



Winter Storm Safety and Preparation

When significant storms are forecast for the central coast of California, Carmel Highlands residents are advised to assure that they have necessary supplies for at least three days and that they remain “sheltered in place” in their homes, at least during the wind portion of the storm.

Firefighters will respond to life threatening situations during high wind events, but residents should realize that emergency personnel become targets while responding during wind events. Our firefighters and equipment have been hit numerous times by falling trees and branches. Residents may encounter the same problems. If you see a “fence” of three lines of any color tape around an area, DO NOT ENTER, as they denote a life hazard.

Storm Preparation

Maintain at least a week’s worth of water for each member of the family, including pets. People need 1 gallon per day for basic use.

Have necessary medications on hand.

Provide enough food for several days, keeping in mind that you may not have refrigeration or heat for cooking.

Check flashlights and batteries. Have a battery powered radio available.

Sandbag necessary areas around doors and other areas of your home with storm leakage history.

Provide the ability for your pet to go outside *without* you having to walk it.

Always assume that a wire on the ground is electrified.

Vehicles should be placed in the garage or moved to a safe location. Vehicles should always be faced *out* to facilitate an emergency exit. It can be quite difficult to back out in a storm during the night. Keep your vehicles full of fuel.

Keep a battery powered radio with fresh batteries in your home for any emergency. Many inexpensive radios include the NOAA National Weather Service bands, which provide not only weather forecasts, but other emergency information as well.

Maintain a supply of flashlights. The LED lights, while expensive, generally use considerably less power, giving them a longer service life on each battery.

Always keep an “old fashioned” (ouch!) non electric phone to use during power outages. The new digital, plug in the wall phone systems are useless without electricity.



During the Storm

Listen to the Carmel Highlands Fire emergency radio station at 1700 on the AM band, keeping in mind that you may live in an area that does not receive the signal.

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Pay attention to weather reports.

We all understand how easily our shallow rooted Monterey pines fall or snap off during a windy storm. Therefore, expect to encounter power outages with power and other utility lines on the ground. **NEVER TOUCH ANY LINE DURING A STORM.** Phone and TV cable lines, as well as metal gates and fences, may be energized by contact with downed lines. If so, they have the ability to kill you if touched. STAY AWAY. If you have trouble opening your gate, when the wind has diminished call the Highlands fire station at 624-2374 and the firefighters will come to your aid.

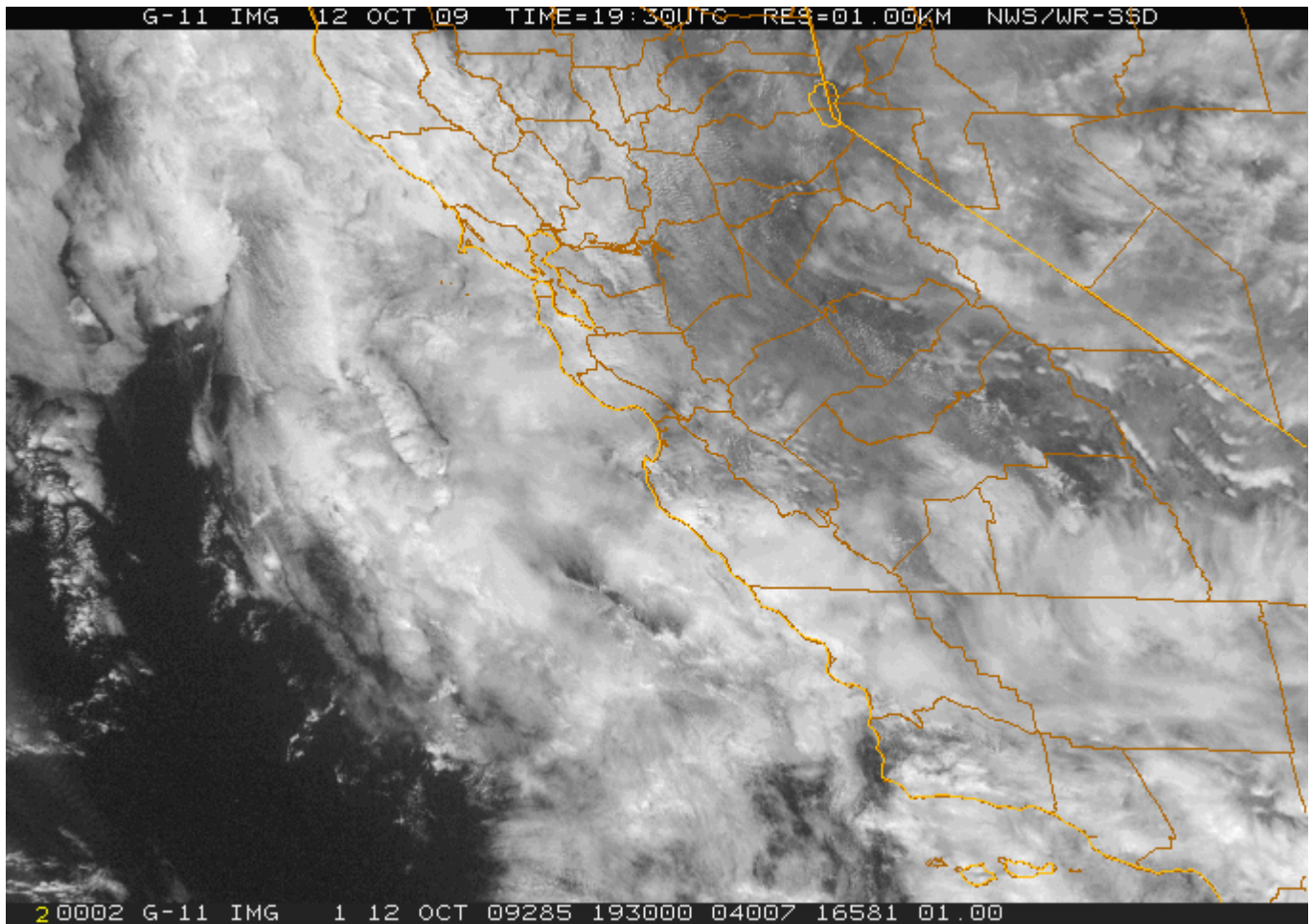
Stay indoors. The danger from downed power lines and falling trees and branches is very real.

If your home is within striking distance of *any* tree, do not use the fireplace. A tree falling on your house can easily disrupt the integrity of the fireplace and cause a fire.

Stay away from large windows if there is any chance of branches striking them.

Your Carmel Highlands fire station has an emergency generator to keep our operations in service. If you need a place to charge a cell phone, have something hot to drink or need any other assistance, feel free to come to the station **after** the wind has subsided. We will be happy to accommodate your needs.

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Satellite image of our October, 2009 storm

Learn to protect your family and neighbors in an emergency. Sign up for a Community Emergency Response Team class taught by your fire department staff. Contact Captain Richard Lopez, at 831-624-2374, for information.



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