



Office of the City Manager

October 22, 2021

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From:  Dee Williams-Ridley, City Manager

Re: Preparing for Storm Season

Keeping Berkeley safe through the storm season is the responsibility of all City staff, residents, and businesses. Here are actions we can take to prepare.

### ***Throughout the year***

- Public Works maintains storm drain inlets/outlets, catch basins, trash racks, and green infrastructure to ensure they are free from debris and operate as designed during storms.
- Parks, Recreation and Waterfront inspects and schedules pruning of street trees that may be dead, dying, diseased, or vulnerable to damage during storms. Inspects, maintains, and repairs storm drain inlets, creek-related trash racks, bio-swale plantings, erosion control waddles as well as repairing rain gutters and roof scuppers on community center and park buildings.
- Residents and businesses hire arborists to inspect trees on private property, repair roofs and fix leaks, and develop an emergency plan.

### ***Two months before storm season begins***

- Public Works ensures an adequate supply of critical tools and materials, e.g., signs, sandbags, barricades, temporary stop signs, rakes, augers, rain gear, etc.
- Public Works inspects and maintains flooding hotspots, tests traffic signal and other battery backups, and, through the street sweeping program, removes leaves from the City's streets that can clog storm drains.
- Parks, Recreation and Waterfront prunes or removes street trees that may be dead, dying, diseased, or vulnerable to damage during storms. Maintains and repairs storm drain inlets, creek-related trash racks, bio-swale plantings, erosion control waddles as well as clears rain gutters and roof scuppers on community center and park buildings.
- Residents and businesses clear their gutters, test their battery back-ups and generators, and keep a list of contractors in case they experience leaks or flooding.
- Residents and businesses call 311 where they suspect a street tree is weakened, diseased, or dying.

### ***The week of a severe storm***

- Public Works has its street sweepers pick up as much leaves and debris as possible in high-priority locations to help prevent flooding.
- Public Works monitors and adjusts the Aquatic Park Lagoon water level to ensure there is capacity to take on stormwater.
- Parks, Recreation and Waterfront inspects street trees that may be dead, dying, diseased, or vulnerable to damage during storms. Clears and repairs all storm drain inlets in the parks, creek-related trash racks, bio-swale drainages, as well as clears rain gutters and roof scuppers on community center and park buildings.
- Public Works and Park, Recreation, and Waterfront ensure sufficient after-hours staffing for storm-related service requests.
- Residents and businesses can retrieve up to 10 sandbags from the City's Corporation Yard at 1326 Allston Way. Proof of residency or business is required.
- Residents and businesses put leaves and green waste in their green containers. Leaves and green waste do not go in the street, as this contributes to flooding.

### ***During the storm***

- Residents and businesses call 311 to request non-emergency service (after hours dial 510-981-2489 and press 1) related to storms, such as:
  - a clogged storm drain, culvert, inlet, or creek;
  - fallen tree or major limb;
  - malfunctioning traffic signal; or
  - flooding that enters a travel lane.

Please be patient. City staff triage many requests for service during storms. Submitting requests by other means results in delay, e.g., requests for service made through social media sites or to City staff and officials rather than through 311.

- Where power outages occur, residents and businesses can report to Pacific Gas and Electric at 1-800-743-5000 and check their status online at <https://pgealerts.alerts.pge.com/outagecenter/>.
- Where traffic signals are out, please treat the intersection as a four-way stop.
- Public Works staff are assigned to storm districts based on flooding or other risks, and communicate with supervisors about service requests through two-way radios.
- For additional information, please visit <https://www.cityofberkeley.info/ready/winter-storm/>.

cc: Paul Buddenhagen, Deputy City Manager  
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Liam Garland, Public Works Director  
Scott Ferris, Director, Parks, Recreation & Waterfront Department  
Jenny Wong, City Auditor  
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