



25TH NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL

## 25TH NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Navajo Nation Council urges residents near Oak Ridge Fire to stay alert and adhere to emergency protocols**



**Council Delegate Dr. Andy Nez confers with BIA CIMT Liaison Amelia Taylor on evacuation procedures during a briefing held on June 30.**

**WINDOW ROCK, Ariz.** – As concerns grow in communities near the Oak Ridge Fire, the 25th Navajo Nation Council urges community members to remain vigilant and follow all emergency protocols and evacuation alerts.

On Sunday, June 29, residents of Hunter's Point, Oak Springs, and Saint Michaels living near the fire and the El Paso Natural Gas substation and pipeline were evacuated, while many others remain on "Set" status—an alert that urges residents to be prepared to evacuate.

"The Oak Ridge Fire is an emergency that is threatening our rangelands, public and residential structures, and livestock. We're receiving reports of residents choosing to stay in their homes even as evacuation alerts intensify. We ask all community members to not act in haste and to prioritize their safety given the growing fire," said Speaker Crystalyne Curley.

The Oak Ridge Fire Incident Command Post (ICP) held a briefing on Monday, June 30, where Incident Commander Lieutenant Tyler Lynch reported that the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) Complex Incident Management Team (CIMT) assumed management and response operations for the fire at 6 a.m.

BIA CIMT liaison Amelia Taylor reported that the Oak Ridge Fire has grown to 6,292 acres with zero containment.

While concerns about containment continue, Taylor emphasized that weather, wind direction, precipitation, and available ground resources all influence firefighting efforts. She noted that the CIMT's top priority is protecting human life in all action plans.

"This transition will strengthen and expand resources dedicated to the Oak Ridge Fire response. Implementing the CIMT also helps elevate the emergency's status on the National Priority list," Taylor said.

She added that the northern boundary of the fire appears stable. "The fire has progressed in a southeasterly direction. With a dry forecast, we must be prepared for shifting winds," she said.

Community Health Representatives are currently notifying high-risk clients near the fire about evacuation alerts. Lt. Lynch stated that a key ICP objective is to ensure evacuation alerts are widely disseminated. "We need to reach residents who have chosen to stay and may need convincing," he said.

The ICP has identified livestock relocation areas, including the Navajo Nation Fairgrounds in Window Rock.

The Oak Ridge Fire ICP will hold a public meeting at Window Rock High School on Monday, June 30 at 6 p.m. (MT) to review evacuation plans and safety alerts.

The Bee Hóldzil Fighting Scouts Events Center in Fort Defiance remains the designated evacuation shelter and donation site for families displaced by the fire. The Division of Diné Education in Window Rock is providing designated shelter space for evacuees with pets; however, pet owners must be present to care for their animals.

The Oak Ridge Fire Incident Command Post has also established a public call center for updates and inquiries. For more information, please contact the ICP at (505) 422-7382.

Official updates will be posted on the Navajo Department of Emergency Management's Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/nndem2020>.

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