State and Local Incident Response and Coordination

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California Election Statistics

- Eligible to Vote: 25,090,517
- Registered to Vote: 22,047,448 (87.87%)
- Voter Turnout of Registered Voters: 17,785,151 (80.67%)
- 58 Counties (Election Jurisdictions)
- High level COVID-19 Policy Responses
  - Every active registered voter mailed a ballot
  - Flexible in-person policy options made available to counties
  - Nearly 35 million pieces of PPE purchased and distributed
  - Location and poll worker recruitment assistance provided
Election Official Working Group

- With COVID, wildfires, civil unrest, and cybersecurity risks threatening election security, SOS convened a statewide election working group
  - All county officials invited to participate
  - Held weekly meetings to discuss communication plans, tools, resources, and needs among election officials
  - Brought in key stakeholders including utility companies and threat intelligence agencies for briefings
- California Association of Clerks and Election Officials (CACEO) runs an email group ElecNet that shares information across the state as well
Natural Disaster Concerns

- The SOS publishes a set of guidelines and procedures for counties to facilitate voting during a natural disaster or other emergency.
Natural Disaster Concerns

- The SOS produced a greatly expanded set of recommendations to ensure a safe and secure election during the COVID-19 pandemic.
Natural Disaster Concerns

- Wildfires are the natural disaster most likely to have an impact on California elections during November general elections
  - Wildfire prevention activities conducted by utility companies called Public Safety Power Shutoff (PSPS) de-energize portions of the grid and can impact county election offices and voting locations

California's wildfire hell: how 2020 became the state's worst ever fire season

California: autumn heatwave sparks fears of new wildfires

Reviewing the horrid global 2020 wildfire season
Wildfire Response Coordination

- SOS established relationships with key utility companies in advance of the election
  - Geo-coded voting locations provided to utilities and CA Office of Emergency Services to enable mapping of voting and tabulation locations in case of PSPS events
  - Utilities committed to providing mobile power generation to tabulation locations
  - Information provided by SOS regarding utility's daily briefings during PSPS event
- SOS developed flyer for voters displaced by wildfire events
- Support provided to county even when a power outage was not PSPS related
Wildfire Response Coordination

- SOS also established relationships with the Red Cross who are contracted to run the emergency shelters across the state
  - Met with county election officials, SOS staff, and Red Cross staff to ensure elections officials were able to provide services to displaced voters
  - Worked with Red Cross to establish protocols for ensuring voters in shelters were given the opportunity to receive services from county election officials
  - Worked with Red Cross to ensure disaster response workers were provided with opportunity to cast their ballot during emergency response operations activity
Info for Displaced Voters

Displaced Voters Fact Sheet
FOR PERSONS DISPLACED AS A RESULT OF FIRES OR OTHER EMERGENCIES.

Displaced voters have options to safely vote in the November 3, 2020, General Election.

Ballots will be mailed to all registered voters by October 5.

Here’s what you can do to ensure you can exercise your right to vote if you have been or are likely to be displaced due to recent fires or other emergencies:

☑️ Change Your Mailing Address

Ballots cannot be forwarded. If you have a forwarding address on file with USPS but you have not updated your mailing address with your county elections official, your ballot will be returned to your local elections office.

You can have your vote-by-mail ballot sent to the home of a family member or friend, a post office box, or your work. To change your mailing address, please contact your local county elections office.

You can also complete a one-time application, listing a mailing address where you can receive your ballot. To register to vote or make updates to your voter registration, visit RegisterToVote.ca.gov by October 19, 2020.

If you did not receive your ballot in the mail, contact your local county elections office.

☑️ Vote in Person

Every voter has the option to vote in-person. Every county in California will offer early in-person voting in the county election offices starting no later than October 5. Other locations, times, and days of early voting vary by county. Find a location near you at Vote.ca.gov.

All voting locations will be open on Election Day from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. To find the location nearest you, visit Vote.ca.gov.

All voting locations will offer Same Day Voter Registration allowing you to register to vote at your new or temporary address. Even if you have been displaced outside of your home county you may use Same Day Registration to register at your new or temporary address.

☑️ It’s Election Day, and I didn’t receive my ballot in the mail. How can I vote?

Don’t worry! You can still vote in person at a voting location in your county or at your local county elections office. Call your local county elections office to see what options are available for you.

☑️ County or State Voter Information Guide

If you lost your county voter information guide most counties have an online version on their website. Voting locations will also have copies of the county information guide. The Secretary of State’s online voter information guide can be found at Vote.ca.gov.

For more information, visit Vote.ca.gov or call our Election Hotline at (800) 345-VOTE (8683).
Incident Response Preparation

- Established California Election Security Task Force to ensure statewide information sharing and response
  - Members include CA Office of Emergency Services, DHS, CISA, FBI, Fusion Centers, US Postal Inspection Service, CA Cyber Integration Center, CA Highway Patrol
- Implemented the California Election Situation Awareness Room (CESAR) for rapid information sharing between county, state, and federal partners
  - Over 350 participants across the state
  - Provided critical information during a PSPS event that impacted 466,000 customers during the weekend in-person voting began
Preparation in Action

- October 24 – National Weather Service issues Red Flag Warning
- Incident information shared by SOS staff through various channels
- Daily calls coordinated with counties impacted by PSPS
- Rapid analysis of election impacts enabled by previous information sharing efforts and mapping project
Preparation in Action

- October 27 – Two fires in Orange County driven by the weekend winds result in impacts to drop boxes

SOS was able to update this information in our website data feed and alert voter hotline staff for situational awareness.
Additional Reports on CESAR

- **Polling Place Incidents:**
  - Reports of voter and poll worker intimidation
  - Reports of electioneering disrupting voting
  - Additional locations opened due to long lines

- **VBM Incidents:**
  - USPS Investigation of mail fished out of collection box

- **Cybersecurity**
  - Scanning activity reported
  - Confirmation of legitimacy of alert emails

- **Voter Hotline was relatively quiet on Election Day!**
For more information on CA SOS Response Plans, contact:

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Thank you!