



# Fire Department

*“Serving the community since 1926”*

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## NEWS RELEASE

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Santa Barbara County Fire Department is pleased to announce the implementation of our 9<sup>th</sup> Remote Automated Weather Station (RAWS) in Santa Barbara County. This project consists of the installation of a fixed Remote Automated Weather Station (RAWS) in the Purisima Hills area of Santa Barbara County on land owned by Sentinel Peak Resources near the Burton Mesa communities of Vandenberg Village, Mission Hills, and Mesa Oaks.

There are nearly 2,200 interagency Remote Automated Weather Stations (RAWS) strategically located throughout the United States. These stations monitor the weather and provide weather data that assists land management agencies with a variety of projects such as monitoring air quality, rating fire danger, and providing information for research applications

The Purisima Hills RAWS unit will provide real-time weather data every hour to assist fire managers with determining Fire Danger Ratings for the Santa Barbara Central Coast Fire Danger Rating Area (FDRA). Weather data includes temperature, relative humidity, wind speed and direction, solar radiation, and dry vegetation fuel moisture. The data will contribute to more effective fire business management decisions including fire resource staffing levels, resource pre-positioning, and fire district project activity levels. The weather data is sent via satellite to various government agencies and ultimately stored permanently by the Western Region Climate Center. The data is accessible by the public via the internet and freely available at all times. The data will also contribute to the ongoing efforts by the National Weather Service to model and predict the local fire weather conditions that have contributed to multiple disastrous wildfires in Santa Barbara County.

The Purisima Hills RAWS site is located near the crest of a ridge covered in annual grass and sage brush and is accessed by an existing private road. The site provides ideal exposure to the local weather conditions. The property is owned by Sentinel Peak Resources who operate the nearby Lompoc Oil and Gas Plant. Sentinel Peak has collaborated with Santa Barbara County Fire to allow use of the site for the RAWS installation.

*Serving the cities of Buellton, Goleta, and Solvang, and the Communities of Casmalia, Cuyama, Gaviota, Hope Ranch, Los Alamos, Los Olivos, Mission Canyon, Mission Hills, Orcutt, Santa Maria, Sisquoc, and Vandenberg Village*

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