
IMMIGRANT DEFENSE TASK FORCE PRESENTS

**SONOMA
COUNTY 2019
DISASTER
RESPONSE
REPORT CARD**

<http://www.northbayop.org/immigrant-defense>

In 2017, the Sonoma County failed its Spanish-speaking residents in every category, an F grade. Fifteen organizations from the Spanish-speaking community made recommendations to the County about their fire response. Only a few of the adopted recommendations were implemented.

A+ First Responders

We are extremely grateful for your kindness, dedication and commitment. This includes county workers who had to work during disaster events.

A Workers with PG&E

Thanks to all the workers who were inspecting and re-connecting our gas lines.

A++ Latino Community Group Care Coordination

Many organizations and members of the Spanish-speaking community helped with their support at the individual level, professional level, or by providing institutional / organizational support.

LETTER GRADE	EXPLANATION
A	IN LINE WITH 2017 RECOMMENDATIONS
B	COUNTY DID BETTER THAN 2017
C	COUNTY PERFORMED THE BARE MINIMUM
D	COUNTY DID NOT TRY
F	COUNTY: YOU DO NOT CARE

A

Alert Systems

Sonoma County sent alerts in English and Spanish.

B

Evacuation Orders

Improvements were made, but major improvements are still necessary. Some areas received notifications with evacuation alerts, others did not. There was no coordination of alternative routes which caused immense traffic jams and delays, especially in areas that required immediate evacuation. This also caused fear and trauma. There was no communication regarding when people could return home without any risk.

A

The county website - socoemergency.org

The map with the latest information on fires was very useful. The labeling of high-risk areas was useful as well. The whole page could be translated into Spanish, which was a great improvement.

F

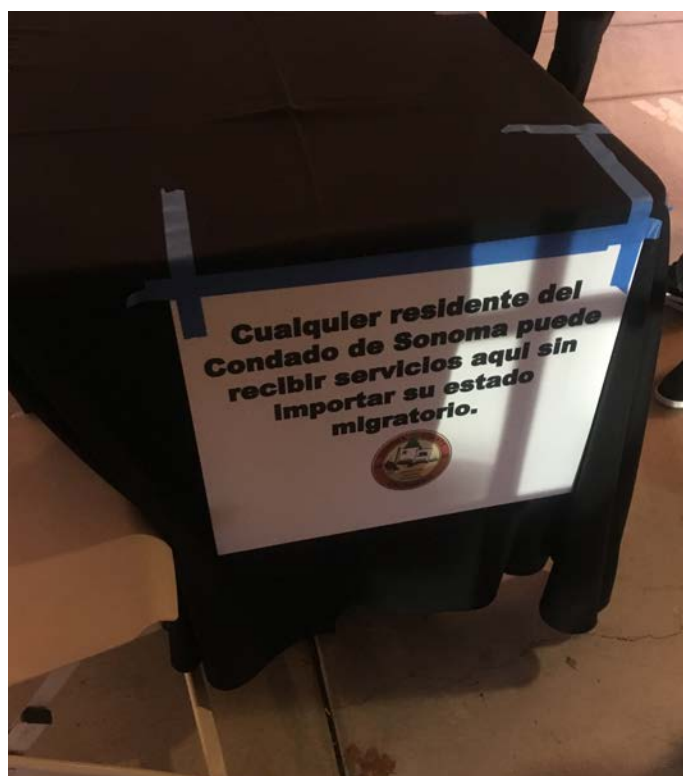
The Sheriff and ICE

Prisoners were not evacuated to a safe zone. The Sheriff cooperated with ICE while Public Defenders were denied access to their clients, possibly violating state law (SB54).

B

Local Assistance Centers (LAC)

Improvements in translations and Interpretation at the County-operated LAC. No community database of translators and interpreters into various languages has been created.



(Sign at Local Assistance Center stating that all residents of Sonoma County can receive services no matter their legal status.)

C

Overall Assessment of Shelter System

- Language access improved, but only because of the commitment of community organizations – and language access varied greatly from shelter to shelter.
- Protocols for volunteers were not well-defined and were different in each shelter.
- Lack of coordination overall was evident because disaster victims and volunteers had varying experiences with both indirect and overt racism, whether volunteers were welcomed or denied. Despite changes won by the IDTF (Immigrant Defense Task Force) in the Resiliency and Recovery Framework of Sonoma County, the system still still does not serve us equally; there is rampant racism and structural inequality. The response that came from Latino community members and their organizations to provide mutual aid and language support and access came about because of the inability of the system as it is now to include all residents during the disaster.

B

Homeless Persons

There was intentional action to ensure that homeless people were accepted at all shelters. Were shelters or buses provided for transportation from known homeless encampments?



(Trusted community leaders addressing concern for safety and sense of security at Santa Rosa Veterans Hall Shelter)

D-

Santa Rosa Veterans Hall Shelter

Many immigrants and others felt unwelcome at this shelter, partly because people in charge were discriminating against people of color, and not enough interpreters were available. It was impossible to hold the Red Cross accountable when unacceptable incidents occurred. (One example: a family arrived at the shelter with two children with autism. The children were terrified and unable to enter the shelter. Staff there was unsympathetic and unhelpful, but they received assistance from other non-Red Cross individuals).

F

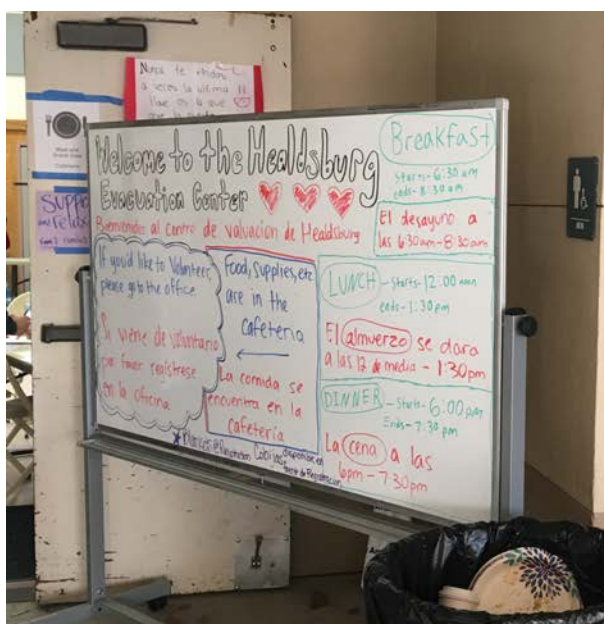
Red Cross Food

Poor quality, small portions, no sugar for coffee, and no kindness or generosity was shown. Culturally inappropriate food, non-nutritional food. Sonoma County failed to change the policy and contracts as promised. No community outreach was done to pre-approve food trucks and restaurants as providers during disasters.

F

Cloverdale Shelter

A great lack of attention and respect for those affected who fled to Cloverdale. There was no adequate response from the County.



(Bilingual shelter schedule and information for evacuees at Healdsburg Community Center Evacuation site)

B

Healdsburg Community Center Shelter

Racism and obvious prejudice on the part of some who were personnel of the Red Cross. Corazon Healdsburg and the Latino Care Community established a partnership and provided a mutual aid response and led a new community response within the shelters.

A

Petaluma Fairground Shelter

The Latino Care community was able to establish itself as a partner with the Red Cross from the first hours the doors were opened until they closed the shelter. People from the Red Cross welcomed us and accepted the help that we provided to everyone, regardless of whether they were Latino or not. We were able to serve the Latino community in a unique way thanks to the cooperation between the Red Cross and Latino led organizations and leaders that were volunteering there.

F

Worker safety and protection:

- Workers were taken to work areas, near fires and exposed to smoke.
- Vineyard workers with H2A visas were left in front of the Healdsburg evacuation center without any support or translator. Employers sent a bus to pick them up the next day to work in full smoke near the fires.

NEW SITUATIONS:

F

Public Safety Power Shutoffs

The difficulties, medical hardships, and economic toll of the power shutoffs was not anticipated. The combination of the PSPS and widespread long-term evacuations was not anticipated.

D

Cellphone Tower Failures

There was not enough backup power, increasing risks to all residents in the County.

Recipients of NBOP's "If It's the Right Thing to Do, We Have Every Right to Do It" Award:

Corazón Healdsburg	MECHA SRJC
Latino Service Providers	Catholic Charities
California Human	Raizes Collective
Development	Daily Acts
North Bay Organizing	Graton Day Labor Center
Project	Nuestra Comunidad
North Bay Jobs with Justice	La Luz Center
Latino Community	Movimiento Cultural de la
Foundation	Unión Indígena
MECHA of Santa Rosa Junior	KBBF 89.1
College	Undocufund
Latinos Unidos	Petaluma Indivisible
Lideres del Futuro	School Box Project
	HPEACE
	Padilla Partners

Additional Suggestions:

KBBF 89.1 is an invaluable resource and trusted source of information and communications that the Spanish-speaking community relies on, yet they were not included in the County's media outreach and communications plan. How is the County planning to include them in disaster preparations and response communications going forward?

The County should be responsible for coordinating these efforts. As non-profits, our missions and existence do not revolve around disaster response. Yet during disasters, we become first responders; our organizations should be compensated, supported in this role, and incorporated into County planning.