

# Wildfires stressed Wine Country's healthcare system

By Soumya Karlamangla, Los Angeles Times

Dr. Scott Witt kept close behind the ambulance carrying the newborns. On his motorcycle, he drove over and ducked under downed power lines. He swerved around embers blowing onto the highway.

Sutter Santa Rosa Regional Hospital, where Witt oversees the neonatal intensive care unit, was being evacuated Oct. 9 because of wildfires that would become the deadliest in California history.

But Witt couldn't call the doctors who would be caring for the babies because there was no power. The physicians at the other hospital also had no way of accessing Witt's medical records online to know what treatment was needed.

The Northern California wildfires created what some described as an unprecedented healthcare crisis that has served as a wake-up call in the region. Not only were two major hospitals evacuated hours into the disaster, but the chaos continued for days after.

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