

Advisory: EL CERRITO-KENSINGTON VIRTUAL EVACUATION DRILL IS SCHEDULED FOR SATURDAY AUGUST 22nd

Dear Kensington and El Cerrito Residents,

On Saturday August 22nd, Kensington Police and Fire and El Cerrito Police and Fire will be conducting a **VIRTUAL** evacuation drill throughout the Town of Kensington and City of El Cerrito with the assistance of the Community Warning System (CWS). An evacuation plan is in place that has divided these areas into different geographical zones.

Again, this is a virtual drill testing the emergency notification system. There is no need to actually drive anywhere for this particular event. We simply ask that you complete the survey at the end of the exercise.

Evacuation orders will be issued for specific geographical zones and will only be issued when there is extreme danger to an area. In a real emergency, when an evacuation order is issued, residents should evacuate immediately, following the instructions provided in the evacuation order.

The August 22nd exercise begins at 8:00 a.m. and involves a virtual fire that ignites at the Little Farm in Tilden Park and begins to spread into Kensington and El Cerrito. Based upon the computer-generated fire model, virtual evacuation orders will be issued to geographic zones that are threatened by the virtual fire. As the virtual fire spreads, additional areas will be ordered to evacuate (virtually). As with a real emergency, all evacuation orders are issued via the Community Warning System (CWS). CWS is the only source for this information. Nixle will not be used for evacuation messages but may be used to provide other information. You should subscribe to both services.

What should residents do to prepare for the exercise?

First, ensure that you are registered for the Community Warning System (CWS) by going to www.CoCoCWS.us. You should register all phones at your residence.

Second, have discussions with your family about what to do if an evacuation is ordered. You should only take one car and bring important papers, wallets, phones, and pets that can be grabbed quickly. For more information about what to take and how to prepare in advance, go to https://www.readyforwildfire.org/wp-content/uploads/calfire_set_brochure_LINOWeb.pdf

Third, on August 22nd, when you receive the virtual evacuation drill notice, gather your family and practice loading up the car. Knock on the doors of the houses next to you to ensure they too received the notice. Once these tasks have been done, you have completed the virtual evacuation drill!

Lastly, please complete the survey you will be receiving so we can evaluate the drill and make any appropriate changes to our procedures.

If you do not receive the evacuation alert, please contact CWS to troubleshoot your registration. They can be reached via:

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By phone: 925-655-0111

By e-mail: cws-staff@so.cccounty.us

By mail: 1850 Muir Road, Martinez, CA 94553

Drills like this help our Fire, Police and Dispatch Departments assess and improve our process in reacting to and notifying residents of emergency evacuation situations. They also help residents ensure we are all prepared, in the event of a real emergency, to evacuate the area safely so first responders can focus on addressing the problem at hand.

Thank you in advance for participating in the Virtual Evacuation Drill. Questions can be directed to any of the following:

- Kensington Police Department at (510) 526-4141
- El Cerrito Police Department at (510) 215-4400
- El Cerrito Fire Department at (510) 215-4450

Battalion Chief
Joseph Grupalo
El Cerrito Fire Department