

HIGHLAND Community News

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State issues Hospital Surge Order for Southern California counties

By **HECTOR HERNANDEZ JR.**
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HIGHLAND COMMUNITY NEWS

With Southern California hospitals at 0 percent ICU capacity availability, the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) issued a hospital surge order on Tuesday, Jan. 5, requiring the postponement of non-essential and non-life-threatening surgeries to preserve services for the sickest patients at San Bernardino County hospitals.

The order affects counties with 10 percent or less ICU capacity under the Regional Stay at Home Order where the regional ICU capacity is at 0 percent. This includes San Bernardino County within the Southern California region, which has been at 0 percent ICU capacity since Dec. 18. Other Southern California counties affected include Riverside, Imperial, Los Angeles, Orange, San Diego and Ventura.

The order will remain in effect for at least four weeks and until rescinded.

The order also requires hospitals statewide to accept patient transfers from facilities under the crisis care guidelines, as long as the patients can be transferred safely.

The order was issued after state COVID-19 hospitalizations increased 17 percent in two weeks, while COVID-19 ICU admissions increased 21 percent in the same time.

“If we continue to see an alarming increase of COVID-19 patient admissions at hospitals statewide, some facilities may not be able to provide the critical and necessary care Californians need, whether those patients have COVID-19 or another medical condition,” said Dr. Tomás J. Aragón, CDPH director and state public health officer. “This order helps ensure that patients continue to receive appropriate medical services by better distributing available resources across the state to prevent overwhelming specific hospitals, counties and regions. As we continue to see the effects of holiday travel and gatherings in our emergency rooms and ICUs, we cannot underscore enough how critically important it is for Californians to stay home, wear masks and avoid getting together with people outside their immediate households to slow this alarming surge of hospitalizations.”

Following the report of the region’s 0 percent ICU capacity, St. Bernardine Medical Center issued the following statement on Monday, Jan. 11:

No healthcare provider ever wants to be in a situation where there are more patients than available resources. Since the start of the pandemic, we have done everything possible.

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County COVID-19 numbers

(as of Wednesday, Jan. 13)

Confirmed COVID-19 cases: 239,786
Resolved COVID-19 cases: 213,033
Total COVID-19 tests: 1,905,470
Positivity rate: 12.6 percent
Confirmed COVID-19 patient use of occupied hospital beds: 50.2 percent
Confirmed COVID-19 patient use of ICU beds: 57.3 percent
Total deaths: 1,552
Fatality rate: 0.65 percent
Vaccinations: 38,770

City council



HIGHLAND COMMUNITY NEWS PHOTO BY HECTOR HERNANDEZ JR.

Antique Ford Model As sitting parked among the homes of Highland’s Historic District give spectators a picture of early 20th century life, during the 2016 Citrus Harvest Festival.

Harvest festival canceled second year

By **HECTOR HERNANDEZ JR.**
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On Tuesday, Jan. 12, Highland City Council canceled the city’s annual Citrus Harvest Festival for the second year due to the coronavirus pandemic and state issued stay-at-home orders for San Bernardino County.

The 2021 Citrus Harvest Festival had been scheduled for March 27, but city staff reported that pandemic circumstances such as a resurgence of the virus, re-issuance of stay-at-home orders and continued statewide restrictions on large public gatherings are unlikely to change by March.

The annual event has drawn attendance of more than 6,000 to visit historic demonstrators, a car show, food and sales ven-

dors lining the streets of the Highland Historic District.

Councilman John Timmer stated that he felt it would be unrealistic to keep people properly spaced for coronavirus precautions during such a congested event and supported canceling this year’s event rather than attempt to reduce its scale in the hope that coronavirus restrictions might be relaxed by March.

The rest of the council agreed and voted unanimously to cancel the event in the hope that it could be held in 2022.

The 2021 event was canceled just two weeks prior to the festival date when the statewide prohibition of public gatherings was first issued. The event’s baking, coloring and other student contests had already been

held.

In other news, the city council declared three vacant seats on the Historic and Cultural Preservation Board with the expiration of terms for Colin Childs, Tony Mauricio and Patrick Sandford.

The board is made up of citizen volunteers appointed by the city council to make decisions on and provide the city council guidance on issues relating to historic preservation, the historic district and the planning of the annual Citrus Harvest Festival.

The city is now accepting applications for the four-year volunteer positions, which are due to the city clerk by Feb. 16.

For more information on applying for the board, visit cityofhighland.org.

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“You don’t have to see the whole staircase, just take the first step.”
– Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

As we turn the page on 2020, let us take the first step toward a hopeful and successful 2021.

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