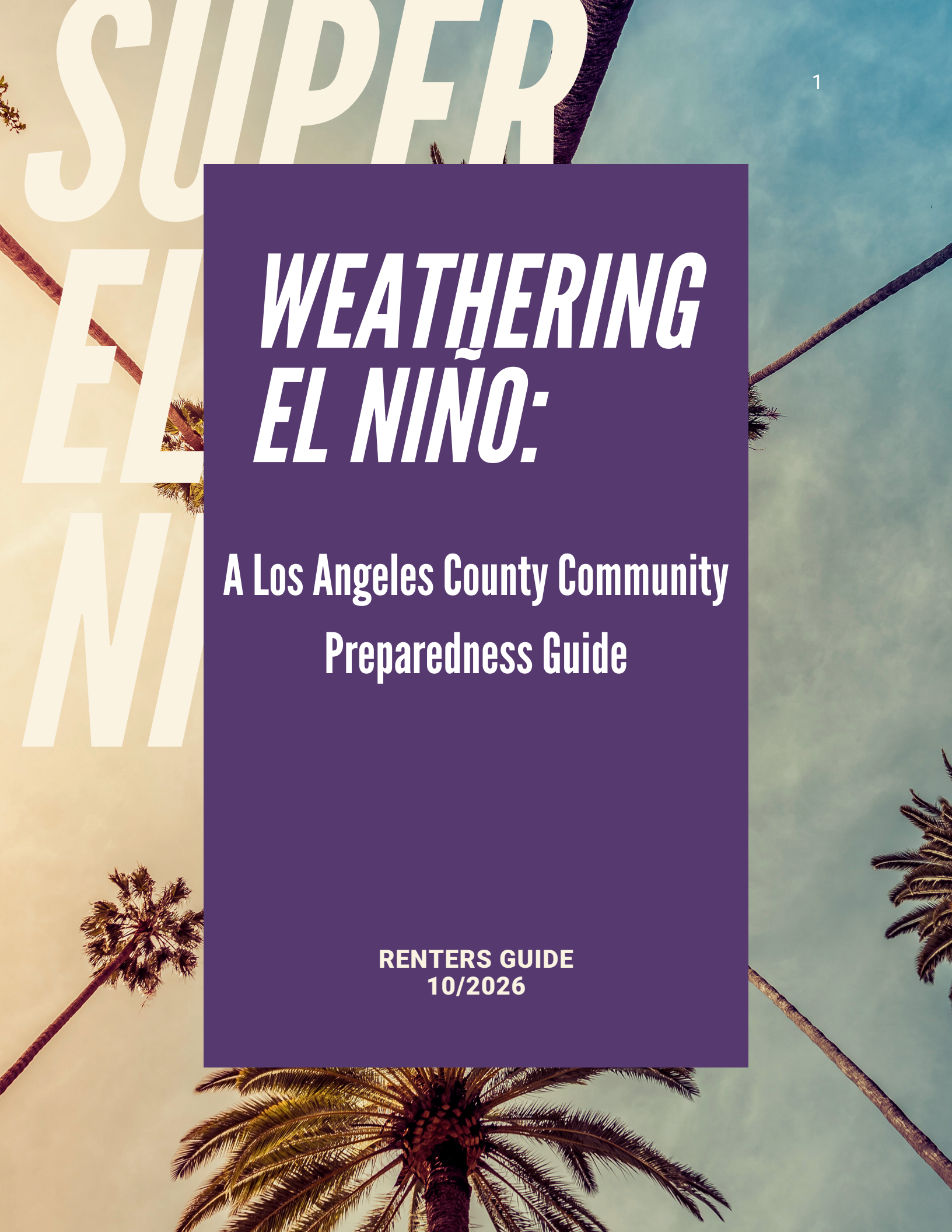


WEATHERING EL NIÑO:

A Los Angeles County Community Preparedness Guide

RENTERS GUIDE
10/2026

SUPER EL NINO



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Heavy rain can cause flooding, power outages, falling trees, road closures, mud and debris flows, and damage to homes throughout Los Angeles County. Renters may not be responsible for maintaining the entire property, but there are important steps you can take now to protect yourself, your household, and your belongings.

1. Know Your Risk

Find out whether your apartment is near a flood-prone area, hillside, drainage channel, creek, or recent burn area. Flooding can happen outside officially mapped flood zones, and flash flooding can develop quickly.

Pay extra attention if you:

- Live on the ground or basement level
- Park in an underground or low-lying garage
- Live below or near a hillside
- Live near a wash, creek, river, or flood-control channel
- Depend on roads that regularly flood during heavy rain

2. Talk to Your Landlord or Property Manager

Don't wait until water enters the building. Ask your landlord or property manager:

- Who should I contact for an emergency leak or flooding?
- Have the roof, gutters and drains been inspected?
- Has the property flooded before?
- What should residents do if the parking garage begins flooding?
- Where are the building's utility shutoffs?
- Is there an emergency evacuation plan?
- Who handles fallen trees, roof leaks or storm damage?

Save your landlord or property manager's emergency number in your phone.

BEFORE THE RAIN

3. Document the Condition of Your Apartment
Take photos or videos of your apartment and belongings before major storms arrive. Photograph furniture, electronics, appliances, clothing and other valuable items. Save copies of receipts for expensive purchases when possible.
Keep the photos somewhere you can access even if your phone is lost or damaged, such as secure cloud storage.

4. Protect Important Items
Water damage often starts at floor level.
Move important belongings off the floor, particularly if you live in a ground-floor unit.
Store documents such as identification, insurance information, birth certificates, immigration documents, medical information and financial records in waterproof containers or sealed bags.
Consider moving electronics and other expensive items away from windows and exterior doors where water could enter.

5. Understand Your Insurance
Your landlord's insurance generally protects the building—not your personal belongings. Standard renters' insurance also typically does not cover damage caused by flooding. Renters can purchase separate flood insurance for their belongings through the National Flood Insurance Program in participating communities. FEMA notes that most NFIP policies have a 30-day waiting period, so don't wait until a major storm is approaching.

Ask your insurance provider:
"Does my policy cover rain damage, water intrusion, temporary housing and flooding?"

6. Prepare an Emergency Kit
Keep enough supplies to manage an extended outage or interruption in services. Include drinking water, nonperishable food, medications, flashlights, batteries, phone chargers and power banks, first-aid supplies, hygiene products, pet supplies, copies of important documents, some cash, and weather-appropriate clothing.
Don't forget supplies specific to your household, including mobility equipment, medical devices, infant supplies or pet medications.

7. Sign Up for Emergency Alerts
Register for Alert LA County, and check whether your individual city has its own emergency alert system. Los Angeles County notes that cities, schools, employers and other jurisdictions may operate separate notification systems.

Pay attention to:
Evacuation Warning — Prepare to leave.
Evacuation Order — Leave the area as directed.

Stay where you are and follow instructions from emergency officials.

8. Make an Evacuation Plan
Know at least two ways to leave your neighborhood in case flooding, fallen trees, mudslides or road closures block your usual route. LA County recommends identifying multiple evacuation routes before storms occur.
Decide where you would go if you could not stay in your apartment.
Keep essential medications, identification, keys, chargers and important documents somewhere you can quickly access them.
If you don't have a car, determine ahead of time how you would evacuate using transit, family, friends, neighbors or emergency transportation resources.

DON'T FORGET YOUR CAR

If your apartment has underground, basement or low-lying parking, pay close attention during major storms.

Move your vehicle to higher ground before flooding begins if local officials or property management warn that the garage could flood.

Never enter a flooded garage to retrieve a vehicle.

And never drive through a flooded street. According to the National Weather Service, about 12 inches of rushing water can carry away most cars.

Turn Around, Don't Drown.



DURING THE STORM





STAY INDOORS

1. Stay indoors when conditions are dangerous and monitor official weather and emergency information.
2. Keep phones and power banks charged.
3. Stay away from windows during strong winds.
4. Never enter floodwater on foot, by bicycle or by car. Just six inches of fast-moving water can knock an adult off their feet.
5. Stay away from rivers, washes, storm drains and flood-control channels.
6. If water begins entering your apartment, move yourself, not just your belongings, to a safer location.
7. Never touch electrical equipment while standing in water.
8. If officials issue an evacuation order, leave immediately.

AFTER THE STORM

01 DON'T ASSUME THE DANGER ENDS WHEN THE RAIN STOPS.

Avoid standing water after a storm, as it may contain sewage, chemicals, sharp debris, or hidden electrical hazards. Stay away from downed power lines and report them to the appropriate utility company or emergency service. When it is safe to do so, photograph any damage to your home or belongings before moving, cleaning, or throwing items away, as these photos may be helpful for insurance claims or reporting damage to your landlord.

02 NOTIFY YOUR LANDLORD OR PROPERTY MANAGER

Notify your landlord or property manager of leaks, flooding, electrical problems and structural damage in writing, and keep copies of your messages.

Contact your insurance company promptly if your belongings are damaged.

03 STAY SAFE

Watch for moisture, mold and recurring leaks in the days following the storm.

Do not return to an evacuated building until authorities say it is safe.

Prepared communities are safer communities.

Check on older adults, people with disabilities, neighbors who don't have transportation, families with young children, and people who may need assistance receiving or understanding emergency information.

IF YOU OR SOMEONE YOU KNOW NEEDS EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS INFORMATION OR HELP CONNECTING WITH SERVICES IN LOS ANGELES COUNTY, **CALL 211**. THE SERVICE IS AVAILABLE 24 HOURS A DAY, SEVEN DAYS A WEEK.

LOOK OUT FOR YOUR NEIGHBORS

REMEMBER

Prepare early.

Protect your belongings.

Know where you will go.

Never enter floodwater.

Follow evacuation orders.

Check on your neighbors.

Green City LA
Building a greener, safer and more resilient Los Angeles.

greencityla.org