



25TH NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL

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Community briefed during Oak Ridge Fire town hall



Speaker Curley assured families that the Bee Hóldzil Fighting Scouts Events Center remains a safe shelter.

FORT DEFIANCE, Ariz. — Today, 25th Navajo Nation Council Delegates and incident command officials gathered at the Window Rock Veterans' Memorial Field House to provide updates to community members from St. Michaels, Hunters Point, Oak Springs, and nearby areas impacted by the Oak Ridge Fire.

"We are asking our communities to stay calm, trust reliable sources, and help one another," said Speaker Crystalyne Curley. "False information spreads fast, but we need to focus on facts and support for one another. Our firefighters, police, and emergency responders are doing everything they can to keep us safe. We must work together and lift each other."

Speaker Curley assured families that the Bee Hóldzil Fighting Scouts Events Center remains a safe shelter with food, water, power, and emotional support services. Today, she visited the center to observe operations, speak with evacuees, and help deliver donations.

Council Delegates Brenda Jesus, Dr. Andy Nez, and Vince R. James attended the meeting to show support. Delegates Jesus and Dr. Nez have been on the ground since the fire's onset, assisting families, coordinating resources, and providing real-time updates.

Rocky Gilbert, Operations Section Chief with the Bureau of Indian Affairs Wildland Fire Management, delivered a technical update on fire behavior. He reported the Oak Ridge Fire advanced more than four miles yesterday due to extreme wind, crossing key pipeline corridors and Highway 201.

Air tankers, helicopters, and a drone with infrared sensors have been deployed. About 350 firefighters are battling the blaze, with crews assigned to divisions managing containment zones. Gilbert warned that shifting winds continue to pose risks for ground crews.

Lieutenant Tyler Lynch of the Navajo Nation Police Department outlined current evacuation statuses using the national Ready-Set-Go framework. He confirmed that around 100 families have evacuated, with five households choosing to remain. Lynch said Community Health Representatives and officers are conducting wellness checks.

He also emphasized that real-time updates are available on the BIA and Navajo Department of Emergency Management Facebook pages. A 24/7 fire information call center is available at (505) 422-7382.

Speaker Curley urged residents to rely only on verified information from the Navajo Nation Council, Department of Emergency Management, Office of the President and Vice President, and the Navajo Police Department. She cautioned against misinformation and unofficial donation solicitations, clarifying the Nation does not have GoFundMe pages for donations.

John Truett, Incident Commander for Southwest Team Two, spoke about the team's strategy and priorities. With wind speeds increasing, Truett said the current focus is protecting homes and infrastructure until conditions allow for direct suppression. He also honored the 12th anniversary of the Yarnell Hill Fire and the 19 firefighters who died, noting the danger his team now faces.

The 25th Navajo Nation Council urges residents to check on neighbors—especially elders—stay aware of their surroundings, and avoid non-essential travel in affected areas. Officials stressed not taking photos or videos during emergencies to help keep roads clear for evacuees. Sightings of displaced wildlife or feral horses should be reported to authorities.

As of this update, the Navajo Nation government remains fully operational and committed to essential services. The Council continues to coordinate with incident command and expresses deep appreciation to all first responders, volunteers, and agencies supporting Diné families during this emergency.

Official information is posted regularly on the Navajo Department of Emergency Management's Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/nndem2020>

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