in a home in highly vegetated areas such as Topanga, and are safer than sheltering in a vehicle. Refer to "The Wildfire Survival Chain" on page 53 for more information.

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**RED FLAG WEATHER:** Weather conditions in which winds are blowing in excess of 25 mph and humidity is below 15 percent, often but not necessarily combined with high temperatures. A Red Flag Warning is issued before the weather conditions arise, and a Red Flag Alert is issued when the conditions are in effect. Call the Red Flag hotline for information: (310) 456-5783.

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**REGIONAL SHELTER/RED CROSS SHELTER (PLAN A):** These facilities are usually pre-identified and are designed to shelter individuals in the event of a disaster. Facilities such as showers, sleeping areas, and kitchens may preexist or may have to be constructed during an incident. Regional Shelters are typically located away from the affected disaster area. For the purposes of this guide, which deals specifically with disasters in Topanga Canyon, any Regional Shelter will be located outside the canyon. (Refer to "The Wildfire Survival Chain" diagram on page 53 for more information.)

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**SCHOOL SHELTER:** A school that students will be transferred to, or remain in that will shelter them, during a large wildland fire or other disaster. School staff will supervise the students until an appointed time when they may be reunited with their parents or guardians.

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**SHELTER IN PLACE (PLAN E):** In some fires and disasters, it is safer for individuals to shelter in their homes or other locations rather than risk evacuation. NOTE: The only time it is safe to shelter in place in Topanga is when you have been instructed to do so by law enforcement or the fire department. This instruction may be delivered in person, via radio or television, or by other authorized agencies. (Refer to "The Wildfire Survival Chain" on page 53.)

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**TCEP - TOPANGA COALITION FOR EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS:** A nonprofit organization of community volunteers dedicated to emergency education, planning, preparedness, and response.

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**TCEP VOLUNTEER EOC:** An Emergency Operations Center created and staffed by local community volunteers for the Topanga Coalition for Emergency Preparedness.

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**TACTICAL ZONE:** A geographical area used by emergency responders to improve coordination during a disaster. Topanga Canyon is divided into nine Tactical Zones, as shown on page 84. Identify the Zone(s) where you live or work, then review the detailed Zone maps starting on page 86 to locate your closest Public Safe Refuge and Public Temporary Refuge Areas.

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**TOPANGA ANIMAL RESCUE:** A nonprofit organization that has the ability to mobilize a veterinary field triage unit in the event of an emergency in Topanga; also provides ongoing animal education outreach programs for the community.

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**TOPANGA CREEK WATERSHED COMMITTEE:** A citizen group addressing environmental issues of the Topanga watershed.

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**TOPANGA SURVIVAL GUIDE:** A preparedness guide intended to inform residents in the Topanga Canyon community about safe practices for preparedness and response to disasters affecting the area. Download a copy of the guide at [www.topangasurvival.org](http://www.topangasurvival.org).

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**TOPANGA TOWN COUNCIL:** An all-volunteer, nongovernmental citizen's advisory group for the Topanga area.

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**TRAFFIC CLOSURE LEVELS:**

LEVEL 1: Open to the public.

LEVEL 2: Open to fire department, law enforcement, critical resources, and residents. (Critical resources include, but are not limited to, Municipal and Public Works, Edison, and Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department volunteers.)

LEVEL 3: Open to fire department, law enforcement, and critical resources. Critical resources may need to be escorted.

LEVEL 4: Open to fire department and law enforcement only.

LEVEL 5: Closed to all traffic. Area blocked or not safe even for fire department and law enforcement.

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**TRAFFIC CONTROL POINT:** A geographical location determined by law enforcement to control access and entry to the area of an emergency incident.

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**WILDFIRE SURVIVAL CHAIN:** Ranging from A: Most Safe, to E: Least Safe, the Wildfire Survival Chain ranks options for residents attempting to evacuate the canyon in a fire. See page 53 for the full range of options.

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**WILDLAND URBAN INTERFACE:** A geographical area where structures and other human development meets with wildland fuels or vegetative fuels. Generally, there is a clear delineation at this interface, with varying degrees of defensible space between the wildland fuels (brush and chaparral) and the non-combustible structures. This term would apply to many newer subdivisions built in surrounding areas and in outlying communities. Few homes in Topanga Canyon meet this criterion.

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**WILDLAND URBAN INTERMIX:** A term used to describe structures and other human development located and mixed within the wildland and vegetative fuels. The distinction between Interface and Intermix is there is no clear delineation between the wildland fuels and the structures themselves in areas considered to "intermix." In these cases, structures may be isolated or built in "clusters," often characterized with poor access roads, steep terrain, combustible construction, as well as heavy ground, ladder, and aerial fuel loading. Intermix areas are usually associated with isolated structures or with older communities, such as Topanga Canyon.

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**ZONE MAP:** For purposes of emergency response, Topanga has been divided into nine Tactical Operations Zones (see maps starting on page 85).

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## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

### TOPANGA EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT (TEM) TASK FORCE

The mission of the Topanga Emergency Management Task Force, a partnership of designated public agencies, non-governmental organizations, and community organizations, is to ensure the sustainability of emergency management efforts and strategies for the Los Angeles County unincorporated area of Topanga. The Task Force oversees the coordination and communication among governmental agencies, non-governmental organizations, and the community to improve preparedness, prevention, response, and recovery. It will develop, review, and monitor community-based emergency plans, facilitate emergency planning exercises, ensure community involvement and educational outreach, and evaluate and update emergency plans after a disaster.

#### TEM Task Force Member Agencies/Organizations

Lead Coordinator, Third Supervisorial District  
 Co-Chair, Jeanne O'Donnell, CEO, Office of Emergency Management  
 Co-Chair, James Grasso, Topanga Coalition for Emergency Preparedness

American Red Cross

California Highway Patrol

Departments of the County of Los Angeles:

Animal Care and Control and Equine Response Team

Board of Supervisors, Third Supervisorial District

Chief Executive Office—Office of Emergency Management and the Office of Unincorporated Area Services

Fire Department—Division VII, Battalion 5 and Forestry Division, Brush Clearance Unit

Public Library

Public Works—Waterworks District #29 and Road Division

Sheriff—Emergency Operations Bureau and Lost Hills Station

Los Angeles Red Cross

Los Angeles Unified School District

Non-Profits and Community Organizations:

Canyon Sages

North Topanga Canyon Fire Safe Council

Topanga Animal Rescue

Topanga Arson Watch

Topanga Chamber of Commerce

Topanga Coalition for Emergency Preparedness

Topanga Community Emergency Response Team

Topanga Town Council

Southern California Edison

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Scott Ferguson, TCEP

James Grasso, TCEP

Susan Nissman, Topanga community member

Jeanne O'Donnell, CEO, Office of Emergency Management

Ryan Ulyate, North Topanga Canyon Fire Safe Council

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## SPECIAL THANKS

Special thanks to Pat MacNeil who made a tremendous contribution to the TEM Task Force during more than 10 years as the Co-Chair of the initial Steering Committee which subsequently transitioned to the TEM Task Force. Pat is also the founding member of TCEP and served as its president until 2013. Thank you for your dedication and commitment to the safety of the Topanga community and its residents!

**Special thanks also to these professionals for donating their time and services to this project:**

### Our Designers

Persechini and Company - persechini.com

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Studio 7

Messenger Mountain News

TCEP

LA County Fire Department

The Topanga Historical Society

Thanks to all the others who generously supplied images.



Stay safe...  
and above all...  
prepare!

This Guide has been prepared by the  
Topanga Emergency Management Task Force

The Topanga Disaster Survival Guide, first published in 2005, puts all of the Task Force's planning, insights, and recommendations into a single booklet for the Topanga community.

This updated edition contains many important revisions to the Emergency Management Plan and is designed to help residents become better prepared for any disaster.