

**PROCLAMATION OF LOCAL HEALTH EMERGENCY
REGARDING FLOOD DEBRIS IN THE COUNTY OF TULARE**

WHEREAS, California Health and Safety Code, Division 101, Part 3, Chapter 2, Article 2, Sections 101075 through 101095 confer upon Local Health Officers of the political subdivisions of the State of California, emergency powers necessary to protect public health and safety; and

WHEREAS, California Health and Safety Code section 101080 and Tulare County Ordinance Code section 1-15-1033 authorize the local health officer to declare of local health emergency in the health officer's jurisdiction, or any part thereof, whenever the health officer reasonably determines that there is an imminent and proximate threat of the introduction of an contagious, infectious, or communicable disease, chemical agent, noncommunicable biologic agent, toxin, or radioactive agent; and

WHEREAS, the Health Officer of the County of Tulare makes the following findings:

1. Debris carried by floodwaters from structural damage, agricultural areas, or undeveloped land can contain hazardous substances. For example, building materials such as siding, roofing tiles, insulation, or household items such as paint, gasoline, cleaning products, pesticides, compressed gas cylinders, and chemicals can result in dangerous debris that contains asbestos, heavy metals, and other hazardous materials; and
2. Such waste is a threat to public health because it is hazardous waste and can cause or significantly contribute to an increase in mortality or an increase in serious irreversible or incapacitating reversible illness; or pose a substantial present or potential hazard to human health or environment when improperly treated, stored, transported, disposed of, or otherwise managed; and
3. Hazardous debris that remains after a flood can expose residents to toxic materials, improper transport and disposal of flood debris can create dangerous health impacts to workers removing the debris, such debris can threaten water supplies, and such harmful material can spread throughout the community at large; and
4. The threat to public health creates the immediate need to facilitate assistance and undertake preventative measures to protect the health of people and the environment and to inform the affected public of any potential health issues associated with the hazardous waste created and carried by the March Storms' Floodwater, thereby warranting the declaration of the existence of a local health emergency; and
5. Hazardous debris on rights of way create dangers to the community through potential blockage of ingress and egress routes for emergency services, damage to vehicles (civilian, commercial, and public), spread of aforementioned hazardous waste through normal vehicle operation, as well as creating slow-down conditions for both emergency and non-emergency vehicles; and
6. The scope and breadth of the March Storms Flood debris cleanup requires a rapid response due to the large area affected, the number of structures damaged or destroyed, and the imminent threat to public health; and
7. The potential for additional storms and/or snow-melt conditions in the County of Tulare offers little time to mitigate further environmental contamination, including contamination

in the watershed, and, therefore, time is of the essence in removing hazardous debris waste from rights of way in the County; and

8. That the protection of the County's natural resources and watershed from flood related debris runoff needs to be addressed; and
9. Immediate action is necessary to mitigate the harm that could be caused to the public health and safety and to the environment from improper disturbance, removal, and/or disposal of hazardous waste, including but not limited to toxic, flammable, corrosive, and reactive materials from rights of way located within flood-affected zones because such debris can create dangerous health impacts.

WHEREAS, on March 9, 2023, the County of Tulare's Emergency Services Director proclaimed a local emergency due to flooding in the County; and

WHEREAS, the Health Officer of the County of Tulare does hereby find that there is an imminent and proximate threat to public health from floodwater debris in Tulare County; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Supervisors is not in session, and cannot immediately be called into session; and

NOW, THEREFORE, the Health Officer of the County of Tulare hereby proclaims and declares that a local health emergency now exists in the County of Tulare due to the presence of and threat posed by floodwater debris in the County of Tulare and such conditions may be exacerbated by ongoing flood conditions, upcoming storms, and potential snowmelt flooding and will continue until the conclusion of this local health emergency.

Date: March 29, 2023

Issued by:

Time: 9:00 AM



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County of Tulare
Health and Human Services
Public Health Branch