2025 Los Angeles Wildfires

In early January 2025, Los Angeles County faced one of its most intense wildfire outbreaks in recent years. Hurricane-force winds and prolonged drought conditions fueled multiple ignition points across the Palisades, Topanga, and Malibu areas, forcing rapid evacuations and challenging coordination among dozens of responding agencies.

Following previous wildfires, Los Angeles County's Office of Emergency Management (LACOEM) adopted Genasys Protect for zone-based communications, to manage evacuations, and to keep residents informed and safe with multi-channel alerts and communications where speed and clarity are paramount.

Problem

The **2025 Los Angeles wildfires** presented an enormous challenge for emergency managers and first responders as multiple fires ignited, **burning over 37,000 acres and destroying 16,000 structures** across steep terrain and densely populated areas. With high winds pushing flames in unpredictable directions across the city, agencies had to make rapid, high-stakes decisions regarding mass evacuations, as well as personnel and resource deployment.

Los Angeles County's vast geography and population density compounded the complexity. Multiple jurisdictions, including fire departments, the Sheriff's Department, Cal Fire, local law enforcement, the California National Guard, and out-of-state agencies and fire teams, were working simultaneously, each responsible for protecting communities with different risk profiles and communication infrastructures. This kind of large-scale, cross-agency coordination is rare, making coordination harder as agencies navigate unfamiliar command structures and differing protocols. The need for real-time coordination and precise, zone-based evacuation planning was critical.

Public safety leaders also faced a growing demand for accurate, actionable public information. Media and the public needed clarity on when to evacuate, which routes were safe, and how conditions were changing. Traditional broadcast alerts and social media updates were often delayed or inconsistent, creating confusion at a time when every minute mattered.

Solution

Building on its earlier use of Genasys Protect for communication zones, LACOEM expanded its deployment in 2024 to include countywide alerting and multi-channel communication, adopting a fully unified Protective Communications system. To help the various mutual aid partners rapidly address the communication demands and assist the public in knowing when and how to evacuate, LACOEM utilized Genasys Protect. With this powerful communication solution, they were able to:

Define and visualize neighborhoods and zones at the most risk, on a shared map, enabling interagency coordination and real-time updates between fire, law enforcement, and emergency operations centers.

Broadcast geo-targeted SMS, voice, email, and IPAWS notifications that overcame delays and limitations of traditional channels, allowing responders to reach residents with life-saving information quickly and accurately.

Share live evacuation maps and verified instructions directly from agencies through the public-facing app and website, giving residents, visitors, and media a single source of truth, ensuring consistent, trusted communication and reducing unnecessary 911 calls.

Together, these integrated tools gave responders a common operating picture and presented the public with an avenue for understanding when and where to act.

When this emergency struck, our teams could focus on coordinating the response with Genasys Protect to make it easier to reach people with clear directions and information."

– 2025 LA Fire First Responder

Results

More than 250,000 residents received timely, geo-targeted evacuation alerts, enabling fast, orderly evacuations and minimizing confusion across affected zones. In an unprecedented and comprehensive mutual aid effort fueled by emergency teams from across the western United States, the January 2025 Los Angeles wildfire response demonstrated both the resilience and adaptability of modern emergency communications.

Coordination and resource allocation between fire, law enforcement, and emergency management for **14,000 personnel from 10 states and 3 countries** improved dramatically because agencies shared a common operating picture through Genasys Protect.

Additionally, **public engagement reached unprecedented levels**. Hundreds of thousands of residents and visitors used the Genasys Protect app with millions more using protect.genasys.com to stay up to date with vital, life-saving information. Over 400 zone status changes, critical to the safety of residents and first responders, were sent in the first two weeks alone.

While the event taxed infrastructure systems under extreme conditions, it also validated the County's investment in Genasys Protect. **Post-incident evaluations highlighted significant improvements in interagency coordination, message accuracy, and public confidence** compared to previous wildfire seasons.

The lessons learned in Los Angeles, especially around redundancy, message clarity, and continuous training, are now shaping best practices nationwide for wildfire communications and other all-hazards events.

Los Angeles 2025 Wildfires: By the Numbers

200,000
People were displaced[1]

*1. https://www.usgs.gov/media/before-after/greater-los-angeles-wildfires-january-2025

$61.2B
Approximate amount in damages[2]

*2. https://www.foxla.com/news/billion-dollar-weather-disasters-2025-data

57,000
Acres of land burned[3]

*3. https://www.frontlinewildfire.com/wildfire-news-and-resources/impact-of-la-fires/