

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Tuesday, Sept. 29, 2026

City of San Diego Urges Businesses to Prepare for El Niño

CITY STAFF VISIT SMALL BUSINESSES TO SHARE BEST PRACTICES AND RESOURCES AHEAD OF THE RAINY SEASON

SAN DIEGO – City of San Diego staff are visiting small businesses in flood-prone communities across San Diego to help owners prepare their properties, employees and operations for weather conditions associated with El Niño, which is expected to bring heavy rain and potential flooding to the region this fall and winter.

“By assessing risks now, local businesses can better prepare their operations and inform employees of the impacts of El Niño,” said Economic Development Director Christina Bibler. **“Our goal is to ensure every business, large or small, has the information and resources they need to stay safe, stay open and stay supported throughout the rainy season.”**

As part of the City's broader El Niño preparedness efforts, over a span of six weeks Economic Development Department teams will be visiting businesses in areas with a history of flooding – including Barrio Logan, Encanto, Logan Heights, Southcrest, Pacific Beach, Mission Beach and Ocean Beach – to share tips on how they can prepare. They are also collaborating with business associations to help share emergency and preparedness information.

Additionally, the City has a website and postcards with valuable [information and resources](#) for business owners and employees to access.

“As with any significant change in weather conditions, planning ahead is key,” said Assistant Fire Chief Rob Rezende of the Office of Emergency Services. **“Knowing how to prepare will give business owners the tool they need to safeguard their shops, along with their employees and customers, to mitigate damage and economic impacts.”**

Stormwater drainage systems in the public right of way are designed for typical rain events. An excessive amount of rain, especially in a short period of time, could overwhelm the City's stormwater system and cause flooding. Because these conditions have the potential to impact communities across the city, including some business districts, it is critical to understand the risks and take steps to prepare.

Readiness is key to protecting property and assets for businesses, as well as private property. Strategies for local businesses include:

1. **Know Your Risk**

Identify areas of your property most vulnerable to heavy rain or flooding. Inspect drainage areas, roofs, doors, windows, and low-lying spots. Take photos or videos to document conditions before any damage occurs.

2. **Protect Your Property & Records**

Move valuable assets away from areas at risk of water damage. Store critical documents in waterproof containers or maintain secure off-site/cloud backups.

3. **Review Your Insurance & Lease**

Understand your insurance coverage and review your lease for tenant and property owner responsibilities. If you're aware of water intrusion or other building concerns, contact the property owner before the rainy season. Connect with your insurance broker about documentation that may be beneficial in the case of a claim.

4. **Make an Emergency Plan**

Prepare an emergency kit and a plan for how your business will respond to severe weather, including employee communications, closures and protecting essential operations. Encourage employees to have emergency plans for their households.

5. **Prepare Before the Rain**

Know where to get sandbags and other flood-protection supplies before a storm arrives. Don't wait until heavy rain is in the forecast to gather what you may need.

If business owners have questions on how to prepare for El Niño, they can contact the City's Economic Development Department by email sdbusiness@sanidiego.gov or call 619-236-6700.

The business outreach is part of the City's broader El Niño preparedness campaign, which includes work to prepare public infrastructure and provide residents and businesses with information to reduce their risk ahead of the rainy season.

In addition to businesses, San Diego residents are encouraged to prepare their homes and families for extreme weather conditions. Resources are available on the City's [El Niño online hub](#).



###