

8.0 INTRODUCTION

Heritage Ranch is a gated community in the unincorporated area of SLO County. Heritage Ranch is located approximately 14 miles northwest of the City of Paso Robles and adjacent to Lake Nacimiento. This geographical location exposes Heritage Ranch to the threat of wildfires, winter storms and earthquakes, as identified in the SLO County Local Hazard Mitigation Plan.

A wildfire is an uncontrolled fire spreading through vegetative fuels, posing danger and destruction to property. While some wildfires start by natural causes, humans cause four out of every five wildfires. From Mother Nature's perspective, wildfire is often the direct result of a lightning strike. The predominate dangers from wildfire are:

- Injury or loss of life to people living or recreating in the affected area
- The destruction of vegetation, property and wildlife

A winter storm can bring with it heavy rainfall, high winds and even hailstorms and snowfall. Winter storms can have devastating effects in terms of property damage, injuries and even loss of life. The danger is multiplied by the risks of downed power lines, localized flooding and landslides/mudslides.

The Community of Heritage Ranch is located in very close proximity to the Nacimiento – Sur Fault which is considered an active strike – slip fault; within 15 miles of the Rinconada Fault; within 20 miles of the San Simeon Fault; and within 35 miles of the San Andreas Fault.

The SLO County Office of Emergency Services Emergency Response Plan for Earthquakes addresses the general response to earthquake incidents for communities such as Heritage Ranch. However, the potential exists for the Community to be isolated from the “normal” public service response provided for in the SLO County's Emergency Response Plan. In this situation, the Community may have to rely strictly upon its own resources to deal with the initial effects of an earthquake or other disaster until such time as the appropriate jurisdictional agencies and resources from outside of the Community arrive.

Therefore, if a major earthquake, a serious wildfire or severe winter storm were to occur, there is the probability that roads leading to Heritage Ranch could become impassable and the Community could become isolated.

It is strongly recommended that each Heritage Ranch resident prepare to be self-sufficient for one week after an emergency. See Section 14 for agencies with publications on disaster preparedness.