

## Severe El Niño Weather Impacts California, Farmers Provides Tips for Californians in Wake of Yesterday El Niño Related Weather

LOS ANGELES, Jan. 21, 2016 /PRNewswire/ -- Heavy rains that deposited up to three inches of water and strong winds nearing 40 mph moved through Northern California yesterday.

Catastrophe claims and call center staff are also responding to incoming claims and quickly working with customers.

Farmers Insurance urges consumers to prepare for more El Niño weather throughout the spring season. In the recent edition of its [Seasonal Smarts Digest](#), Farmers Insurance warns of potential power outages associated with severe weather and the damage they can cause to homes and appliances. This year's weather is poised for a larger-than-normal impact on California.

Farmers Insurance encourages Californians to closely monitor the weather and stay safe. The Farmers [Seasonal Smarts Digest](#) provides the following general tips for consideration:

- **Use Your Generator Safely:** If your power goes out and you choose to use a generator to provide electricity, never use it indoors, not even in your garage. Be sure to keep it away from areas where carbon monoxide could enter the home and harm you or your loved ones. Always follow the recommended product usage instructions.
- **Unplug Electronics and Major Appliances:** If the power goes out, disconnect your electronics and other major appliances. Even a power strip for your TV or stereo system may not have protection against the power surge that results when electricity is restored.
- **Stock Up On Sandbags:** Check with your community to see if sandbags are being distributed to residents, as sandbags can go a long way in preventing rain runoff from entering your home.
- **Clean The Gutters:** Heavy rains can quickly overload gutters that are full of debris, causing the water to drain into your home instead. Make sure your gutters are clean to help ensure proper drainage.
- **Watch Out For Post-Storm Dangers:** After a rainstorm, potholes can fill with water, making them harder to see. If safety permits, drivers should try to avoid potholes, if possible, which can cause serious vehicle damage.
- **Check Your Braking Technique:** Gradually pushing down on the brake instead of stomping on it may help reduce skidding on wet roads. In general, drivers should also coast slowly toward a stoplight and brake gently, instead of accelerating toward it and braking at the last minute.
- **Replace Windshield Wipers:** Blades should be changed out at least once a year to ensure you don't get caught blind in a rainstorm.
- **Plan Ahead:** If the weather calls for rain, it may be best to remain where you are, especially if your vehicle is in a covered parking area and safe from other potential hazards, like flooding or downed trees.

Farmers customers who suffer damage from the storm should file their claims at [www.farmers.com](http://www.farmers.com), via the Farmers Insurance Claims app on their smart phones, or by calling the 24-hour claims center.

- Farmers Claims Contact Center number: 1-800-435-7764
- Foremost and 21<sup>st</sup> Century customers: 1-800-435-7764
- Bristol West customers: 1-800-274-7865
- Spanish-language claims: 877-RECLAMO (877-732-5266)

\* Based on Farmers Insurance claims data from January through March 2013-2015.

### **About Farmers Insurance**

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