

COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS POLICY

Subject

Use and Distribution of County-Owned Sandbags and Other Resources

**Policy
Number**

K-11

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Purpose

To establish policies and procedures for the use and distribution of County-owned sand, sandbags and other erosion control devices.

Background

In recent years, the County of San Diego has experienced several natural disasters that have denuded or over saturated land thereby creating a potential for severe land erosion or subsidence, causing a potential safety issue and environmental concern with releasing sediment or other pollutants into the waterways. Sediment and other pollutants may be discharged from damaged property in stormwater and non-stormwater flows. When these discharges are made onto County maintained roads or other County property, the County may be compelled to address the pollutants to avoid potential liability as a transporter and subsequent discharger. Even without such liability, the County may be compelled to act to remove the sediment, debris and other material to ensure County property remains available for its intended use.

In order to prevent sediment and other materials from entering onto County property as a result of stormwater and non-stormwater discharges, the Department of Public Works and other County departments that may have sand, sandbags and other erosion control devices available in excess of any County needs, may make the materials available to the public when doing so is a cost-effective means of limiting County liability, protecting the health and safety of residents, or ensuring vital public facilities remain open and useful. Additionally, the County Office of Emergency Services should, to the extent resources permit, assist citizens in preparing for the flood season by making available information on sources of equipment and supplies by a continuing program of education in the techniques of flood damage prevention. This policy is not intended in any way to limit the liability or responsibility of private property owners for failing to properly maintain their properties. County departments should continue to evaluate the feasibility of enforcement and other measures under the circumstances of each incident.

Policy

It is the policy of the Board of Supervisors that:

1. Primary responsibility for the prevention of erosion, subsidence and other flood impacts to private property rests with the individual property owner.

2. Information on the techniques of flood damage prevention shall be made available by the County Office of Emergency Services and Department of Public Works, Watershed Protection Program, to the public to the extent resources are available to do so.

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3. The County Office of Emergency Services shall maintain an up-to-date listing of commercial sources for sand, sandbags and other erosion control devices available to the public upon request.

4. County forces and resources before, during, and after emergency or other operations due to flooding or debris flows shall:

a. First, be used for the protection of County maintained roads, bridges, culverts, buildings and other County maintained or owned facilities or property;

b. Second, for emergency repairs to County maintained or owned drainage facilities and other property to mitigate risk for which the County could be held liable and to ensure public facilities and property remain open and useful.

c. Lastly, for the distribution of sand, sandbags and other erosion control devices in excess of any County needs to private property owners when doing so is determined to be a cost-effective means of limiting potential County liability or ensuring that public property and infrastructure remains open and useful.

Sunset Date

This policy will be reviewed for continuance by 12-31-19.

Board Action

12-10-80 (7c)

1-13-81 (71)

12-4-84 (29)

12-15-87 (44)

11-29-94 (40)

09-27-05 (1)

12-09-08 (33)

11-08-11 (2)

12-04-12 (3)

CAO Reference

1) Department of Public Works

2) Office of Emergency Services