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March 31, 2020

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## **Los Angeles County Supervisors Adopt New Protocols for Managing Emergency Response**

*Revisions follow national and state best practices and modernize portions of the County Code first drafted in the 1970s*

Following an extensive review after the devastating 2018 Woolsey Fire, Los Angeles County has adopted new protocols for managing emergency response to ensure better coordination, planning and messaging to the public.

The changes were approved by the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors today and take effect immediately.

The action is in line with best practices now in place throughout the nation and state. Although federal and state emergency management systems were updated significantly in recent decades following catastrophic events such as the 9/11 attacks, L.A. County's emergency services ordinance has remained essentially unchanged since it was first drafted in the 1970s.

Under the changes approved today, the County Code now:

- Specifies that the Chief Executive Officer is responsible for coordinating the County's activities related to emergency preparedness, response and recovery

- Expands the membership of the County Emergency Management Council
- Specifies that the Sheriff continues to be responsible for operational command and control over law enforcement activities

The new protocols bring Los Angeles County into alignment with modern best practices that recommend use of deeply-trained disaster management professionals to manage emergency functions that often span a full range of critical functions such as public health, housing and health services, in addition to public safety.

Both nationally and in the state of California, most emergency management programs and emergency operations centers are now managed by professional emergency managers that are organized within executive offices.

For example, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) leads emergency management for the nation and is housed in the executive branch under the Department of Homeland Security. In California, the Governor’s Office of Emergency Services leads emergency management functions for the state and activates and manages the State Operations Center.

In Los Angeles County, the revisions approved by the Board shift the authority needed to activate the County’s Emergency Operations Center to the Office of Emergency Management (EOC), enabling the EOC to serve as the hub of a wheel coordinating a vastly expanded regional disaster response and “one voice” messaging across County departments.

Today’s vote on the code changes had been originally scheduled for March 17, 2020, but that meeting was cancelled due to the COVID-19 emergency.

Read the urgency ordinance [here](#).

Read the Woolsey Fire After Action report [here](#).

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