

Preparing for California's natural disasters

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Californians face a wide range of natural disasters every year, including earthquakes, wildfires, landslides and floods. In June, half a dozen earthquakes with a magnitude over 2.5 hit parts of Southern California in just one week. Around the state, at least six wildfires have burned in recent weeks.

On this week's "In Focus SoCal," host Tanya McRae takes a look at how Californians can best prepare for natural disasters. She meets with the founder of one Inland Empire organization called Building Resilient Communities that provides classes, supplies and resources.

"I began to look around and talk with people from FEMA, get a better understanding of the whole concept around disaster preparedness," Debra Williams said. "FEMA talks about the whole community, you know, the idea of, 'It takes a village to raise a child.' Well, it takes a village to prepare, respond and recover from a disaster."

Jacqueline Marie Banks took disaster preparedness training and does a regular inventory check of what she has at home and in her car.

"I'm always thinking ahead and that's something that we all need to do because you don't know," she said. "You're just going through life, but life happens, so you need to be prepared."

Getting your home insured is also another priority in preparing for a disaster. But navigating insurance policies and understanding what's needed for long-term recovery can be complicated. Amy Bach, executive director of United Policyholder, joins McRae to provide tips on how homeowners can be ready. One thing she recommends doing is to take a video of your home and keep it somewhere accessible.

"Walk around your home and make an inventory. Talk about the furniture," Bach said. "'This is my bedroom set that I got at Macy's, and here's my dining room table, etc.'"

Bach also recommends homeowners take a close look at their policies and check with their insurer that there is enough coverage.

“What our organization has found over the years is that two-thirds of disaster-impacted households find their insurance comes up short on their homes, on the value of their home,” she said.

McRae also sits down with California state Sen. Tom Umberg in Sacramento to discuss the latest bills he’s working on to help provide law enforcement with a tool to address the drug epidemic. One proposed law would require social media companies to cooperate with law enforcement agencies in a regular and timely fashion.

“We have an epidemic here in California, particularly with respect to fentanyl,” Umberg said. “Fentanyl is a different kind of drug that we’ve never dealt with before, and fentanyl is being laced into even things like Xanax and oxycodone and Percocet, and those kinds of things.”

Watch the show every Saturday at 11 a.m. and Sunday at 9 a.m., and send us your thoughts to InFocusSoCal@charter.com.