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**MAYOR LONDON BREED ISSUES EXECUTIVE DIRECTIVE
ON SAN FRANCISCO'S RESPONSE TO AIR QUALITY
EMERGENCIES**

With climate-related emergencies expected to worsen, Mayor Breed directs City departments to study response to the poor air quality resulting from the Camp Fire and prepare the City for future air quality emergencies

San Francisco, CA— Mayor London N. Breed today issued an Executive Directive to strengthen San Francisco's response to air quality emergencies. The Directive is aimed at learning from the City's response to the recent poor air quality following the Camp Fire in Butte County and preparing for similar situations when they occur in the future.

As the air quality began to worsen in November from the Camp Fire, the City took a number of steps to inform the public and respond. Daily alerts were sent through AlertSF, San Francisco's emergency text message system, which were supported by outreach through traditional media (both in English and other languages) and social media. Multilingual information was delivered to the general public through City agencies, social media, elected officials, and community based organizations to encourage people to stay indoors and provide specific advice on activities based on the corresponding air quality level. SF72.org, the City's emergency preparedness website, provided a map of all public "air respite centers."

The City also took proactive measures to provide support to vulnerable members of the community. Additional shelter mats were added for unsheltered residents, and masks and bottles of waters were distributed by the City's homeless outreach teams. Masks were also distributed by Department of Public Health (DPH) to City employees who work outside so they could continue to serve the public. The Human Services Agency (HSA) established early and consistent contact with their most vulnerable clients and provided safety tips and guidance. Department of Emergency Management (DEM), DPH, and HSA coordinated messaging to the public to reach out to family members, neighbors, and friends, especially those who are home-bound or who have health conditions.

The City's response to the air quality emergency was evident in a number of outcomes, including no impact on 9-1-1 call volume, no impact to the emergency medical services system, no increase in emergency room visits, and no significant, sustained increase in asthma-related cases. San Francisco accomplished this while participating in mutual aid to the Camp Fire, with 67 staff members and 9 deployed fire engines providing assistance. This included personnel from the Fire



Department that helped to fight the fires and from DEM who helped run emergency operations for the town of Paradise and provided relief for the city's staff, many of whom lost their homes.

"The tragic Camp Fire was yet another reminder that we need continue to adapt our City's plans to prepare for climate-related emergencies," said Mayor Breed. "During the prolonged air quality emergency last month, the City took a number of important steps to help residents, including distributing masks to homeless individuals, opening emergency shelters and respite centers, and making public transit free for riders. It is important that we learn from this emergency and take the necessary steps to prepare for similar events in the future."

Mayor Breed has instructed DPH and DEM to lead the revision of the City's air quality emergency plan, which was revised following the 2017 North Bay Fire, to prepare San Francisco for future sustained poor air quality situations. The plan will identify specific strategies to reach vulnerable populations and recommend proactive actions that can be taken within existing community networks. It will also provide recommendations on how to protect public health and include advice on the distribution protocol and use of masks.

Furthermore, the Directive instructs DEM to chair a Task Force, which will also include DPH and the City Administrator's Office, to establish measures of effectiveness for public respite facilities for weather-related events. DEM will establish a roster of civilian, multi-agency personnel of various backgrounds that can be rapidly deployed to aid areas facing disasters to mitigate against eventual widespread impacts affecting San Francisco and also support recovery efforts. Finally, DEM and DPH will work with the Bay Area Air Quality Management District and other Bay Area cities and counties to develop consistent, multilingual educational messaging that is accessible for people with disabilities.

"The smoky, unhealthy air that San Francisco endured affected each and every one of us in the San Francisco Bay Area," said Mary Ellen Carroll, Executive Director of the Department of Emergency Management. "Of utmost importance was to keep the entire community informed about how to protect one's health. I am very grateful to everyone for heeding public health official's directions, which was evidenced in our 9-1-1 call volume holding steady, and our overall Emergency Medical Systems not being overburdened."

"Because of San Francisco's temperate climate and history of excellent air quality, our bodies and buildings are not adapted to withstand sustained elevated temperatures or poor air quality," said Dr. Tomás Aragón, Health Officer for the City & County of San Francisco. San Francisco is a national leader in climate change planning, now, by coordinating across the city we can improve climate change response that protects health, especially of our most vulnerable communities."

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