PRESS RELEASE

Governor Brown Declares a State of Emergency in Santa Barbara County and the Federal Government Issues a Fire Management Assistance Grant for the Thomas Fire

(Santa Barbara, CA) – On December 7, 2017, Governor Brown declared a state of emergency in Santa Barbara County due to the Thomas fire. In addition, Santa Barbara County was issued a Fire Management Assistance Grant (FMAG) from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to assist with the mitigation, management, and control of the Thomas Fire.

The Thomas fire which began on December 4th in Ventura County, has spread to the Santa Barbara County line threatening homes and other structures and forcing the evacuation of residents in Santa Barbara County.

The Governor’s action by declaring a state of emergency is an essential step when dealing with this significant incident. This action recognizes the magnitude of this emergency and helps facilitate State funding which supports necessary resources and efforts needed to control the Thomas fire and ensure the safety of our County. The receipt of the FMAG funding allows additional mutual aid support of State and local resources. Santa Barbara County Officials have worked hard to ensure that we are maximizing our reimbursement opportunities for this incident.

“Supporting our firefighters and other first responders to protect the public is the County's top priority, as well as preventing damage to structures, infrastructure, our rich agricultural resources, and our critical watersheds,” said Robert Lewin, Director for the Santa Barbara County Office of Emergency Management. Both actions help to provide the resources necessary to support efforts of keeping our community safe and demonstrates the partnership we have with the State and Federal government.

The Thomas fire continues to threaten Santa Barbara County. The fire is burning on the north and east side of Highway 150 and is also burning on the west side of Highway 33. The fire has been burning along the 101 freeway to the Santa Barbara county line as well as in the back country west of Ojai. To date, over 132,000 acres have burned and the fire is 10% contained.

MEDIA ONLY
Joint Information Center 805-696-1188
Hashtag #Thomasfire

County of Santa Barbara Fire, Sheriff, Office of Emergency Management and Public Health departments have posted information on their social media including Twitter and Facebook.

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