Celebrate El Cerrito at the worldOne 4th of July Festival!

**CELEBRATE INDEPENDENCE DAY** and diversity in El Cerrito on July 3 and 4 with main stage entertainment, kids’ rides, traditional carnival games, craft shopping, community information, a pop-up City Hall, and delicious food. Free admission to the Festival!

**JULY 3 PROGRAM**
The celebration begins Wednesday, July 3, in Cerrito Vista Park from 4 to 7 p.m. Bring a picnic dinner or buy delicious food at the park from food truck vendors Canasta Kitchen, Curbside Kitchen, and Kiane’s Shave Ice. Enjoy free performances by Circus Imagination, Magical Nathaniel, and a concert featuring musicians Aguacero (Bomba + Plena/Puerto Rico) and Bululú (a tropico-Venezuelan band).

**JULY 4 PROGRAM**
Main stage performers on July 4 will include: Gamelan Sekar Jaya (Music + Dance of Bali), Moira Smiley (Original + Ancient Folk), Benny Bock (Jazz), BrasArte (Music + Dance of Bahia, Brazil), Luv Phenomena (Universoulve Hip-Hop), and Afrolicious (Dance Party)! The incomparable Circus Imagination will return to delight children of all ages. Join in a Sosakete Round Dance and swirl your hips with Hoopin’ Heather.

**THINGS TO KNOW**
- Street parking around Cerrito Vista Park is limited.
- Portions of Pomona Avenue and Moeser Lane will be closed.
- Free valet bike parking will be available.
- Bring a picnic blanket or a low-back folding chair.
- Be sure to visit the food court in the Contra Costa Civic Theater parking lot and all the vendors along Pomona Avenue.
- Free shuttle for persons with disabilities and their attendants. Park at the El Cerrito Plaza BART Station to catch a ride to and from Cerrito Vista Park.
- Purchase a wristband to give your child unlimited rides, games, and bounce house entries.
- No dogs allowed at the event except service dogs and dogs in carriers.
- Games and rides will close at 6 p.m. and music ends at 6:30 p.m.

The annual 4th of July Festival is produced by the City of El Cerrito and worldOne Radio, KECG-88.1 FM, and made possible by our generous sponsors. Special thanks to our 2018 sponsors: Honda of El Cerrito, Marin Clean Energy (MCE), The Mechanics Bank, East Bay Sanitary, Sierra Nevada Brewing Co., Maria-Tina Vision, WCCUSD, The Whole 9, RecycleMore, Olivero Plumbing, Safeway Bottling Company, Super 8, Children’s Dentistry (Nicholas Ching, DDS, Inc.), Gary Hale, DDS, East Bay Tottenham Hotspurs, Plaza Auto, Ransome Company, Two Brothers Pool & Spa, and other local businesses and individuals. For more information, go to el-cerrito.org/July4.
Weekends, June 14 through July 21

Once on This Island
Contra Costa Civic Theatre, 951 Pomona Ave.
Fridays and Saturdays, 8 p.m.
A modern retelling of The Little Mermaid, told in joy-filled song and dance, takes the beloved fairy tale to the Caribbean. This is the story of a peasant girl who falls in love with a wealthy boy, while the gods who rule the island make a bet with each other over which is stronger, death or love. Tickets and information for the Contra Costa Civic Theatre production at ccct.org/.

Saturday, June 15
Safe Swim Event
El Cerrito Swim Center, 7007 Moeser Lane
10 a.m.–3 p.m.
Kick off the summer with this annual free event featuring a 25-minute swim lesson and a 3-hour rECreation Swim. Pre-registration is required for lessons. The event also includes staff safety training in real life situations, including rescue drills and scenarios throughout the day to ensure lifeguards and swim instructors are in peak shape for the summer season. For more information, call 559-7015.

Wednesday & Thursday, July 3–4
4th of July Festival
Cerrito Vista Park, 950 Pomona Ave.
July 3: Entertainment, 4–7 p.m.
July 4: Entertainment, rides, games, and food, 10 a.m.–6 p.m.
Music until 6:30 p.m.
Details online at elcerrito.org/July4 and on page 1.

Thursday, July 4
4th of July Holiday
All City offices will be closed.

Sunday, July 21
Summer Splash Pool Party
El Cerrito Swim Center, 7007 Moeser Lane
11 a.m.–4 p.m.
This fun event is an opportunity for the entire community to visit the El Cerrito Swim Center free of charge. Bring your family to enjoy swimming, games, and more! Details on page 7.

Saturday, July 27
Three Parks Stroll
Meet at the bottom of Poinsett Park, corner of Poinsett and Harris Aves.
11 a.m.–1 p.m.
Join the El Cerrito Trail Trekkers for a pleasant, at-times steep, 90-minute to two-hour stroll. The route goes through two of our City’s favorite parks and one park in Richmond. See fine homes, creeks, rock outcrops, public art, and other wonders. For more information, call Dave Weinstein at 524-1737.

Tuesday, August 6
National Night Out
El Cerrito Neighborhoods, evening
Host a block party in your neighborhood and learn more about safety and crime prevention. El Cerrito’s National Night Out provides a unique opportunity for residents to connect with their neighborhood police and with each other. To host an event, go online to elcerrito.org/NNO or call Sergeant David Wentworth at 215-4446.

Saturdays: August 17 & September 21
El Cerrito Green Teams Cleanup
Various El Cerrito locations, details to be determined
Join one of the El Cerrito Green Teams for their upcoming clean-up events throughout the City. For information, go online to elcerrito.org/NewGreen, call the Operations and Environmental Services Division at 215-4350, or email green@ci.cerrito.ca.us.

Saturday, August 24 through Friday, August 30
El Cerrito Compost Give-Away
Recycling Center, 7501 Schmidt Lane
Get free compost made from your yard waste and food scraps. El Cerrito residents and businesses only. Bring proof of residency and containers. Limit of five cubic feet per household. Available while supply lasts. A shovel will be available; however, you may want to bring one.

Saturday, September 14
National Drive Electric Week
Civic Center Park, 1940 Allston Way, Berkeley
11 a.m.–3 p.m.
National Drive Electric Week is September 14–22. Join the City of El Cerrito’s Environmental Quality Committee in supporting a sustainable energy event in Berkeley. Details are still being determined, and a City of Richmond event is also being planned. Stay tuned for more information at driveelectricweek.org/events.php.

Wednesday, September 25 through Wednesday, October 30
Community Police Academy
El Cerrito Police Department, 10900 San Pablo Ave.
Six Wednesday evening sessions, plus two Saturday sessions
This six-week program is designed to help community members understand the El Cerrito Police Department’s functions, capabilities, and limitations. Includes two field trips. To apply or for more information, call 215-4446, or go to elcerrito.org/CommunityAcademy.

Saturday, October 5
Fall Citywide Garage Sale
Locations throughout El Cerrito
Register by September 9 at 6 p.m.
Sale on October 5, 9 a.m.–3 p.m.
Keep waste out of the landfill, discover your community, and find great deals. To host a sale, complete the Registration Form by September 9. Visit elcerrito.org/GarageSale to register or for more information.
Four Steps to Safety: Preparing for Disaster

IF CATASTROPHE WERE to strike tomorrow, what would you do?

El Cerrito residents know that a natural disaster or large-scale emergency is always a possibility. Given recent fires, our proximity to a major tectonic fault, and man-made disasters such as the 2010 San Bruno Pipeline explosion in our area, our community knows the importance of and necessity for emergency readiness. This has led the City to promote the Community Warning System and CERT program. We want everyone to have a plan before the next disaster strikes.

To start your plan, follow these four key steps to ensure that you and your family will be ready in an emergency. When you have a plan, you have peace of mind.

1. PREPARE TO STAY AWARE: SIGN UP FOR COMMUNICATIONS AND ALERTS

In the event of an emergency, early warning is a key element of survival. The sooner you know, the sooner you can take appropriate action to increase your safety. We encourage all residents to sign up for Nixle alerts in the Contra Costa area. Text your zip code to 888-777 for mobile alerts related to natural disasters, road closures, police activity, and more.

The Contra Costa County Community Warning System (CWS) is another important information service. CWS will alert residents and businesses within our City that are under threat in an emergency. A CWS message includes basic information about the incident and specific protective actions that you can take to protect your life and health, such as sheltering in place, lockdown, evacuation, and avoiding the area. This is an OPT-IN service. You must register your phone and emails with the system to receive the alerts. To register, go to cwsalerts.com/registration, click the red button for English or the purple button for Spanish and follow the easy instructions.

In addition, the National Weather Service issues Red Flag Warnings. These warnings alert residents and fire agencies of critical weather conditions that could lead to increases in wildfire activity within 24 hours. On Red Flag days, the Fire Department will raise the flags at all fire stations, and post information on their websites and on Nixle. For specific do’s and don’ts on Red Flag days, go to diablofiresafe.org/pdf/redflag.pdf.

2. PLAN AHEAD WITH FAMILY

According to El Cerrito Battalion Chief and Fire Marshal David Gibson, survival starts in the home. It’s important to remember that disasters can strike at any time. Having an emergency plan in place with your family will help everyone remain calm and could mean the difference between recovery and catastrophe. The City offers a template to help you prepare your family communication plan. You can access it at el-cerrito.org/FamilyCommunicationPlan.

The template outlines the steps a family needs to take to prepare for an emergency. These include a shared, written list of important contact information, identifying emergency meeting places, and a dress rehearsal to practice the plan together.

Communication is a vital part of being prepared. It is important to let neighbors and extended family know what you will do to keep your family safe and encourage them to do the same. Building a proactive network may help you and allow you to help others in need. It’s best to over-communicate, knowing that people may be stressed during an emergency and only retain part of what they have learned.

Emergency kits are another crucial component of a complete plan. You will need both a Go-Bag and a home kit. The Go-Bag is a backpack (or a small suitcase on wheels) that you can take if you must run out the door. Both kits should include:

- Basic electronics, including an extra charger and a portable battery pack; a long-life LED flashlight; a hand-crank or battery-operated NOAA weather radio; and extra batteries
- Personal needs, such as toiletries and backup eyeglasses
- Other emergency items, like a first-aid kit, a multipurpose tool, and a whistle to signal for help
- Clothing for three days in layers you can add or remove
- Medications for 3 days
- Important paperwork in a zip-top, waterproof bag
- Food and drink, including bottled water and small but filling food items such as energy bars
- Cash, including small bills and a roll of quarters

A red warning flag flying to indicate fire danger
If you don’t want to make your own, you can purchase a Go-Bag through the Red Cross at redcross.org/store. In addition to all of the above elements, a home kit should include water for three days—about one gallon of water per person (and per pet!) per day—and food for the same amount of time. Other essential items for a home emergency kit include a dust mask to help filter contaminated air; plastic sheeting and duct tape to shelter-in-place; moist towelettes, garbage bags, and plastic ties for personal sanitation; and a wrench or pliers to turn off utilities.

For more information about emergency kits, see the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) recommendations at ready.gov/build-a-kit.

3. KNOW YOUR EXIT ROUTE

Another key element in planning for the unexpected is to know the best exit route from your home, place of work, and other areas you visit frequently. The City advises residents to keep a local map in their home and car with routes highlighted for easy identification. Remember, in an emergency, main roads are likely to be gridlocked or may be damaged, so become familiar with multiple routes and connecting streets. Main exit routes in El Cerrito include Arlington Boulevard, Richmond Street, Moeser Lane, Potrero Avenue, Ashbury Avenue, and San Pablo Avenue, with arterials to those streets. Go online to el-cerrito.org/Maps to view a map of City streets.

4. PLAN FOR EVERYTHING YOU WILL NEED AFTER THE EVENT

Should a natural or man-made disaster occur, you may be without emergency assistance for several days, perhaps longer. Because of this possibility, the City of El Cerrito Fire Department’s Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) offers free hands-on training to residents in disaster first aid, disaster preparedness, basic firefighting, light search and rescue, damage assessment, and how to turn off utilities. This training provides participants with the knowledge and ability to be self-sufficient for up to 72 hours and beyond in the event of a major disaster and teaches skills that could prove crucial in an emergency. For more information and to register for CERT classes, please contact Battalion Chief Joe Grupalo online at el-cerrito.org/CERT or by calling 215-4450.

Though it is difficult to think about a disaster happening here, not being prepared could make a disaster much worse. We hope these resources will help to keep you safe. For more information, please visit el-cerrito.org/AdditionalResources.

4. The City of El Cerrito • News & Views

Annual Fire Inspections

Annual Fire Inspections

IT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY of a property owner, or anyone who manages a building, to reduce fire hazards on their property (California Public Resources Code 4291). The El Cerrito Fire Department conducts annual fire hazard inspections throughout El Cerrito to help property owners make their properties fire-safe.

The department has developed a set of guidelines that conform to state law and National Fire Protection Association standards to address the most common problems found on private property in El Cerrito. More information is available on the City’s website at el-cerrito.org/VegetationManagement.

CERT
COMMUNITY EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAM

- Disaster Psychology
- Terrorism Awareness

Learn what you can do to help at a CERT training course. The next session will start on Thursday, August 29, 6:30 to 9 p.m., at the Arlington Club House, 1120 Arlington Boulevard, with sessions on following Thursdays for 8 weeks. The final simulation/drill training will be on Saturday, October 26. Registration is required and space is limited. Sign up at el-cerrito.org/CERT.
Be Counted in the 2020 Census

The US Constitution requires that the US Census Bureau take a count, or census, of America’s population every ten years. This information can be critical for community services. Each year, the federal government distributes more than $675 billion to states and communities, divided according to Census Bureau data.

The last census, held in 2010, counted 23,549 people in El Cerrito, a 1.6 percent increase over the 2000 count of 23,171.

The 2020 US Census is less than a year away. Federal and state governments, as well as community organizations across the country, are already gearing up for the new count. The Census Bureau will use data that the public has already provided to build an accurate address list and automate its field operations—all while keeping your information confidential and safe.

In 2020, new technology will make it easier than ever to respond to the census. For the first time, you will be able to respond online, as well as by mail or phone.

In March 2020, the Census Bureau will mail an invitation to participate to nearly every household in the country. Forms will be available in English, Spanish, Mandarin, Cantonese, and Japanese, among other languages. The confidential data collected will be used solely for statistical purposes.

Changes in Recycling Markets Impact El Cerrito Recycling

In 2018, China changed its policy, limiting the import of recyclable materials, particularly mixed paper and scrap plastic. This has created unprecedented disruptions in international recycling markets, especially for curbside programs in the United States, and diverted even more recycled materials to the neighboring countries of Vietnam and India. It is causing gluts there, as well, resulting in even more limits on US recycled materials after India followed China in banning international loads of scrap plastic.

These international changes have created pressure on US recycling programs to find new markets for curbside recyclables and improve the quality of those recyclables. Consequently, while revenues from sales have declined, the costs of processing curbside materials have risen sharply.

Recycling market disruptions are continuing into this year. El Cerrito has been somewhat insulated from the worst effects of these market changes, though waste rates have increased and revenue from recycling did decrease in 2018. The City recently received notice from its recycling processor that they will start charging a fee to cover the costs of processing recyclables from our curbside program. This is becoming the norm for recycling programs throughout the United States.

As of this writing, City staff are investigating all available options and alternatives to maintain relatively stable rates for customers, while ensuring recycling materials are diverted from landfills. Although Integrated Waste Management rates for carting waste may increase, our first priority is to insure that the recycling program will continue to operate and offer the same levels of service.

Recyclables retain their greatest value when they are Empty, Clean, and Dry, as well as properly sorted. To ensure that recyclables continue to bring us revenue and can be recycled into new products, do your part by cleaning the items before placing them in your gray bin.

Alternatively, you could take your sorted recycling materials directly to the Recycling + Environmental Resource Center. This cost-saving option provides another way for people to support our recycling programs.

For more information, contact the City’s Operations + Environmental Services Division at 215-4350 or email the division at green@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us.

Empty
Clean
Dry
Eureka and Lexington Avenues Street Improvement Project

LATER THIS YEAR, the City will begin construction of the Eureka Avenue and Lexington Avenue Street Improvement Project, funded by the City’s Measure A Street Improvement Fund and the SB 1 Local Partnership Program.

This project will focus on Eureka Avenue between Kearney and Liberty Streets and Lexington Avenue between Eureka Avenue and Fairmont Elementary School. The surrounding area includes the school, the El Cerrito Library, the new Centennial Park, and the Ohlone Greenway.

The Street Improvement Project will:

- rehabilitate the pavement;
- reconstruct sections of sidewalks, curbs, gutters, and storm drain facilities damaged by underlying tree roots;
- install new and modified curb ramps at the intersections;
- install new traffic signage and pavement markings;
- construct a frontage curb ramp and ADA parking space alongside the recently restored Centennial Park; and
- install a high visibility crosswalk at the intersection of Liberty Street and Eureka Avenue.

The project will benefit the community by providing safe and accessible walking, biking, and driving routes. It will also extend the useful life of these road segments.

If you have questions about the project, please contact Engineering Manager/ Senior Engineer Ana Bernardes at 215-4382 or email abernardes@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us. Project updates can also be viewed online at el-cerrito.org/CIP.

Sign Up for 100% Green!

HELP REDUCE greenhouse gas emissions by choosing energy from renewable sources such as sun, wind, tides, bioenergy, and geothermal heat.

El Cerrito’s local electricity provider, MCE Clean Energy, offers a 100% renewable energy option called the Deep Green plan. On average, this plan costs only about $5 more per month than MCE’s default Light Green option. Sign up for Deep Green at mcecleanenergy.org/ElCerrito. For more information, call 525-7622 or email wprovost@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us.

Volunteer Opportunities

THE CITY OF El Cerrito currently has 13 boards, commissions, and committees serving our community and making recommendations to the City Council. The groups help with some of our most popular programs and events, such as Arts Month, Loving Day, Earth Day, Hillside Fest, National Night Out, and Arbor Week.

The City advisory bodies are:

- Arts & Culture Commission
- Citizens Street Oversight Committee
- Civil Service Commission
- Committee on Aging
- Crime Prevention Committee
- Design Review Board
- Economic Development Committee
- Environmental Quality Committee
- Financial Advisory Board
- Human Relations Commission
- Park & Recreation Commission
- Planning Commission
- Urban Forest Committee

For a list of vacancies and an application, visit el-cerrito.org/Commissions, call the City Clerk’s office at 215-4305, or email cityclerk@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us.

Responding to Graffiti and Illegal Dumping

INCREASING AMOUNTS OF graffiti and instances of illegal dumping on public property are causing problems for the City of El Cerrito’s Maintenance Division. Maintenance staff respond to requests for service as soon as possible, but the extra time and expense means a drain on City resources. The rise has been more dramatic with illegal dumping and the corresponding costs have been greater. As a result, staff are participating in countywide discussions, looking for innovative and effective ways to reduce illegal dumping.

If you witness anyone painting graffiti, dumping, or engaging in any other form of vandalism, please call Police Dispatch immediately at 233-1214. To report illegally dumped materials or new graffiti on public property, please contact the Maintenance Division at maintenance@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us or 215-4369.
Be Aware and Prepared!

When you apply for or next renew your driver's license or identification card, you will have to choose between a federally compliant REAL ID and a non-compliant document. If you choose to get the federally compliant REAL ID driver’s license or ID card, you must visit a DMV office and present original or certified documents to prove your identity, social security number, and state residency.

Beginning on October 1, 2020, Californians will need a REAL ID driver’s license or identification card with golden bear insignia, a valid passport, or other comparable federally compliant identification to do any of the following:

- Board a flight anywhere within the United States
- Enter a secure federal facility or military base
- Purchase firearms or ammunition

Federally compliant identification will not be necessary for these purposes:

- Applying for or receiving benefits from a federal agency, such as the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), the Social Security Administration, or Medicare
- Entering a post office or other federal facility that does not require identification
- Visiting a hospital or receiving life-saving services from an emergency medical technician (EMT)
- Riding Amtrak or other public ground transportation

For more information about REAL ID cards and how to apply in California, visit REALID.dmv.ca.gov.

Summer Splash Pool Anniversary Party

The El Cerrito Swim Center had its first splash in 1962, thanks to the then residents of El Cerrito. They passed a major bond measure that paid for the original pools, the El Cerrito Community Center, and several parks and clubhouses. Thirty years later, when the Swim Center faced imminent closure due to safety issues, once again residents came to the rescue by passing Measure A in 2000. This measure funded a full-scale rebuilding of the Swim Center. The new center re-opened in 2004, and this year, you are invited to celebrate its 15th anniversary!

The anniversary party will take place on Sunday, July 21. It will be an opportunity for the community to enjoy the Swim Center free of charge. Bring your family from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. to enjoy swimming, games, and much more!

To help kick off the day, our energetic water aerobics instructors will be holding an adult water aerobics class from 10 to 11 a.m. Water aerobics is currently among the most popular of adult exercise programs. Whatever your ability, our trained instructors will provide a low- to no-impact workout for you. Try an introductory class for free!

After water aerobics, pools will open for a recreational swim. Pools include the activity pool with its water slide and play feature, the splash park and its spray features, and the Emery G. Weed III Lap Pool with diving boards. Plus, the Swim Center will be trying out a new feature, an inflatable in-water obstacle course! The obstacle course will take up most of the length of the Emery G. Weed III Lap Pool and end with a splash into the water!

Bring your lunch (no glass bottles and containers or adult beverages, please) and enjoy everything the Swim Center has to offer!

Properly Dispose of Mercury

When you are ready to upgrade your old thermostat, you’ll need to properly dispose of it. Many old thermostats contain mercury, which is harmful to both people’s health and the environment. Some contain more than 1,000 times the amount of mercury in a single compact fluorescent bulb. Because of this, thermostats are considered a household hazardous waste (HHW) and must be properly collected and disposed of at an appropriate facility. It is illegal to just throw the thermostats into the trash.

You can drop off your old thermostat at the West Contra Costa HHW site at 101 Pittsburg Avenue, Richmond, Wednesdays through Saturdays. The El Cerrito Recycling + Environmental Resource Center accepts HHW on Tuesdays, the designated HHW dropoff day. Both facilities are open 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. and both are closed for lunch, noon to 12:30 p.m. To learn more about the proper disposal of thermostats, call the West Contra Costa HHW Collection Facility at 231-4200 or go online to thermostat-recycle.org.
Smoke-Free El Cerrito

DID YOU KNOW that El Cerrito’s Smoking Pollution Protection ordinance (ECMC 8.06) requires 100% smoke-free public places, commercial areas, and multi-unit residences within the City of El Cerrito? Landlords of multi-unit housing are required to include smoking prohibitions in leases, and business owners should notify employees and patrons of the smoke-free ordinance.

The ordinance was adopted to protect El Cerrito’s residents and visitors from the health hazards and environmental impacts of smoking.

Please note that smoke and smoking includes all forms of tobacco, marijuana, and other weeds or plants, as well as vaporizing via electronic smoking devices.

You can find more information, including the full text of the ordinance and free downloadable No Smoking signs, at el-cerrito.org/SmokeFree. You can also email questions to smokingfree@ci.el-cerrito.ca.us or call the Smoke-free Information Hotline at 215-4475 (recorded message/voicemail).

Calling 9-1-1
CALL 911 only for time sensitive emergencies requiring immediate response of police, fire, or emergency medical personnel.

You can also reach the Police Dispatch Center directly by calling 237-3233. Please listen to the prompts, as the menu has recently changed.

The phone number to directly reach the dispatch center for El Cerrito Fire or Medical has changed to (925) 941-3330. Please note the 925 area code for this number.