

# A Week of Storms



**Friday, January 22, 2010**

Since the weather was the focus of most of our attention this week, I thought I would devote this week's Friday Newsletter to highlight the challenges the storms presented as well as the efforts of the Council and staff to prepare for, and respond to, those challenges.

## **PREPARING**

Upon learning of the heavy storms headed our way, City staff in all departments began to prepare. Actions included:

- Public Works, with assistance from Gas & Oil and Parks, Recreation & Marine, delivered 600 tons of sand to five fire stations and other locations.
- Fire and Public Works distributed up to 80,000 sand bags to the public.
- Public Works cleaned, and continually monitored, storm drains citywide to ensure maximum drainage capacity.
- Maintenance staff from all departments placed sandbags at City facilities to minimize flooding.
- Technology Services installed additional back up power to ensure wireless network link for voice and data communications between City Hall and EOC remained operational.
- Technology Services displayed storm preparation press release information on LBTv, and implemented a new message crawler to provide continuous storm preparation information.
- Technology Services and Public Works placed tarps below ceiling tiles to redirect water leaks away from computers and network equipment.
- Health & Human Services/MSC homeless outreach staff made extra efforts to canvass the L.A. River area to inform homeless people of the river dangers during rainy storm periods and to assist them in finding shelter.
- Parks, Recreation and Marine built and monitored sand berms on the beach to manage erosion and prevent property damage.
- Public Works sent out NPDES Notification to all City Departments and to Contractors working in the City to brace for the storm by setting up their BMPs around their sites and to monitor the BMPs once the rain storm starts.
- Gas & Oil built a 150 ft.-long berm, using 400 sand bags, to prevent water draining over the CalTrans slip road and entering via holes in the slip road into the Temple Blvd Bridge Structure or undermining the retaining walls of the Spring Street on ramp to the 405 freeway southbound.

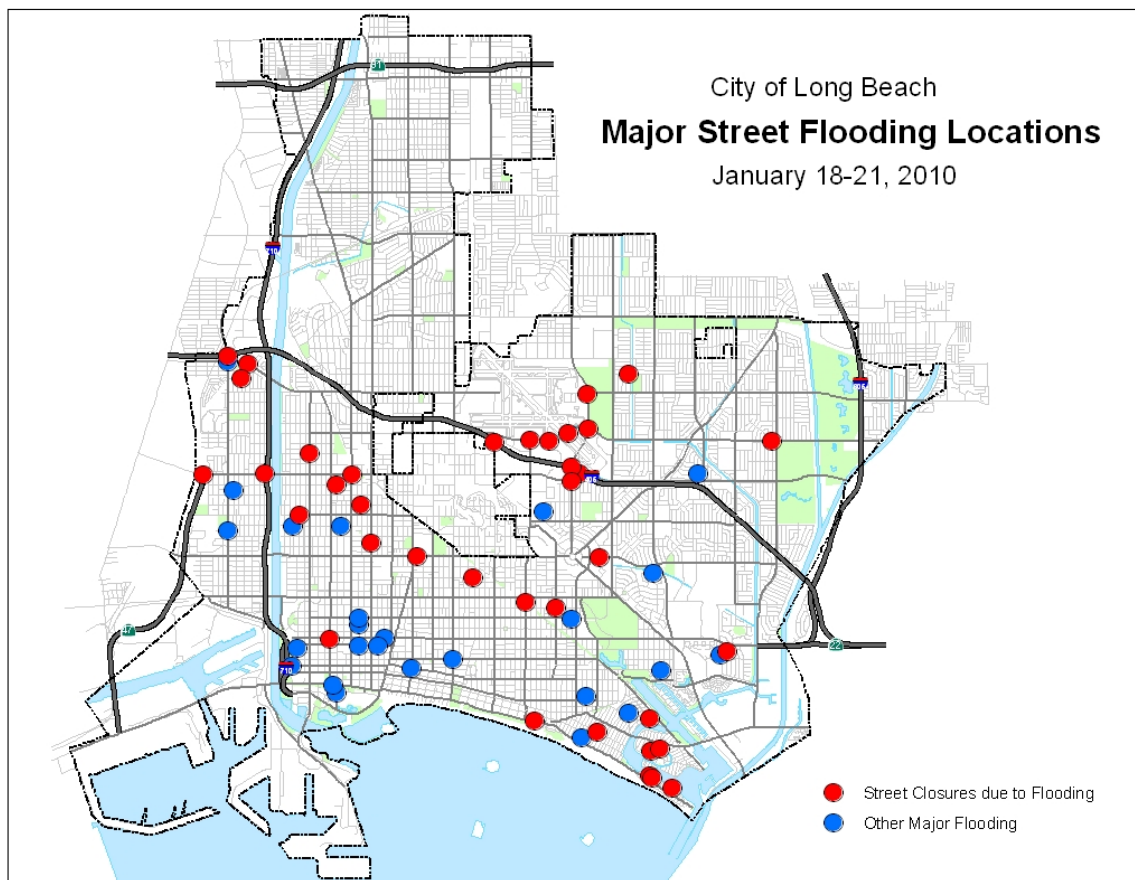
## THE RAIN & THE RESULTING FLOODING

The City of Long Beach experienced 7.19 inches of rain in the past week, including more than 1.5 inches within a one-hour period on Wednesday, and nearly 1.0 inch in a half-hour period on Tuesday. . The daily rainfall totals, as recorded at the Long Beach Airport, were as follows:

Jan. 16 (Sat)	0.01"
Jan. 17 (Sun)	0.27"
Jan. 18 (Mon)	1.03"
Jan. 19 (Tues)	1.43"
Jan. 20 (Wed)	1.43"
Jan. 21 (Thurs)	2.51"
Jan. 22 (Fri)	0.51"
<b>Total</b>	<b>7.19"</b>

The City's historical average rainfall for the month of January is 2.95 inches!

The storm drain systems are designed to handle up to one inch of rain an hour. Any more than one inch of rain an hour overwhelms the flow of runoff from the streets into the Los Angeles River and the San Gabriel River. The map below shows the locations of reported significant flooding of major streets.



While the above map does not show all residential flooding, it is interesting to note that North Long Beach did not have any major incidents (as reported) of street flooding. This can be attributed, in part, to the street reconstruction activities that occurred in the area in recent years, and continue to occur today.

## RESPONDING

City officials and staff from every department responded to the storms in some way. Some of the more notable actions included:

- City Council offices were very visible in the community reporting problem areas to ensure quick responses.
- Public Works responded to **511** flooded locations since Tuesday, including 250 calls on Tuesday, 240 on Wednesday, and 21 on Thursday.
- Fire responded to **236** water-related calls for service, including 123 on Tuesday, 99 on Wednesday, and 14 on Thursday.
- Police responded to **367** calls for services, including 181 on Tuesday, 164 on Wednesday, and 22 on Thursday.
- Public Works and Parks, Recreation & Marine responded to leaks at several City facilities, including the Main Library (which was closed on Thursday), the Main Health Department facility, 14 community centers, and the following neighborhood libraries: Bach, Bay Shore, Brewitt, El Dorado, Bret Harte, Los Altos, Mark Twain, and North.
- Public Works staffed the storm “hotline” 24 hours Wednesday to Thursday.
- Public Works and Parks, Recreation & Marine responded to reports of trees and limbs down in streets and parks across the city.
- Technology Services and Public Works worked to resolve a power outage in the Wireless Communications room in City Hall. Portable generators were procured in case power could not be restored. Power was restored Tuesday afternoon.
- Public Works staffed the main library overnight Wednesday and into the evening Thursday to manage the leaks from the library roof.
- Public Works, with the assistance of Waste Management, deployed 10, 40-cubic yard debris boxes in flood impacted areas for residents to use in the cleanup of their homes.
- Parks, Recreation & Marine manned the debris boom at the entrance to Rainbow Harbor to prevent debris from the L.A. River from entering the harbor.
- Parks, Recreation & Marine staff continuously replenished sand on the City’s beaches to combat erosion and protect property.
- Health & Human Services/Hazardous Materials Division responded to a sunken vessel leaking fuel, a parking garage full of water with oil sheen, and Storm Water Pump Station pumping water with oil sheen.

## THE AFTERMATH

While it will be some time before we know the full extent of the damage, the following is a summary of the storm damage as we currently know it:

- Significant damage was incurred at several park facilities, several libraries, and the CSULB Student Union.
- Several thousand tons of debris have been deposited on our beaches, with more coming down the L.A. River.
- 26 park trees were lost (at El Dorado, Houghton, and Davenport Parks), and 46 street trees were lost. Numerous large limbs were also lost.

Preliminary cost estimates of damage are as follows:

- \$2,000,000 in damage to residences and businesses
- \$1,000,000 in damage to public buildings
- \$200,000 in personnel costs (these estimates are from Fire, Police, Public Works, and Parks, Recreation & Marine)

## ASSISTANCE

For those who need assistance, or would like to help:

- A hot line has been established to help residents and business learn about opportunities for assistance if they suffered damage in the storms. The hot line will be staffed during normal business hours and will be able to collect information 24/7 in English, Spanish, and Khmer. The information received will also help identify the extent of damage experienced by the public, and help people detail their damage and estimated financial loss. The hot line number is **(562) 570-6077**.
- The Health Department and the Long Beach Rescue Mission (LBRM) are asking for donations of winter clothing to distribute to the homeless during this extreme storm period. Jackets, sweaters, sweatshirts, socks and pants are all high on the list of needed items. Donations can be dropped off at the Health Department, 2525 Grand Ave. or the MSC - 1301 W. 12th Street. Cash donations can be made to the LB Rescue Mission at 1335 Pacific Ave. or by calling LBRM at (562) 591-1292.

*The following pages contain a few images of the effects of the storms.*



2nd Street - Belmont Shore



Near Wilson High School



Near Wilson High School



California Heights



Broadway



Sandbagging at Station 14



Seabright & Anaheim



El Dorado Park Estates



CSULB



Belmont Shore



El Dorado Park



El Dorado Park



Junipero Beach



Erosion Along Bike Path



Peninsula Erosion



Crews Clean Up



Albeit ever so briefly,  
the surf returned to Long Beach!