



# California's 2-1-1s: A Vital Resource for Disaster Preparation, Response, and Recovery

In 2017, California's 2-1-1s assisted with a wide variety of disasters and emergencies, including: Public Health emergencies such as Hepatitis A outbreaks, out-of-state disasters including hurricanes and the Las Vegas mass shooting, and multiple in-state local and regional fires, floods, and storms.

## STATEWIDE 211 DISASTER REQUESTS, 2017 Fire – Flood – Major Storm

Disaster preparedness information	
<b>RESPONSE</b>	
Evacuation information / Mandatory Evacuation Areas	
Road closures	Evacuation transportation / Paratransit
Incident information: Wildfire Advisories / Water level monitoring / Flood advisories	
Emergency Sheltering / Shelter / Mass care sites / Pet Sheltering	
Missing family	
Power outages due to disaster / Utility Service Providers	
Food / FEMA emergency supplies	Medication
School closures	Clothes / Diapers / Infant Formula
Fire department services	Air quality information
Sandbags	Flood areas
Return to home information	
<b>RECOVERY</b>	
FEMA registration	State benefits
Mental health – Trauma / PTSD services	
Emergency Management / Relief Organizations / Red Cross / Recovery information / Disaster relief	
Donations	
Debris removal	Damage Assessment Reporting
Housing assistance / Financial assistance for RV space rent	
Insurance inquiries	

### Jennings Fire, 211 San Diego

During the 2017 Jennings Fire in eastern San Diego County, the existing relationship between 211 San Diego and CAL FIRE created a smooth information sharing and disaster activation process. 211 San Diego was officially activated by CAL FIRE and the San Diego County Fire Authority, and successfully fielded 285 calls related to incident updates, road closures, and evacuations that same day.

### Sonoma County Fires, 211 Sonoma

Amidst the confusion of the rapidly moving fires and mass evacuations in Sonoma and neighboring counties, 211 Bay Area, 211 Sonoma and their after-hours providers, 211 Ventura and 211 San Bernardino, provided non-stop 24/7 public information coverage for the fires and subsequent fire recovery effort, despite 211 Sonoma's center and many of its staff being evacuated.

2-1-1 provided critical information on evacuation areas and routes, emergency shelter locations, medication, reporting missing persons, mental health and trauma resources, donations management, and FEMA registration, housing assistance, and debris removal and other recovery needs.

After initial challenges with information sharing due to lack of an established process and awareness of 2-1-1's role, a process for regularly sharing information was developed. 211 continues to play an important role in Sonoma County's recovery process with rumor control and ongoing recovery resources.

### Oroville Dam Spillway Evacuation, 211 Butte

The threat of Oroville Dam's spillway failing initiated a massive multi-county evacuation of 180,000 people. The California Department of Water Resources initially issued a press release and tweeted for residents to call 2-1-1, but had not warned or activated 211 Butte. The resulting influx of calls briefly crashed their system.

Once restored and with 211 Sacramento providing overflow assistance, 2-1-1 consistently provided crucial evacuation information to people in urgent distress, including in the midst of Butte County's EOC, emergency officials, and DWR all evacuating in the first couple hours.

Two of the other counties with evacuations, Yuba and Sutter, did not have 2-1-1 service, and 211 Butte did not have access to their emergency information despite handling calls from those counties.

The experience underscored the need for a regional plan for sharing information, integrating 211 into emergency management processes and structures, and for extending coverage to currently unserved counties.

It also demonstrated the flexibility of the 211 network during large scale disasters.