



NEWS



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UPDATE: Fast-spreading blaze erupts on Palmdale Road off-ramp

Northbound I-15, Palmdale Road shut down for several hours Wednesday night

Monica Solano and Paola Baker, Daily Press

Posted: June 30, 2016, 4:47 PM

Updated: July 1, 2016, 9:25 AM



San Bernardino County Fire Department responded to a vegetation fire along the northbound Interstate 15 off ramp and on ramp on both sides of Palmdale Road Bridge in Victorville on Thursday. David Pardo, Daily Press

VICTORVILLE — Firefighters battled a fast-spreading blaze on the freeway off-ramp near Palmdale Road on Thursday afternoon, authorities said.

Reports of a vegetation fire on the northbound Interstate 15 off-ramp near Mariposa and Palmdale Roads was first received just before 3:45 p.m. Thursday. While the blaze was initially reported to be small, the flames quickly spread, with **San Bernardino County Fire Department** officials reporting that the blaze had jumped over the freeway overpass and had spread to 3 to 4 acres by 4:40 p.m.

Firefighters engaged in an aggressive attack to protect multiple commercial buildings from the fire. The fire was eventually contained to 4 acres with no damage reported to any of the threatened structures or roadways, officials said.

The fire remained on the west side of both the offramp and onramp and did not spread further. A total of 65 firefighters responded to the blaze, including two brush patrols, two chief officers, five engines, two hand crews and three water tanks, County Fire Captain Jeremy Kern said.

As of 5:40 p.m., Thursday, the fire was reported to be contained, with crews remaining on scene for a few hours for clean-up.

A SigAlert was requested just before 5 p.m. and all northbound lanes of I-15 were closed at Palmdale Road. The Palmdale Road overpass and Valley Center Drive were also shut down as authorities combated the blaze.

California Highway Patrol logs indicated one northbound lane would be opening at 6 p.m. Thursday. The No. 2 lane was opened just after 7 p.m., according to tweets from Caltrans, and the Palmdale Road overpass was open by 10 p.m.

Drivers on the I-15 freeway reported that traffic was backed up as far as Main Street well into Wednesday night. All lanes were reported to be open just after 2:30 a.m. Friday, Caltrans said.

No buildings were reported to have been evacuated, Kern said.

No injuries were reported to civilians or fire personnel. Fire officials said several fire investigators are still working to determine the fire's cause and origin.

<http://www.vvdailypress.com/article/20160630/NEWS/160639984>

Brush fire forces closure of northbound I-15 in Victorville

Matt Hamilton, Los Angeles Times

Posted: June 30, 2016, 6:24 PM



A wildfire near Interstate 15 in Victorville forced officials to shut down the northbound lanes. (San Bernardino County Fire Department)

Most of the northbound lanes of Interstate 15 were closed in Victorville on Thursday after a brush fire ignited near the roadway.

The fire broke out about 3:45 p.m. near the freeway onramp at Mariposa and Palmdale roads, according to the **San Bernardino County Fire Department**.

By 5 p.m., the blaze had spread to about two or three acres, the Fire Department said.

Officials advised motorists to drive cautiously in the area. Aerial fire crews were dumping large payloads of water onto the flames.

Shortly after 6 p.m., officials reopened one lane of the busy roadway.

This story will be updated as more information becomes available.

<http://www.latimes.com/local/lanow/la-me-ln-brush-fire-victorville-20160630-snap-story.html>

Brush fire near 15 Freeway in Victorville causes traffic jam

Staff Reports, The Sun

Posted: June 30, 2016, 6:59 PM



A fire at the Palmdale Road offramp of the northbound 15 prompted a full freeway closure Thursday afternoon. Photo by Doug Saunders

VICTORVILLE >> A brush fire burning near the 15 freeway, at Palmdale and Mariposa roads, caused a massive traffic jam on the northbound lanes Thursday afternoon and at least one lane remains closed.

The fire was contained to 4 acres, according to the **San Bernardino County Fire Department**. About 65 firefighters are on scene, and crews will remain there through the evening.

The No. 1 and 2 lanes of the northbound 15 freeway are open, according to the California Highway Patrol.

Caltrans reported via Twitter that the No. 3 lane and the offramp at Palmdale Road remain closed. All southbound lanes of the 15 freeway are open.

Both directions of Palmdale Road, or Highway 18, are closed at the 15 Freeway for an unknown duration.

Firefighters have described the vegetation as medium to heavy fuels. No structures were damaged, county fire officials reported.

Helicopters conducted water drops to help extinguish the blaze, according to San Bernardino County Fire.

<http://www.sbsun.com/general-news/20160630/brush-fire-near-15-freeway-in-victorville-causes-traffic-jam>

Victorville Brush Fire Backs Traffic Up For Miles on 15 Freeway

Staff Reports, ABC7

Posted: June 30, 2016, 8:30 PM



A brush fire along the 15 Freeway backed up traffic for miles in Victorville on Thursday, June 30, 2016.

VICTORVILLE, Calif. (KABC) -- A small brush fire along the 15 Freeway in Victorville caused big headaches for drivers Thursday evening.

The fire broke out near Palmdale and Mariposa roads by the 15 Freeway before 4:30 p.m.

Firefighters with the **San Bernardino County Fire Department** were able to contain the blaze to 4 acres.

As crews battled the fire, the 15 Freeway heading northbound was closed at the Palmdale exit.

Traffic could be seen backed up for miles down the 15 Freeway as the California Highway Patrol blocked off the freeway.

The freeway was partially reopened just after 6 p.m.

<http://abc7.com/news/victorville-brush-fire-backs-traffic-up-for-miles-on-15-fwy/1409231/>

2nd Alarm Fire Threatens Structures and Closes NB 15 Freeway

Victor Valley News

Posted: July 1, 2016



(photo by Hugo C. Valdez, Victor Valley News)

VICTORVILLE:(VVNG.com)- A fast-moving wind driven fire shut down the 15 freeway for several hours on Thursday afternoon.

At about 3:45 p.m. on June 30th **San Bernardino County Firefighters** were dispatched to a report of a vegetation fire on the Palmdale Road off-ramp to the northbound 15 freeway.

Crews arrived within four minutes and located a spot of vegetation on fire. Due to the strong winds, the fire quickly spread to surrounding brush and large pine trees. The fire jumped over the Palmdale Road overpass and onto the Palmdale Road on-ramp.

Due to the heavy brush and rapid rate of spread, crews requested a 2nd Alarm bringing additional resources from the region, including 2 San Bernardino County Fire All risk hand crews. A total of 65 San Bernardino County Fire personnel were assigned to the fire.

Firefighters engaged in an aggressive attack protecting multiple commercial buildings from the fire. Due to the close proximity to the I-15 freeway, several lanes were closed to protect motorists.

East and westbound Palmdale Road was closed at the 15 freeway till about 9:00 pm. Valley Center Drive was also closed in both directions for structure protection. CHP opened the no. 1 lane of the northbound 15 at about 9pm.

Public Information Officer Eric Spies said the fire was contained to 4 acres with no damage reported to any of the threatened structures or roadways. No injuries were reported to civilians or fire personnel.

Several fire Investigators are working to determine the fire's cause and origin.

<http://www.vvng.com/2nd-alarm-fire-threatens-structures-and-closes-nb-15-freeway/>

San Bernardino City Fire becomes part of San Bernardino County Fire

Ryan Hagen, The Sun

Posted: June 30, 2016, 7:46 PM



Adrian Gonzales of Xgraphix, removes San Bernardino City Fire Department decals on a truck in preparation for county fire's takeover. John Valenzuela — Staff Photographer



Victor Cruz of Xgraphix applies a new San Bernardino County Fire Department decal on truck 221. John Valenzuela — Staff Photographer

SAN BERNARDINO >> One hundred-thirty-eight years after Charles F. Rowe was part of the formation of this city's fire department, his great-great grandson Scott Leidner was part of its dissolution Thursday.

Leidner was among 150 San Bernardino City firefighters and support staff who transitioned at midnight into employees of the **San Bernardino County Fire Department**, a distinction Leidner said Thursday night was disappointing.

"It's a privilege to be part of that legacy, and it's sad to see it end," said Leidner, who has five generations of San Bernardino residents on his mother's side — some of them firefighters, some not.

All of the firefighters who wore city uniforms Thursday remain firefighters Friday, and the county guaranteed employment to all qualified employees.

But now they're part of a new tradition.

"It's bittersweet," fire Capt. Mike Arvizo said Thursday. "A lot of experience is leaving the city, people who know this city inside-and-out."

Arvizo, who has been with the department for 16 years, is among the one-third of employees choosing to keep working within the city's borders rather than transferring elsewhere in the county.

"For some people it makes sense to work closer to where they live," Arvizo said.

At least one firefighter with a history in the city will be assigned to each fire engine, according to Arvizo.

The number of firefighters isn't dropping — in fact, an additional paramedic squad will begin working in the city.

The paramedic squad was among the cuts San Bernardino made in recent years, part of the fiscal difficulties city officials say forced them to make the tough decision of annexing the city's fire services into the county. The move is projected to save \$7 million to \$8 million per year, in part through a new parcel tax that starts at \$148 per year.

Fire officials say response times should also improve because of efficiencies like integrating with the county for dispatch and other services.

Since Monday, city firefighters have been learning county protocols, so they should be ready on Day One, said county fire spokeswoman Tracey Martinez. Although the change becomes official Friday, the personnel swap comes Sunday, when shifts change.

It's not the only change coming to the Fire Department Friday.

Twentynine Palms, a 58-year-old department, was absorbed the same day.

And the addition of San Bernardino City — which patrolled a 60-mile city with an unusually high volume of calls — convinced the county to create a new fire district, effective Friday.

Known as the East Valley Division, it will be led by Assistant Chief John Chamberlin.

Chamberlin, whose own career began with county fire's absorption of an existing agency — Adelanto, in 1999 — most recently led the county's South Desert Division.

"San Bernardino has come to expect the highest level of fire protection in their community and San Bernardino County Fire is committed to maintaining and ultimately enhancing the service delivery to the community," Chamberlin said in an email Thursday. "It's a privilege and honor to serve this city."

<http://www.sbsun.com/government-and-politics/20160630/san-bernardino-city-fire-becomes-part-of-san-bernardino-county-fire>

SB County Prepares To Officially Take Over San Bernardino City Fire Dept.

Ken Vincent, KVCR

Posted: June 30, 2016

After nearly a century-and-a-half of service, the City of San Bernardino Fire Department will officially cease to exist tomorrow, as the bankrupt city turns fire protection over to **San Bernardino County**. KVCR's Ken Vincent has more.

(Follow link to listen to story)

<http://kvcrnews.org/post/sb-county-prepares-officially-take-over-san-bernardino-city-fire-dept>

Governor Brown Announces Appointments

Imperial Valley News

Posted: June 30, 2016

Sacramento, California - Governor Edmund G. Brown Jr. today announced the following appointments:

Joseph Zuccaro, 56, of Victorville, has been appointed to the 28th District Agricultural Association, San Bernardino County Fair Board of Directors. Zuccaro has served as a fire prevention supervisor at the **San Bernardino County Fire Department** since 2009. He was a deputy fire marshal at the Victorville Fire Department from 1980 to 2009. Zuccaro is a member of the High Desert Rotary Club. This position does not require Senate confirmation and there is no compensation. Zuccaro is a Republican.

(To read full list, follow link)

<http://www.imperialvalleynews.com/index.php/news/california-news/9830-governor-brown-announces-appointments-6-30-16.html>

EDITORIAL: San Bernardino bouncing back

Press-Enterprise Editorial

Posted: June 30, 2016

On Tuesday, the San Bernardino city council approved a budget for the 2016-17 fiscal year, which begins today, which calls for a general fund spending of \$112.52 million against \$112.76 million in revenues, yielding a slight surplus. Also today, **San Bernardino County Fire** officially takes control of fire and emergency services, marking the end of the city's 137-year old fire department.

It has taken a remarkable amount of political and legal wrangling to reach this point, and the bankrupt city should be proud of the tremendous progress it has made.

To be sure, the city's ability to reach this point came at great sacrifices, some less questionable than others. The city has been prudent in contracting out extensive services; its decision to be annexed into the county's fire district will save roughly \$30 million a year and discussions about reorganizing city government have been long overdue.

Alas, there are still many obstacles the city still faces, including “staggering” unfunded capital needs, as the city’s budget notes, and many more months of bankruptcy proceedings at the least.

It should also be kept in mind that the city’s current financial situation was only made possible by shying away from impairing pension benefits and committing itself to maintaining the status quo with the California Public Employees’ Retirement System.

City officials must remain mindful of the long-term impacts of additional pension obligations as they begin the process of filling scores of vacant city positions.

Though the council discussions reflected a cautious optimism about the direction of the city, much of it revolved around figuring out what kind of tax increases to pursue. Increasing business license and utility taxes are among the options being assessed.

Officials also took the time to discuss the apparent problem of street vendors, with council members generally inclined to press for more enforcement, while Councilman Benito Barrios offered the sensible idea of legitimizing street vendors. “There are people out there because there are no jobs, there’s no way to go out and find a good paying job to support a family,” said Mr. Barrios.

It will be imperative for the city to do all that it can to cut red tape and improve business friendliness. At this time, the city could use all the legitimate businesses that it can.

<http://www.pe.com/articles/city-807173-fire-year.html>

Prevent childhood hot car deaths

MJ Duncan, Inland Empire Community News

Posted: June 30, 2016



Seven children have died this year across the nation of heat stroke from being left in a vehicle. Parents need to take precautions to avert such preventable deaths such as leaving their shoe or cell phone in the back seat, setting a reminder on their cell phone or asking day care provider to call if your child doesn’t arrive by a certain time. Courtesy Photo

With Inland temperatures consistently in the triple digits, it’s important to remind parents of the dangers of leaving children in hot cars. Since January seven children nationwide have died of heat stroke from being left in a car.

According to **San Bernardino County Fire Department** Public Information Officer Tracy Martinez, on a 75-degree day the temperature inside a vehicle increases 30 – 40 degrees in an hour, 70 percent of which occurs in the first 30 minutes.

“On days that we’ve been experiencing excessive heat and humidity, the temperature in a car can reach 120 degrees in no time,” Martinez said. “Heat stroke occurs when the body reaches 104 degrees.”

For many it’s unfathomable that a parent could leave their child in a car, but Martinez said that most of the time they become distracted or there has been a change in routine.

She added that many parents think it’s safe to leave the air conditioner on in the vehicle while they quickly run an errand, but too many variables are at play if a child escapes their car seat and she strongly cautions against this practice.

These childhood deaths are preventable, and below are some recommendations to help ensure a tragedy doesn’t occur:

1. Leave a Teddy bear/stuffed animal in your child’s empty car seat. When you put your child in the seat, put the teddy bear on your dashboard or in an obvious place so that when you get out of the car you see it and it triggers your memory that your child is in the back seat.
2. Take off one of the shoes you are wearing that day and leave it in the back seat, on the floor-board, near your child. You should remember the moment you get out of the car to grab your shoe, and therefore, will remember your child is still strapped into the car seat. By leaving it on the floor-board, it reduces the chances of it becoming a projectile in case of a car accident.
3. Same idea with your purse or cell phone. Put either near your child, since even if you do forget your purse or your cell you will likely remember quickly enough to return to your car to retrieve them and discover your child.
4. Set a reminder or a timer on your cell phone when you and your child leave the house.
5. Ask your day care provider to call you if your child does not arrive by a certain time.

<http://iecn.com/prevent-childhood-hot-car-deaths/>

County Fire Investigators Making Arrests for Possession of Fireworks

Z107.7 News

Posted: July 1, 2016

County fire investigators seized more than 25,000 pounds of illegal fireworks in June. Investigators issued 116 citations totaling \$145,000 in fines. Investigations conducted at the Interstate 15 agricultural inspection station in Yermo found that the top three destinations for smuggled fireworks were Los Angeles, Orange, and San Bernardino counties.

<http://z1077fm.com/county-fire-investigators-making-arrests-for-possession-of-fireworks/>

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