



## **LeadingAge California Lauds Members' Efforts During Natural Disaster**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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SACRAMENTO, CA – LeadingAge California extends its deepest condolences to all who were affected by the devastating loss of life and property during the recent wildfires in the Napa Wine Country. Throughout the crisis, we were inspired by the responsiveness of LeadingAge California members who leapt into action to assist fellow providers in a time of great need. Throughout the crisis, more than 20 local LeadingAge California members offered space to displaced residents.

“Our members are resilient and giving,” said Jeannee Parker Martin, LeadingAge California’s President & CEO. “They gave of their time and resources by volunteering to assist, providing beds for the evacuees and those who lost homes, contributing goods and services, and by donating to our disaster relief fund.”

The efforts of members can be described only as heroic. Below are two examples:

Thanks to the seasoned and decisive leadership of Sharon York, Executive Director of Spring Lake Village, nearly 500 seniors were safely evacuated to sister and partner communities or friends and family. When the evacuation order came in the pre-dawn hours, leadership on the scene deputized those who were available, including dining staff - and even an elevator repair man - to canvas the apartments to insure all were evacuated. The communications effort began shortly after with the community’s status updated on their website as early as 7:00 AM. Frequent Facebook Live briefings have kept everyone apprised of the situation. The 77 residents who temporarily relocated to St. Paul’s Towers talk about the fellowship that has developed with the residents who accepted the evacuees into every available corner of the community.

“I am proud of our whole team for coming together to serve our residents during this stressful and uncertain time. As a system, we asked for help and support from each of our communities and they all demonstrated tremendous leadership and worked through all the details. The residents have been patient, the staff has been diligent, and the response team in Santa Rosa has been impressive. Our focus now is on the staff who have lost their homes and need our support,” offered Kevin Gerber, President and CEO of Episcopal Senior Communities.

In an affordable housing community in Santa Rosa operated by PEP Housing, a resident manager lost her mother in the fires that ripped through her community. While still not knowing the status of her mother, this devoted manager continued to assist residents with their evacuation. The staff at PEP Housing showed their resiliency and dedication by continuing to support their community by setting up emergency housing because shelters are full, feeding animals, taking in evacuees into their homes, and setting up a free store.

“The community support has been overwhelming,” said Mary Stompe, Executive Director of PEP Housing. “Everywhere you go, restaurants are offering free meals to evacuees, haircuts, clothing, everything.”

Our hearts are with the compassionate members in the community who demonstrate the nonprofit spirit every day and have answered the call of their community when it mattered most. Thank you.

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**About LeadingAge California**

LeadingAge California is the state’s leading advocate for quality, nonprofit senior living and care. The public-interest association’s more than 400 members across the state include providers of affordable senior housing, residential care facilities for the elderly (assisted living), continuing care retirement communities and skilled nursing care and home and community-based services. LeadingAge California members serve the needs of approximately 80,000 seniors. For more information, visit [www.leadingageca.org](http://www.leadingageca.org).