



**City of Santa Clarita**  
**Building & Safety Division**  
**23920 Valencia Boulevard, Ste. 140**  
**Santa Clarita, CA 91355**  
**(661) 255-4935**



**What to do if you experience a mudslide or serious erosion problem on your property:**

If you observe or are notified by a City Building Inspector that a serious or potentially serious condition exists with a slope or hillside on your property, you must take action to prevent further damage and reduce or eliminate the hazard(s).

Often, uncontrolled erosion can lead to major slope failures and significant property damage.

**The following protective steps can help you prevent further damage and reduce or eliminate the hazard to your property and adjacent properties:**

*If it is safe to do so,*

... clear out debris, mud and other obstructions from v-ditches, inlets and other drainage devices to help water flow freely and unobstructed to its intended destination in the storm drain system, the public way, or to a natural drainage course.

... protect exposed, unplanted slopes with visqueen plastic to protect the surface of the slope from becoming further eroded and saturated before the next rainstorm. Excessive amounts of water flowing onto exposed slope surfaces can lead to additional mudslides, landslides or slope failures which can be dangerous and create a hazard to adjacent properties. Plastic cover for slopes should have a minimum thickness of 6 mil. The sheets should be overlapped to prevent water from flowing underneath and should be secured with weighted sandbags to prevent it from slipping or being blown away.

...use sandbags to divert water away from slopes into approved drainage device courses and to prevent water, mud and debris from flowing into your house. Do not let water pond at the top of the slope. When placing sandbags on your property, make sure they are placed where they do not divert water into other properties that may be damaged as a result. Keep the flow of water in designed drainage areas or natural watercourses such as v-ditches, channels or creeks.

...contact a professional geologist to give you specific recommendations on how to repair and stabilize the slope or hillside. A geologist will also prepare for review by the City a detailed analysis on the relative hazard that may exist. If a City Geologist visits your property, it is only to make a preliminary safety assessment. The City Geologist can not conduct tests or a slope stability analysis for private properties; these must be done by a private geologist that the property owner is responsible for hiring.

...have slope repairs done by a qualified grading contractor. Plans for the repairs must be prepared by a licensed Civil Engineer and submitted to the City along with all of the geotechnical reports for review and approval prior to issuance of the repair permits.

...clean up mud and debris from the property but do not place it in the public right-of-way. The clean-up contractor should haul mud and debris off the property to an approved location. Temporary stock piles of dirt, mud and debris placed in the driveway must be covered during the rain to prevent mud and debris from flowing into the public right-of-way and storm drain system.

## **What to do to prevent mudslide and erosion problems in the future:**

The following preventive steps can help reduce or prevent some common erosion and mudslide problems:

*Unless it is recommended otherwise by your Geologist, Soils, or Civil Engineer,*

...keep slopes well planted with deep-rooted vegetative material. During the rainy season, the plant root systems help stabilize the slope surfaces and prevent slope failures, mudslides and excessive erosion that produce debris flows and extensive property damage. Native, drought-tolerant species should be used when the slope is not irrigated. Other plant species may be used if an adequate irrigation system is installed; however, to minimize water usage and guard against over watering of the slopes, drought tolerant or low water demand plants should be used. Contact your local Fire Department to ensure that your plant selection meets their requirements for low combustibility.

...Do not over water slopes. Excessive moisture levels in the slope can lead to instability and problems with adjacent retaining walls and other structures. To prevent inadequate drainage to slopes from broken irrigation lines, install adequate controls and shut-off valves to be sure no pressure lines are adjacent to the slope in case they are damaged.

...Never clear slopes of their vegetation, unless specific precautions have been taken to protect the slope during the rainy season by using protective devices such as temporary plastic visqueen, jute netting or other devices. Immediately, or as soon as practical, replant the slope with deep-rooted planting. Make sure that the irrigation system is well maintained and that you do not over water.

...Rebuild or repair broken or damaged drainage devices. If you notice a v-ditch or drainage inlet that needs maintenance or repairs by your Homeowner's Association (HOA) or Landscape Maintenance District (LMD), contact them immediately. If an HOA or LMD is not responsible for the maintenance

of the drainage device, it is the responsibility of the property owner. The City does not maintain or repair any slopes or drainage devices on private property, unless it is within an easement for that purpose and under the jurisdiction of the maintenance district.

...improve drainage from your property by ensuring that the yards slope away from the house and toward an approved drainage device or to the public way (the street). If water is ponding on portions of your property then you need to restore proper drainage by doing the necessary minor grading. Never drain property toward an adjacent property or onto a slope. If you will be moving a significant amount of dirt or diverting a drainage course, contact the City's Development Services Division prior to doing the work. You may need to obtain a grading permit before you start.

...never alter a natural drainage course. Grading and construction of walls, diverters, crossings, bridges, etc. is prohibited in riverbeds and all blue-line water courses such as the Santa Clara River, Sand Canyon Wash, Iron Canyon Wash, Placerita Creek, Newhall Creek, etc. even if they are on private property, unless permits are first obtained by the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers, California Department of Fish and Game, the Regional Water Quality Control Board, and the City of Santa Clarita. For further information on how to obtain a conditional permit, call the City's Development Services Division at (661) 255-4942.

## **Common questions about storm-related erosion and mudslide damage:**

**Q: Who is responsible for the repair and maintenance of slopes and drainage devices on private property?**

A: Slopes, hillsides and all drainage devices on private property are the responsibility of the property owner. Only those slopes that are specifically designated as part of a Landscape Maintenance District Drainage Benefit Assessment Area or Homeowner's Association are maintained by these entities. The City cannot maintain, repair or fund any improvements to private property.

**Q: What is the City’s role in the event of a serious mudslide or erosion problem?**

A: The City’s Building and Safety Division is responsible for conducting safety inspections on private property. These inspections are only intended to establish whether the property and the buildings are safe to occupy.

If a hazardous or potentially dangerous condition is observed, the Building Inspector may ask the occupants of a house to vacate the property until either a more detailed safety assessment is made or until the necessary repairs are made to eliminate the hazard.

The Building Inspector may also serve a Notice to a property owner to initiate repairs or maintenance to a slope in order to remove a condition that may lead to a future hazard. This Notice is usually issued when a slope failure or partial failure has already occurred and is likely to get worse, or when maintenance to critical drainage devices is found to be inadequate. This Notice is issued with the intent of making the responsible property owner aware of these conditions and to instruct him or her of their responsibility for the required work. Failure to initiate the necessary repairs or maintenance may cause the City to record a Notice with the County Recorder’s Office. The recorded notice alerts future buyers, lenders, and other parties investigating the property that there exists a substandard or unsafe condition on the property. In severe hazard cases, and in cases involving more than one property, the City may initiate Code Enforcement proceedings through the District Attorney’s Office to obtain compliance.

From time to time, such as during a storm or just prior to the rainy season, the City’s Building Inspectors may monitor areas with known slope and geology problems to look for new signs of slope damage or hazards. City inspectors will inform the affected parties of the situation and issue a Notice when appropriate. They can also give you some general information about the city’s position on enforcement and permitting

for the required repairs.

The City will also help you with information on how to get started, what repairs and maintenance needs to be done, and whether you need to contact a professional Engineer or Geologist for further help in planning any repairs.

**Q: Why are these conditions a hazard or a serious potential problem?**

A: Slope failures, mudslides and erosion can cause extensive property damage costing thousands of dollars to clean up and repair. They can also create a hazard to the life and safety of building occupants living adjacent to the affected slope. The property owner having responsibility for the slope may also be held responsible for damage caused to adjacent properties. For example, property owners not maintaining the drainage devices on their property, or creating conditions that induce slope failure thereby causing property damage to others, may be held responsible for the losses. Damage caused by an adjacent property is strictly a civil matter between property owners.

**Q: Who do I need to contact for further information?**

- A: **At the City:**
  - Grading permit information:
    - Development Services Division..... 255-4942
  - Inspections/building permit information:
    - Building and Safety..... 255-4935
  - Substandard property conditions:
    - Community Preservation..... 255-4983

**Private Professionals:**

Grading, earth moving and slope repair work:  
Contact a grading contractor. See the telephone directory listing for Construction, Contractors, Grading Contractors, or Slope Repair Specialists.

Landslides, mudslides and slope failures: call a private geologist. See the telephone directory listing for Geologists, Geotechnical Engineers, or Soils Engineering.

Design of slope repairs, drainage devices and grading plans: Contact a Civil Engineer. See the telephone directory listing for Civil Engineering

**City Assistance:**

City Building & Safety - Building Inspections & Building Permits .....	661-255-4935
Community Preservation – for other Municipal Code Violations .....	661-286-4076
Grading Requirements & Permits .....	661-255-4942
Grading Inspections Engineering/Geotechnical Requirements by Development Services Division .....	661-255-4942
Landscape Maintenance Districts .....	661-255-4910
NPDES - Storm Drain Problems.....	661-255-4330
or Hotline .....	661-222-7222
Field Services Street Maintenance/Repair/Flooding or Hazards in the public right-of-way .....	661-294-2520

**Federal Agencies:**

Department of Agriculture	
Rural Development .....	916-668-2000
Department of Veteran Affairs .....	800-827-0648
Disaster Information Helpline.....	800-525-0321
(TTY for hearing/speech-impaired) .....	800-660-8005
Farm Service Agency.....	916-498-5300
FEMA Fraud Detection.....	800-323-8603
FEMA Registration .....	800-462-9029
(TTY for hearing/speech-impaired) .....	800-462-7585
Food Safety Hotline – Meat & Poultry .....	800-535-4555
Housing and Urban Development Hotline.....	800-669-9777
Internal Revenue Service .....	800-829-1040
(TTY for hearing/speech-impaired) .....	800-829-4059
National Flood Insurance Program	
(Obtain policy/information) .....	800-427-4661
Natural Resources Conservation Service .....	916-757-8200
Policyholders/claims – National Flood Ins. Program .....	800-638-6620
Small Business Administration.....	800-488-5323
Social Security Administration .....	800-772-1213

**State Agencies:**

Attorney General’s Office.....	800-952-5225
Cal Trans Highway Information Net.....	800-427-7623
Contractors State License Board	
Disaster Hotline .....	800-962-1125
License Checkline .....	800-321-2752
Department of Consumer Affairs.....	800-952-5210
Department of Insurance .....	800-927-4357
Department of Social Services	
Individual and Family Grants.....	800-759-6807
(TTY for hearing/speech-impaired) .....	800-852-8349
Franchise Tax Board .....	800-852-5711
(TTY for hearing/speech-impaired) .....	800-822-6268
Statewide Flood Information .....	800-952-5530
Veterans Affairs (CALVET).....	800-952-5626

**Other Services Provided:**

American Red Cross	
Central-Inland .....	800-422-7935
Monterey-North .....	800-788-1736
South of Monterey .....	Call local chapter
Salvation Army .....	Call local office

**Sand Bags Are Available at the Following Locations:**

Fire Station #73: .....	24875 San Fernando Road
Fire Station #76: .....	27223 Henry Mayo Drive
Fire Station #107: .....	18239 Soledad Canyon Road (Sand Only)
Fire Station #111:.....	26826 Seco Canyon Road
Fire Station #123:.....	26321 North Sand Canyon Road

**Geo-Technical Engineers:**

AGI Geo-Technical, Inc.  
7247 Hayvenhurst Avenue, Unit A-2  
Van Nuys, CA 91406  
818-785-5244

R.T. Frankian & Associates  
1329 Scott Road  
Burbank, CA 91504  
818-531-1501

Geo Lab  
31119 Via Colinas, Suite 502  
Westlake Village, CA 91362  
818-889-2562

Geo Soils Consultants, Inc.  
6634 Valjean Avenue  
Van Nuys, CA 91406  
818-785-2158

Miller Geosciences, Inc.  
26831 Ruether Avenue  
Santa Clarita, CA 91351  
661-299-2206

Alan Seward Engineering Geology, Inc.  
27825 Smyth Drive  
Valencia, CA 91355  
661-294-0065

Southwest Geotechnical  
21704 Golden Triangle Road  
Santa Clarita, CA 91350-2617  
661-222-9544

PETRA Geotechnical Inc.  
21021 Soledad Canyon Road, Suite 509  
Santa Clarita, CA 91351-2336  
661-255-5790

**Civil Engineers:**

William Rose & Associates, Inc.  
25141 Rye Canyon Loop  
Santa Clarita, CA 91355  
661-295-3590

Sikand Engineering  
15230 Burbank Boulevard  
Van Nuys, CA 91411  
818-787-8550

Hunsaker & Associates  
26074 Avenue Hall, Suite 1  
Valencia, CA 91355  
661-294-2211

Rothman Engineering  
21704 Golden Triangle Road  
Santa Clarita, CA 91350-2617  
661-253-2011

CRC Enterprises  
27600 Bouquet Canyon Road, Suite 200  
Santa Clarita, CA 91350-3720  
661-297-2336

DRC, Inc.  
25115 Avenue Stanford, Suite B-118  
Santa Clarita, CA 91355  
661-295-3994