



COUNTY OF MONTEREY
CAO Weekly Report

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SPECIALREPORT



A rock and gravel slide at Jacks Peak- just one example of the widespread damage done to county parks during the February windstorm.

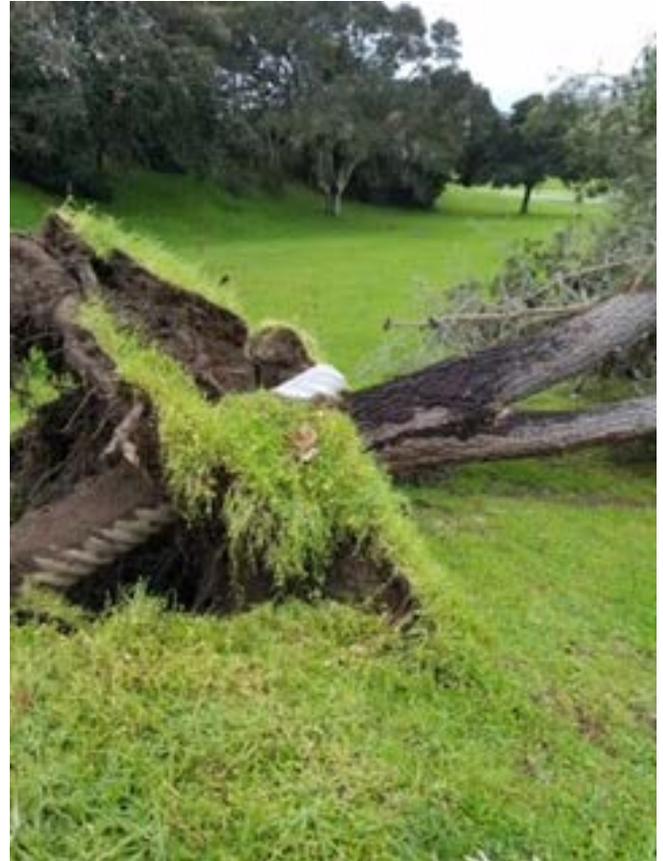
County Notes

- > Got storm damage? Please report it and spread the word. Help yourself and others qualify for federal aid. Damage surveys at the [Virtual Local Assistance Center](#)

Crews Repairing Windstorm Damage at County Parks

Rockslides and runoff and downed trees – oh my! Last month’s powerful windstorm wreaked havoc at county parks, several of which had to be closed at times during the last two weeks until they could be safely opened to the public.

The parks hardest hit by damage were Toro, Jacks Peak and Royal Oaks. All three have been reopened; in the case of Toro, clean-up of the parks much-loved hiking trails continues.



Why some trails at Toro Park are still off limits to hikers due to erosion and damage (left). An uprooted tree after the windstorm (above).

“Crews were able to clear out immediate hazards in the most commonly used areas so that we could open to the public,” explains Facilities Manager Mario Salazar. “There is still a lot of work to be done on the trails, some of which we can’t reach yet to repair because the ground is unstable due to saturation. Some trails continue to slide even without rain. It is very dangerous for people to use trails we have marked closed.”

About half of Toro Park trails are open to hikers, but at this point there is nothing available for mountain bike and equestrian use.

During the height of the storm and its aftermath, crews doing damage assessments documented trails that looked more like creeks due to heavy runoff. Salazar says the trails may appear safe, but they are deceptively dangerous - the ground is so soft that the trails can give way. Water damage is also evident and an emerging problem at Toro, a sink hole developing on the road near the entrance. The area is blocked off and the park is open but crews have some new repairs on their extensive ‘to do’ list.

Acting Chief of Parks Cam Sanchez says work crews have been working long hours and weekends since the storm, logging in more than 200 hours just between February 17th and 20th clearing damage

in the parks, shoring up slides, repairing trails and cutting up trees that came down on powerlines, picnic benches and along trails or that were uprooted.

“These trees were already affected by previous storms and the powerful winds finished the job,” says Sanchez. “We have cut up and stacked a lot of wood.”



The entrance road to Toro Park looked more like a water park during the February storms (above). Tree limbs snapped like matchsticks (right).



Check out other photos and video of the storm damage and runoff at the parks on the [Office of Emergency Services Facebook page](#).

Big Sur Library Serves Community in Need

For folks in the isolated area of Big Sur, having a branch of the county library accessible has been a nice diversion from other troubles. It may be weeks to go before access out is available but there is still plenty to read!

The library had its own troubles last week, due to power outages and road blockages it had to close February 22nd - 25th, but the branch reopened to residents March 1st.



The Big Sur Library Branch on Highway 1 may be small but it provides much more than just books.



The library has slightly shortened hours, closing an hour early on Wednesdays and Thursdays so the librarian can return home and be off the roads before sunset which is a requirement for locals at this time.

Here are the new Big Sur Library hours:

W, Th: 2 - 5 p.m.

F, Sat: 11 a.m. - 4 p.m.

While the little branch located at Highway 1 at Ripplewood Resort has not been able to receive books from other branches to freshen up its offerings, it still serves the community with reference services, materials, computers connected to the internet and Wi-Fi.

NMC Launches Next Phase of Head Trauma Prevention Program

Last year, Natividad Medical Center launched Brain Smart, a community education program about head trauma, focusing on the serious issue of concussions.

Now the hospital is moving ahead with the program's second phase which concentrates on fall prevention. Did you know that falls are the leading cause of injuries for Americans aged 65 and older?



In response to this growing concern, NMC's trauma prevention team will hold a series of educational classes designed to teach practical strategies to reduce falls. The program, called 'A Matter of Balance: Managing Concerns about Falls,' will begin **March 10th at NMC and continue every Friday afternoon from 2-4 p.m. through April 28th.**

Older adults and anyone interested in improving balance, flexibility and strength are encouraged to attend this free eight-week series. Participants will learn to set goals for increasing activity, make changes around the house to reduce fall risk and understand what exercises increase muscle strength and balance. To learn more and register, please call Lorraine Artinger, RN, Trauma Prevention and Outreach, at 831-772-7357.

As the only Level II Trauma Center in the county, Natividad Medical Center is well positioned to address the need for information concerning falls, which are the number one cause of traumatic brain injuries.

"The Trauma Center tracks injuries that affect our community most often, and falls are always at the top of the list," says Lorraine Artinger, RN.

Keep an eye out for fall prevention tips and ways to maintain an active lifestyle on KION News Channel 5, 46 and Telemundo this month. To learn more about Brain Smart, visit NatividadBrainSmart.com.