

**For Immediate Release**

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**City of Ventura takes swift action in response to severe high surf events**

**Ventura, Calif.** — Responding proactively to recent severe high surf events, the City of Ventura has officially declared a local state of emergency. This move allows the City to expedite disaster response and seek emergency funding from the state to aid recovery. The City Council ratified the local state of emergency on January 9, 2024, and it will remain in effect for the next 60 days.

"With recent damages to our iconic and historic pier, Ventura faced repair needs and additional cleanup costs caused by recent high tide events," noted Ventura Mayor Joe Schroeder. "The declaration of a local state of emergency enables us to seek essential emergency funding, expedite recovery endeavors to swiftly address damage, hasten repairs, and ensure the prompt restoration of our City's infrastructure."

The winter storm began on December 28, 2023, and produced large breaking waves with life-threatening rip currents and significant coastal flooding. City staff swiftly responded to reports of flooding, roadway debris, retaining wall damage from high surf, and other hazardous conditions in public areas. Beach protective measures were implemented to mitigate tidal impacts. During the High Surf Event, the Ventura Fire Department was dispatched to 10 Ocean Rescue incidents, producing 38 individual unit responses.

Addressing potential hazards on public property and within the public right-of-way, the Ventura Pier, previously impacted during the January 2023 winter storm events, underwent emergency stabilization measures. The recent high tides resulted in additional damage, extending the pier's closure for several months.

Recent damage includes nineteen missing or damaged piles and estimated costs exceeding \$1.75 million, further postponing the reopening for several months. The ongoing emergency repair endeavors focus on rectifying dislodged piles, damaged bracing, and brackets.

"Ventura City staff, in collaboration with the County of Ventura and numerous local and state agencies, worked cohesively to swiftly respond to emergency calls for help, clear debris, reopen public areas, and implement mitigation efforts along the coastline," stated City Manager Bill Ayub. "We express our gratitude for their effective coordination, which played a crucial role in addressing challenges posed by coastal flooding and significant high surf."

For real-time updates and information on emergency efforts, residents can visit the dedicated webpage at [www.cityofventura.ca.gov/EmergencyAlerts](http://www.cityofventura.ca.gov/EmergencyAlerts).

For critical emergencies, please call 911. Stay informed of critical incident updates in your area by registering for VC Alert, Ventura County's Emergency Notification System, at [www.VCAAlert.org](http://www.VCAAlert.org).

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