



Statewide Emergency Planning Committee Meeting

On November 18, 2015, I attended the quarterly Statewide Emergency Planning Committee (SWEPC) Meeting. SWEPC (pronounced *swep* • see) meetings are hosted by the Cal OES [Planning and Preparedness Branch](#), coordinated by Emergency Services Coordinator (ESC) Diane Kuncz, and facilitated by Manager Cindy Shipley. Attendees include our local, state, federal, and nongovernmental partners. SWEPC provides an opportunity for participants to disseminate information, express concerns, and/or develop ideas concerning emergency management in California.

Cal OES Flood Response

The first presentation, conducted by Lee Dorey who leads Cal OES' Response Operations Unit, was about **Cal OES Flood Response**. Lee discussed the three phases of response: Pre-Incident, Response, and Recovery. He also discussed the live-demonstration ArcGIS public-facing site for the Butte and Valley Fires that can be accessed at <http://arcg.is/1KD1fc4>. Finally, Lee introduced the new California Storm Ready website that includes information about preparedness, weather, and road conditions. You can find it at <http://storms.ca.gov>.

Winter Flood Preparations

The Chief of the Department of Water Resources' (DWR) [Flood Operations Center](#), John Paasch, directed the second presentation regarding **Winter Flood Preparations**. John discussed drought, the effects of El Niño, and the variable rainfall in California. To

demonstrate the ease in handling moderate precipitation over a period versus the difficulty in dealing with much rain in a small amount of time, John called forward Cal OES Recovery Specialist, Sean Smith. When he misted Sean with multiple sprays of water, Sean was able to easily absorb it; however, when he started throwing water balloons, it illustrated how flooding results. And, Sean's great sportsmanship!



Drinking Water Emergency Planning and Response

Joseph Crisologo led the third presentation about **Drinking Water Emergency Planning and Response**. He's the Senior Homeland Security Engineer at the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) Division of Drinking Water (DDW). Joseph explained that DDW assures safe, clean, wholesome, and potable water is served reliably and adequately. They do this by regulating public water systems; conducting inspections, issuing permits, and conducting enforcement; educating and training; and by responding to emergencies and coordinating with partners, including Cal OES. For more information, visit SWRCB's DDW webpages [here](#).

2015 September Statewide Fires Panel

The Panel was populated by Cal OES' Al Lehenbauer from Inland Region, Paul Tassone from Law Enforcement, and Sean Smith and Katrina Palomar from Recovery. They were joined by Jennifer Chappelle from the Department of General Services (DGS) and Don Boland from the California Utilities Emergency Association (CUEA).

They discussed the response challenges and successes with the Butte and Valley Fires. One challenge was organizational flexibility. For example, the Coastal Region needed staff in the field so the Inland Region Emergency Operations Center (REOC), with assistance from the Cal OES Red Incident Support Team, took over response coordination for the Valley Fire. An additional challenge was the lack of an adequate number of ADA-compliant showers—only five in the state!

Among the successes were the significant use of Emergency Management Mutual Aid (EMMA) resources for the Lake County Emergency Operations Center (EOC), and great staffing support from our state agency partners for the Local Assistance Centers (LACs).



Conclusion

I've been attending SWEPC meetings for years and have found them to be a great way to learn more about the emergency activities of Cal OES and other state agencies. It also provides the opportunity to network with our local, state, federal, and nongovernmental partners. SWEPC meetings are open to all Cal OES employees and if you haven't attended one yet, I'd strongly encourage you to contact [Diane Kuncz](#) and sign up for the next one!