CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION

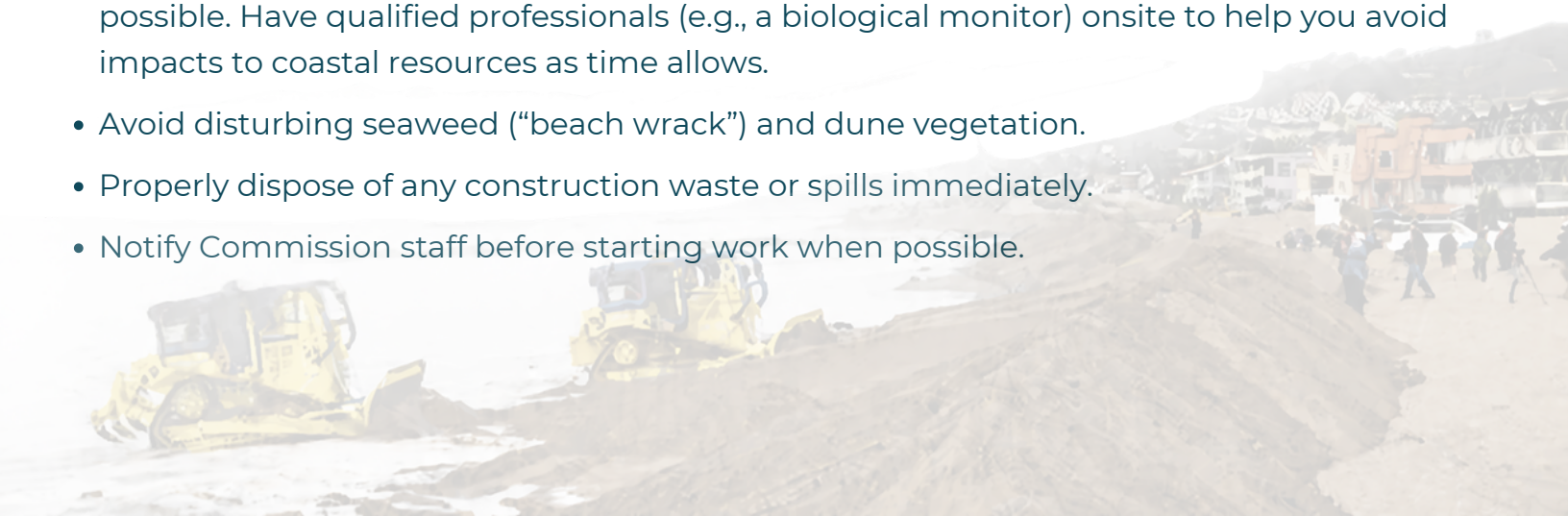
SAND BERM BEST PRACTICES

Executive Order N-14-26 (signed October 27, 2026) exempts the creation of temporary sand berms from California Coastal Act permitting requirements for this 2026-27 El Niño season. The exemption applies to sand berms that use existing sand from the surrounding beach area. Berms made from materials other than sand or that import new sand from different beaches that are not contiguous would not qualify for this exemption, but may qualify for the expedited permit or emergency permit process provided by the Governor's September 21, 2026 emergency proclamation.

Best practices are an important part of any storm preparation and response project, regardless of permitting requirements because they help protect coastal resources, public access, and our coastal economy during construction. See below for the best practices that the Coastal Commission recommends for sand berm projects, to the extent they are feasible and as time and circumstances allow. **Reach out to your nearest Coastal Commission office to confirm whether you qualify for this exemption and for additional guidance on applying these best practices to your specific project.**

Best Practices During Emergency Circumstances:

- Obtain authorizations or permits from other agencies as applicable (e.g., State Lands Commission, local city or county).
- Consult with relevant professionals (e.g., licensed engineers) to oversee construction and ensure that work is limited to the minimum necessary to address the emergency.
- Ensure compliance with any existing property or permit restrictions, including any conditions of approval of any existing Coastal Development Permits that apply to the site.
- Avoid working in the water if possible. Do not place or store any construction material or waste where it may enter coastal waters or natural habitats.
- Avoid impacts to coastal resources (including beach access, biological resources such as active bird nests and active grunion spawning areas, and cultural resources) to the extent possible. Have qualified professionals (e.g., a biological monitor) onsite to help you avoid impacts to coastal resources as time allows.
- Avoid disturbing seaweed ("beach wrack") and dune vegetation.
- Properly dispose of any construction waste or spills immediately.
- Notify Commission staff before starting work when possible.



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SAND BERM BEST PRACTICES

Best Practices During Emergency Circumstances (continued):

- After work is completed, contact Commission staff to confirm any unavoidable coastal resource impacts.
- Restore the construction area around the sand berm to pre-construction conditions.
- Remove the sand berm when it is no longer needed to mitigate the impacts of this El Niño season (~May 1, 2027 or later as needed).

Special Considerations for Mechanized Equipment:

- Keep activities contained within defined construction, staging, and storage areas. Use fencing to separate construction areas from public recreational use areas where feasible.
- Have an oil spill response plan in place. Avoid refueling and washing mechanized equipment within 100 feet of coastal waters.
- Clean construction equipment prior to entering the work site to minimize introduction of non-native or invasive species.



All exempt sand berms should be removed after the 2026-27 El Niño season.

Questions? Contact your nearest Commission district office at:
www.coastal.ca.gov/contact/

Learn more about El Niño storm preparation & response at:
https://www.coastal.ca.gov/climate/extreme-weather/el-nino/