



PRESS RELEASE

CONTACT: Kiara Nowlin, City Manager's Office
(805) 646-5581, ext. 120 or (805) 794-5462 (mobile)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

City of Ojai hosts disaster drill, local organizations convene for emergency preparedness training

OJAI, CA (January 30, 2023) The City of Ojai hosted a disaster drill on Wednesday, January 25, 2023 at Kent Hall in Ojai, CA. The City, including the Ojai Police Department and the Ventura County Fire Department, and 10 public safety stakeholder organizations received emergency preparedness training, led by Ojai Disaster Council member and retired Ventura County Fire Chief John McNeil.

The following organizations attended the two-hour training: Casitas Municipal Water District, County of Ventura Office of Emergency Services, Humane Society, Ojai Unified School District, Ojai Valley Community Hospital, Ojai Valley Fire Safe Council, Ojai Valley News, Red Cross, Southern California Edison, and the Ventura County Auxiliary Communications Service and Ojai Valley Amateur Radio Club. The City also encouraged residents to join virtually.

"After the Thomas Fire in 2017, our team recognized the need for an increased focus on emergency preparedness," said Ojai City Manager James Vega.

"Since then, the City has formed the [Ojai Disaster Council](#), finalized the [Ojai Community Disaster Guide](#) and held our first [disaster drill](#) with key public safety stakeholders. We will continue our emergency education and training, so when disaster strikes, we are ready."

The training covered a number of topics, including crisis planning, the City's emergency operations center (EOC) and the role of each organization in an emergency. The drill also allowed organization representatives to connect, strengthening the relationship between Ojai's disaster workers.

"During a crisis, everyone must work together to ensure the safety of ourselves, our loved ones and our community; therefore, it is imperative for emergency workers to train for these events regularly" said McNeil.

"Through their efforts, the City of Ojai is proving that they take emergency preparedness seriously."

Residents can watch the disaster drill recording [online](#), and the disaster guide is available on ojai.ca.gov and at City Hall.

#