

## **IMPORTANT NEWS FOR RESIDENTS AND VISITORS TO THE SANTA CATALINA MOUNTAINS**

Recent fires in the Santa Catalina Mountains have had a tremendous impact on property owners, residents, structures, wildlife, and habitat in this area over the past month. As a result of the fire, how rainfall affects the mountain and downstream locations may change. The following things have occurred as a result of the Aspen fire:

- ▶ Much of the vegetation has been damaged. This will lessen its ability to hold soil in place.
- ▶ Loss of the vegetation and damaged soil structure will reduce the amount of water held in place on the mountain.

These two fire effects may result in:

- ▶ Increased storm runoff from the mountains
- ▶ Increase in soil erosion
- ▶ Smaller storms may cause washes to flow
- ▶ Increased probability of flooding
- ▶ Increased downslope movement of debris (rocks, tree limbs)
- ▶ Damage to and debris on roads where they cross drainages

## **WHAT IS PIMA COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION/FLOOD CONTROL DISTRICT DOING TO HELP WITH THIS SITUATION?**

- ▶ Pima County Flood Control District (District), in cooperation with the National Weather Service, operates a 24 hour per day/7 day per week ALERT Flood Warning System, providing real-time monitoring of weather, precipitation and stream flow conditions throughout eastern Pima County and adjacent counties.
- ▶ The ALERT system currently consists of 124 rain, stream, wind, humidity, temperature, and barometric pressure sensors which report back to both agencies ensuring round-the-clock emergency response should the need arise.
- ▶ Working with the US Forest Service and National Weather Service, planning for the installation of additional gauges has begun - severe burn areas on the mountain will be a priority as a result of the Aspen Fire.

- ▶ The District is performing additional field verification, calibration, and maintenance of existing gauges that may have been affected by the Aspen Fire.
- ▶ The District is also coordinating with other emergency response groups such as the Sheriff's Department, Office of Emergency Preparedness, and the fire departments in the Catalinas.

## HOW CAN YOU HELP ?

- ▶ Watch the skies!!! Be on the alert for cloud build ups and possible rain storms.
- ▶ Pay attention to weather **near** your area too. Rain in a watershed area above your home or present location can still be dangerous!
- ▶ Obtain and maintain a NOAA Weather radio through local electronic stores or the National Weather Service.
- ▶ Listen for Severe Thunderstorm Watches and Warnings on your NOAA portable radio. Also listen for Flash Flood Watches and Warnings.
- ▶ Take along a cellular phone, fully charged with an extra battery and make sure it works!
- ▶ Use extreme caution while driving. Roads have also been damaged by fire and debris. Pay particular attention to rocks on slopes above your location.
- ▶ Keep children and pets out of burned areas. Hidden hazards may be present as a result of the fire – fallen trees, ash, building materials, debris, and other potentially hazardous items.
- ▶ Listen for unusual sounds – it may signal an increased threat of on-coming debris. Also watch for change in water quality – going from clear to muddy may signal soil disturbance.
- ▶ Be careful under burned trees – limbs may fall without warning.
- ▶ Be alert to injured wildlife that may be present in the area - use all precautions.
- ▶ Be careful of singed or burned trees if thunderstorms are in the area. **DO NOT SEEK SHELTER UNDER OR NEAR THEM!!**
- ▶ Take emergency first aid kit, flashlights, and bottled water with you.
- ▶ If ordered out of the area by official personnel, follow their directions.
- ▶ If you come upon a barricaded crossing, **DO NOT GO AROUND THE BARRICADES!**
- ▶ Please call the Flood Control District at (520) 740-6350 for additional information.
- ▶ **REMEMBER – Be Safe and Stay Alert !!!**

