

Help Available for Businesses Affected by Thomas Fire *Small Business Development Center Offers Services for Relief and Recovery*

The local Small Business Development Center is ready and available to provide direct assistance to businesses that have lost revenue, sustained damage or have other impacts due to the Thomas Fire, and to provide access to other local, state and federal resources. Santa Barbara County businesses can access free services through the Santa Barbara Small Business Development Center (SBDC).

“Small businesses in Santa Barbara County may have suffered lost sales, and that may continue as visitors may avoid the region for some time. The impacts may be particularly acute to hospitality and tourism, and the retailers and service firms that depend on visitation,” notes Ray Bowman, director of the center.

Lost Sales: The most significant impact to our economy—both now and moving forward—is the interruption to regular commerce, with small retailers and service firms suffering the greatest losses. The fire couldn’t have come at a worse time. The National Retail Federation reports that the holiday season represents more than 20 percent of retailers’ sales. For some shops, jewelry stores, for example, the share is closer to 30 percent.

Impacted businesses should call for help.

Contact the Small Business Development Center, 805-409-9159, alondra.gaytan@edcsbdc.org. Start here to get:

- Professional, no cost business advising services immediately.
- Access to capital for short- and long-term loans for disaster relief.
- Assistance and advice regarding insurance, unemployment, loans and tax relief.
- Updates as new services become available.

For more information, visit our website for services in Santa Barbara and Ventura Counties:

<https://edc-vc.com/disaster-recovery-services/>

