



**ANNOUNCEMENTS FOR  
ROSSMOOR EPO MEETING (JANUARY 8, 2024)  
“Coping with Post-Disaster Trauma for  
Residents, Neighbors and the Community” (Bill Coy)  
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**(1) Rossmoor Firewise USA Accreditation**

Rossmoor earned accreditation in late 2023 as an official Firewise USA community and we now begin our 3-year plan to initiate brawnier wildfire resiliency here in Rossmoor within our Mutuals. Tremendous *kudos* go to our new gifted and steadfast MOD Director Jeroen Wright and EPO proudly sits on his Firewise organizing committee and I have little doubt it will not take long for Rossmoor to receive one of our nation’s most distinguished awards as a nationally recognized “site of excellence” given our community’s unifying Foundation, Mutual and resident support. Firewise USA helps vulnerable communities like Rossmoor make landscaping decisions that markedly reduce our flying ember dangers (burning pieces of airborne wood or vegetation that can be carried all-too-quickly one mile within one minute in strong devil winds off Mount Diablo) landing within 5 feet of our units and other structures. When I became President four years ago, I placed 7 goals on my EPO vision board — as I leave my fourth year as your leader, 5 have been erased. Go, Team Rossmoor Firewise USA!

## **(2) Californian's Increased Vulnerability to Respiratory Viruses**

We Californians carry an increased vulnerability to three respiratory illnesses (a viral cocktail of Covid, the flu and RSV) that are presently plaguing our state this winter because we rightfully quarantined early in the pandemic dramatically lowering our natural immunity to these respiratory viruses. This higher vulnerability should galvanize Rossmoor seniors to be vaccinated for all three respiratory threats — check with your health care provider to ascertain if you can receive all three vaccines. Pharmacists are now being allowed to both prescribe and fill Paxlovid prescriptions (the remedial Covid-19 antiviral medication) that have been shown to markedly reduce hospitalizations for Covid victims 65 and up by 73% while reducing deaths in this prime age cohort by 79%. Currently American seniors account for 9 out of every 10 Covid deaths — national public health epidemiologists describe Covid currently as the “plague of the elderly”. 300 Americans die each day from Covid with the vast majority being seniors 65+ — this is 2 to 3 times higher than current senior flu deaths. Check with your health care provider within 5 days after Covid symptoms begin even if they are mild. Paxlovid is another self-defense arrow in our senior archery bow of secondary prevention!

## **(3) New Covid Bivalent Vaccine**

Sadly only 20% of eligible Californians have received the latest Covid bivalent vaccine — compared to our 75% vaccination rate during the height of the pandemic — mercy! Covid infections are present in wastewater samples across Contra Costa County and currently stand at the highest level since the first Omicron wave that struck in the Fall of 2022. CDC has issued several calls stating it is of “highest need” to get eligible Americans vaccinated against the latest Omicron mutation JN.1. 70 to 80% of all American adults carry at least one condition that places them at higher risk for long Covid with a worse outcome from a Covid infection. Epidemiologists now also recognize that flu infections can include “long flu” aftermaths which can happen up to 18 months following a flu infection. CDC encourages Americans taking vaccines to hydrate immediately afterwards.

#### **(4) Rossmoor Residents Need to Up our Masking Game!**

CDC is recommending Americans up their masking game! We should avoid the national epidemic of “mask fatigue” and should now be sporting KF 94, KN 95 or N 95 masks in all large public indoor spaces — we need to lose our paper and cloth masks and upgrade to “high-quality” masks that are more highly protective and tighter fitting — paper and cloth or textile masks no longer promise a sufficiently tight fit around the mouth and nose and they lack a nose wire that noticeably tightens the fit around the nose. Because of the increasing transmission power of the rapidly oncoming Omicron mutations (remember the sole job of the mutation is to survive to infect another day!), paper and cloth masks fail to protect us against droplets, splashes, sprays and scatter that can contain viral or bacterial particles. High-quality masks offer three layers of increased protection. CDC is also encouraging Americans to up their hand sanitizing game too: when you use sanitizer, rub your hands together until your hands are completely dry — this merges the sanitizer deeper into your hand surface cells and affords you greater protection against infection.

#### **(5) Changes in Global Climate Patterns**

July 2023 was the hottest month in 125,000 years of life on earth! The UN Secretary General of the United Nations calls this Mother Earth’s “global boiling point” — we would need to return to the Pleistocene Era 125,000 years ago when giant mastodons and sloths roamed North America for the same defining point. Early July saw the hottest week, hottest summer and hottest early fall ever recorded. Climategate’s Zeke Hausfather calls our record-breaking July “absolutely gobsmacking bananas”. Last July, Canada had close to 6500 wildfires still ablaze! Promising wetter and warmer winters, El Nino arrived in 2023 forcing out our cooler La Nina weather pattern. The World Meteorological Organization predicts the next 5 years on earth will be the hottest ever recorded. And the Rossmoor community should always remember that California bears the most variable climate in our Republic which increasingly positions us to suffer the worst disasters and weather emergencies in our Republic. And lastly, California’s most extreme drought in the past 126 years has officially been declared over (November 2023). Our historic three year drought placed 28% of our state under extreme drought conditions with all 58 counties under a drought emergency proclamation.

## **(6) Future EPO Events**

EPO tabled at GRF's New Resident event on January 16 — a momentous and timely opportunity to educate new residents in ways they can ready their households to remain safe and resilient following a major event or incident here in Rossmoor and beyond. Contra Costa County's Office of Emergency Services is offering a "Natural Hazards Mitigation Questionnaire" survey for people who live and work in our county to inform county leaders of best ways to update the county's Hazard Mitigation Plan. Go to [www.contracosta.ca.gov](http://www.contracosta.ca.gov) and answer this vital survey before January 30. EPO is also beginning to plan our 32nd birthday celebration with a large gala party in April that includes inviting the community and outside stakeholders to come salute our three decades of devoted emergency messaging service to our beloved vulnerable senior community. We will be bestowing EPO awards on neighborhood EPO teams, EPO operations chiefs and partners inside and outside Rossmoor who are integral to helping us meet our singular core mission. Please join us for this historic commendation that honors us and all our stakeholders — Save-the-Date email to follow soon. We have much to celebrate!