



Visit Santa Barbara – Crisis Communications Recommended Social Media Guidelines – January 2019

Approach:

During times of crisis, we encourage you to take a moment and **think before you post**. While it's easy to snap and send, we've developed the following recommendations on what and when to post on social media, to help visitors better understand the current crisis periods as conditions begin to stabilize.

What's Considered a Crisis?

Though Santa Barbara could be affected by a variety of incidents, tragedies or controversies, we are focusing on types of crisis that affects tourism, travel and safety to Santa Barbara for the purpose of this toolkit. This includes:

- Fires within Santa Barbara County, especially those affecting highway closures
- Flooding/mudslides within Santa Barbara County, especially those affecting highway closures
- Other natural disasters which might affect safety and travel
- For additional consideration: acts of violence or mass casualty (i.e. mass shootings, terrorist attacks, etc.)

During a Crisis Period

- **DO**
 - Focus on updates of unaffected areas, helpful resources and express thanks and gratitude to first responders and the community for their support during this time of need.
 - Use a dedicated crisis hashtag when posting these updates. (Example: #ThomasFire)
 - Share posts from Visit Santa Barbara's social channels:
 - Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/visitsantabarbara/>
 - Twitter: <https://twitter.com/santabarbara>
 - Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/visitsantabarbara/>
 - Share the current state of your business with the date and time to maintain transparency.

- Direct your social audiences to the following URL to find more traveler-related information: <https://santabarbaraca.com/travel>
- Move conversations offline by directing travelers to a contact email address or phone number when appropriate
- Share business-related updates directly with JessyLynn Perkins at jessylynn@santabarbaraca.com
- **DON'T**
 - Highlight images/videos of the crisis situation itself or updating on how bad conditions are
 - Use language drawing upon fear (Example: horrifying, tragic, awful, etc.)
 - Post your usual promotional or informational content around your business; Messaging should be limited to updates on how the crisis affects your business and its accessibility, the wellbeing of your business and staff, and helpful resources for patrons (i.e. air quality information, road closure information, etc.)
 - Use #SeeSB, #SavorSB and #AmericanRiviera until crisis concludes
 - Use #SantaBarbaraStrong, #SBstrong, #805strong, or other trending hashtags; As conditions continue to evolve during the crisis period, we don't want to associate the City of Santa Barbara directly to a crisis until we learn more

Sample copy:

- "We'll be closed this week as the #ThomasFire affects traffic through our neighborhood. Though our staff and partners are all safe, we're sending well-wishes and gratitude to the hardworking firefighters in our area."
- "We'll be temporarily closed this week due to the #ThomasFire affecting staff availability. Though our staff and partners are all safe, we're sending well-wishes and gratitude to the hardworking firefighters in our area."
- "Skies are getting bluer in Santa Barbara! We're fully open and ready for visitors. For those traveling from out of town, find updates and information at SantaBarbaraCA.com/Travel"
- "We're thankful for the hardworking firefighters and first-responders keeping our community safe. Find fire-related information and travel updates at SantaBarbaraCA.com/Travel"

Recovery Period

- Once the state of your business has stabilized, begin posting photos showing the current state of the business on that day - blue skies, sunshine and positive photography.
 - To remain transparent, only post photos that are from post-crisis, rather than old photography as to not mislead our audience. Note where and when the photo was taken in the copy.
- Post about success stories and community efforts from local hotels, restaurants, and other hospitality businesses.
- Post about future happenings and events in Santa Barbara and at your business.

Sample Copy:

- "We're open for business! Thanks to hardworking firefighters and first-responders, fires have been stabilized and Santa Barbara is returning to clear, sunny skies."
- "We've re-opened our doors and are welcoming back visitors. Here's our view from this afternoon."
- "We have plenty of exciting events coming up to welcome you back to The American Riviera! Sign up on our website and start planning your visit today."
- Blue skies are back in Santa Barbara, and we're now open for the rest of the week! This photo was taken this morning along Cabrillo Boulevard."