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Fire Update Page

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Fire Update Page

ORANGE, Calif., Oct. 29, 2007 -- The Santiago fire burns on, to the far south and east of Chapman in the hill and canyon country. Smoke in the air eased over the weekend. If you are a student and have been affected by the fires, your professors will help in any way that they can in assisting you to make up any work missed. Students are also urged to call Chapman's Psychological Counseling office at 714-997-6778 if they need to talk to a counselor. Chapman faculty and staff members affected by the fires are urged to let their supervisors know so that work accommodations can be made. Here are some thoughts from Chapman's Psychological Counseling Services on how to reduce anxiety if you have been affected by the wildfires:

HELPING YOURSELF AND OTHERS DURING THE CALIFORNIA WILDFIRE CRISIS:

* **Reduce the input:** High levels of anxiety made worse by watching TV, listening to the radio, and reading news can be lowered by limiting your exposure to the sights and sounds of the disaster. Try watching television reports at the beginning of the hour when they summarize the news and do this only every few hours.

* **Focus on the positive:** Think about the courage and commitment of the responders firefighters, police, state officials, Red Cross and other voluntary agency staff, and thousands of spontaneous volunteers. The outpouring of support for those directly impacted has been tremendous.

* **Recognize your own feelings.** Knowing that some of the physical and emotional problems you might be experiencing are stress-related helps to reduce their effect on you. It also helps to know that this is a shared experience.

* **Talk to others about your feelings.** Understand that many others may share these feelings about what you are experiencing.

* **Accept help from others.** If you need help putting your feelings in perspective, talk to a mental health worker. In this kind of situation your coping skills may be stretched.

* **Deal with your anger and stress.** Anger may be a part of what you are feeling in response to this disaster. Exercise or strenuous physical activity is one way to deal with anger, and is great for relieving stress. Deep breathing or meditation can also defuse anger and release stress.

* **Reach out.** Offer to listen to others who might need to talk. If you feel so moved, offer to volunteer time, money or necessities to those who have lost homes. Your local Red Cross chapter can offer suggestions about what is most needed.

* **Do something you enjoy and stay connected.** Whenever possible, take a few minutes to

enjoy the people and nature around you.

ORANGE, Calif., Oct. 23, 2007 -- Chapman University remains open as scheduled today, Tuesday, Oct. 23. All departments are open and all classes are set to proceed as scheduled. Because some students and employees and their families have been impacted by the fires and evacuations, faculty and supervisors are continuing to provide flexibility to those who may need to be away from campus during this time. Students who need to miss class should contact their instructors when convenient, to arrange to make up for any missed assignments.

The nearest fire to the campus, the Santiago Canyon fire, is located at least 10 miles from Chapman, on the outskirts of Orange, in an area of canyons and hills. Its prevailing direction has been away from downtown Orange, where Chapman is located.

According to campus safety officials, it would be extremely rare for a fire of this kind, which is dependent on uncleared brush and the higher winds associated with canyons, to leap freeways and come into an urban area like downtown Orange. Chapman is surrounded by urban streets and well-manicured neighborhoods where there is no uncleared brush, so any fire that might occur downtown would much easier to control than the ones occurring in the hills and canyons.

Campus officials are in constant contact with the City of Orange fire and police departments to keep updated on the situation 24/7. In the highly unlikely event of fire on campus, an emergency preparedness plan is ready to launch if needed.

Up-to-the-minute updates on the Southern California fires, with a focus on the Santiago Canyon fire in the canyons of Irvine and Orange, can be found at www.ocregister.com.

Air quality today (Tuesday) has been variable, and there is still smoke and dust in the air. Individuals with compromised breathing or conditions such as asthma are urged to read the campus-wide air quality warning below, or to go to http://www.ocfa.org/_uploads/pdf/2007smokeinair.pdf.

Please continue to visit the Chapman University homepage at www.chapman.edu for any campus safety updates.

ORANGE, Calif., Oct. 22, 2007 Chapman University officials have been kept busy today reassuring worried parents and friends from around the nation that the university is safe from the wildfires that have ravaged areas of Southern California yesterday and today.

A thin pall of smoke and dust from the Santiago Canyon fire in Irvine has hung over the campus most of the day, and the university's Public Safety office has issued a warning about the potential dangers of smoke inhalation. (See below for that warning.) But campus officials reiterate that presently there is no danger of fire on or near Chapman's Orange campus, and that classes are set to proceed as scheduled.

The Santiago Canyon fire is the nearest, and its south of us, with the wind blowing south, so theres not much chance of it coming anywhere near the campus, said Randy Burba, chief of

Chapman Public Safety. He added that the campus police are in constant contact with the City of Orange fire and police departments, and that the situation is being monitored 24/7 so that students, faculty and staff will be fully informed in the unlikely event that conditions worsen.

In the highly unlikely event of an emergency situation connected with the fires, Chapman University is part of a countywide disaster preparedness response plan that includes evacuation plans, a partnership with City of Orange police and fire departments, and agreements with local Red Cross shelters to temporarily house evacuees. More than 50 Chapman employees are ready to serve as on-campus Emergency Operations Center volunteers, if needed, and are trained as zone captains and building coordinators to assist campus and local police and fire crews in emergency and evacuation proceedings.

Any campus-wide emergency notices will be posted and updated on the Chapman University homepage at www.chapman.edu.

**ORANGE CAMPUS WARNING ON SMOKE AND HEAT
(Issued by Chapman University Public Safety on 10/22/07)**

Smoke from the fire in the Irvine and City of Orange area may pose a health danger to individuals on the Orange campus, especially those in certain high-risk groups. In addition, high temperatures may also contribute to the health danger.

Among those who can be most directly affected by smoke exposure are individuals with heart and respiratory diseases, older adults, children and pregnant women. Air pollution levels from the fire can change rapidly, depending on weather conditions, so we recommend that individuals in these high-risk groups take precautions until the situation is over.

Residents, faculty and staff of the Orange campus affected by drifting smoke should limit outdoor activity and physical exertion. Other recommendations include:

Keep the windows and doors in your office or residence hall room closed, and use your air conditioner on the re-circulate mode, if available, to limit the intake of outdoor air and keep your area comfortable.

Contact Public Safety at 714-997-6763 or call 911 if you have symptoms such as chest pain, chest tightness, shortness of breath or severe fatigue.

Follow an asthma management plan, making sure those with asthma have at least a five-day supply of medication on hand.

The Santa Ana wind conditions contributing to the fire have also brought unseasonably warm temperatures. Recommendations to prevent heat-related illnesses include:

Avoid unnecessary sun exposure and unnecessary exertion.

Drink plenty of water; don't wait until you are thirsty.

Wear light, loose-fitting clothing.

Never leave children, elderly people or pets unattended in closed cars or other vehicles.

Check on those who are at high risk to make sure they are staying cool including seniors who live alone, people with heart or lung disease, and young children.