



NEWS



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Measure A: Town voters say yes to fire tax - overwhelmingly

Matthew Cabe, Daily Press

Posted: November 8, 2016, 12:01 AM

APPLE VALLEY — Voters are saying yes to the tax measure designed to bolster emergency services in the town, according to unofficial election results posted at 10 p.m. Tuesday.

With more than 34 percent of precincts reporting, Measure A has received overwhelming approval, amassing 10,364 votes, which translates to 77 percent of the vote, according to the San Bernardino County Elections Office.

Measure A needed a two-thirds majority to pass.

Doug Qualls — former Apple Valley Fire Protection District Chief and Measure A’s principal officer — told the Daily Press things are “going well” in the district as a result of the voting.

“The threshold of reaching two-thirds of the voters is an extraordinary effort,” Qualls said. “To get two-thirds of the people to agree on something, and we far exceeded that expectation, that’s by commitment to the community.”

Qualls called Tuesday’s outcome the result of a reality wherein fire stations need to be reopened; currently just three of the district’s seven fire stations are opened, and emergency-response times are below the national averages.

“In 1997,” Qualls said, “the fire district promised the voters that they would deliver the best service they can deliver with the resources provided. That has held true for the last 19 years. And tonight’s results indicate that the voters have confidence in the Apple Valley Fire Protection District (and) the service that they provide.”

Measure A never met any formal opposition; however, **San Bernardino County Fire Department** Chief Mark Hartwig expressed concern in October over how his department was being portrayed by the campaign that pushed hard to maintain local control.

Then, days before the election, the Daily Press learned that the campaign committee behind Measure A potentially violated election law by not disclosing its finances, which totaled more than \$15,000.

But there was only joy on election night. After the 8 p.m. results were released, Town Councilman and former AVFPD Fire Chief Art Bishop — who was at Measure A headquarters — said you could hear those in attendance “cheering from four blocks away.”

“There were probably 75 people there,” Bishop said, “and I’m just so proud of our firefighters and all the people who voted.”

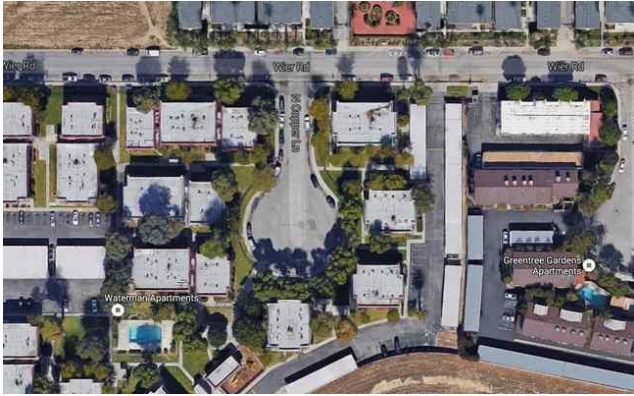
Measure A will extend a sunset tax voters passed in 1997. Taxpayer dollars collected are expected to be used to reduce 911 response times, improve AVFPD firefighters’ ability to simultaneously respond to numerous emergencies and reopen closed fire stations in the district.

<http://www.vvdailynews.com/news/20161108/measure-a-town-voters-say-yes-to-fire-tax---overwhelmingly>

Family of 6 displaced in San Bernardino apartment fire

Beatriz Valenzuela, San Bernardino Sun

Posted: November 8, 2016, 11:40 AM



A downstairs apartment unit caught fire Tuesday in the 2600 block of Copper Lane in San Bernardino, displacing a family of six. (Image via Google Earth)

SAN BERNARDINO >> An apartment fire displaced a San Bernardino family Tuesday morning after county firefighters made quick work of the blaze.

“The Red Cross was called out to assist,” said Jeff Allen, spokesman for the **San Bernardino County Fire Department**. In total, two adults and four children were displaced.

Around 10:30 a.m., a caller reported heavy smoke coming from of the units in the 2600 block of Copper Lane, according to a San Bernardino County Fire Twitter post.

County fire along with Colton and Loma Linda fire departments knocked down the blaze just before 11 a.m., Allen said.

It appears the fire started in one of the downstairs units, and no one was injured as a result, reports indicate.

The cause of the fire is under investigation.

<http://www.sbsun.com/general-news/20161108/family-of-6-displaced-in-san-bernardino-apartment-fire>

Firefighters Rescue Man Pinned Under SUV

Hugo C Valdez, Victor Valley News Group

Posted: November 8, 2016



(Gabriel D. Espinoza., Victor Valley News)

VICTORVILLE, CALIF.(VVNG.com)- A 30-year-old man was pinned underneath an SUV after the vehicle overturned Monday night.

On November 7th at about 11:00 p.m. dispatch received reports of a single vehicle rollover on the 15600 block of Choctaw Street in Victorville.

San Bernardino County Fire responded and located a 1997 red Ford Explorer on its side with a single occupant trapped underneath the vehicle.

San Bernardino County Fire Department firefighter-paramedic Steven Castagnola said, the male in the vehicle had his arm stuck underneath.

“We performed an operation to lift the vehicle while stabilizing the vehicle,” stated Castagnola. “Once we were able to get his arm free we were able to get him out of the vehicle.”

A total of seven firefighters responded including one battalion, a truck company, and an engine company.

The male driver was transported by ground ambulance to Arrowhead Regional Medical Center with non-life threatening injuries.

According to Sheriff's spokeswoman Mara Rodriguez, the vehicle's registration was found to be expired and was towed and stored.

The cause of the crash is currently under investigation.

<http://www.vvng.com/firefighters-rescue-man-pinned-under-suv/>

These 13 states have the most homes at risk from wildfires

Caterina Pontoriero, PropertyCasualty360.Com

Posted: November 8, 2016



Scorched cars and trailers burned by the Blue Cut fire line a residential street in Phelan, California, on Aug. 19, 2016. See where California ranks in CoreLogic's ranking of the 13 states with the highest total number of homes at risk for residential wildfires. (Photo: AP Images)

While every state is at risk for wildfires, the glaring truth is that the American West consistently experiences the most frequent and severe wildfires, as well as the worst aftermath associated with the most wildfire-related property damage year after year.

Irvine, California-based analytics firm CoreLogic has analyzed 13 western states that are ranked at or near the top of the list for the most wildfire activity and property damage each year for its 2016 "Wildfire Hazard Risk Report."

The report shows the number of residences in each state that are at extreme, high, moderate and low risk for residential wildfires.

The 2015 wildfire year saw several record-setting fires, in addition to the highest annual total acreage ever burned. Because the 2016 wildfire year is still ongoing, the potential exists for a continuation of extreme fires and property damage.

The Erskine Fire in June, for example, spread over 46,000 acres and damaged or destroyed 386 structures in a community northeast of Bakersfield, California, and the Blue Cut Fire north of San Bernardino, California, in August was responsible for destroying 318 structures over more than 37,000 acres, says CoreLogic.

With drought conditions ranging from abnormally dry to exceptional drought, there is a continuing fear that plagues approximately half of the American West, with the strong possibility for fires to grow into large blazes and cause associated property losses.

The drought conditions that have plagued the American West for the past several years only serve to increase the threat of damaging fire events. However, historic records of wildfire activity indicate that even without drought conditions, these states would still continue to have areas of high wildfire risk each year.

Here are the 13 states with the highest risk of residential wildfires, according to CoreLogic:

13. Wyoming: 199,699 total homes at risk
12. Montana: 335,604 total homes at risk
11. Idaho: 578,700 total homes at risk
10. New Mexico: 612,017 total homes at risk
9. Utah: 752,828 total homes at risk
8. Nevada: 891,512 total homes at risk
7. Oklahoma: 1,252,076 total homes at risk
6. Oregon: 1,293,153 total homes at risk
5. Colorado: 1,783,547 total homes at risk
4. Arizona: 2,090,527 total homes at risk
3. Washington: 2,296,440 total homes at risk
2. Texas: 7,734,997 total homes at risk
1. California: 9,104,466 total homes at risk

California and Texas continue to lead the nation in total number of homes in the extreme wildfire risk category because of a large number of residential properties in each of these states, combined with the proximity of high-risk fuels and terrain.

An examination of the number of properties in the extreme category reveals California with 263,152 properties, and Texas close behind with 261,595 properties at the highest level of wildfire risk. Combining both the high and extreme categories, California's lead widens with 645,445 properties compared to 532,367 properties in Texas.

http://www.propertycasualty360.com/2016/11/08/these-13-states-have-the-most-homes-at-risk-from-w?slreturn=1478708680&page=8&page_all=1

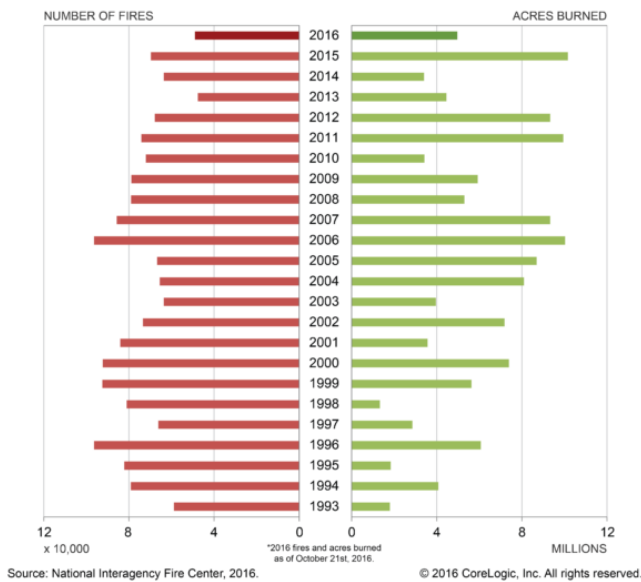
2016 Wildfire Season Not Likely to Top Record-Setting 2015 Season

Trajectory Shows Fewer Fires and Fewer Total Acres Burned in 2016

Tom Jeffery, Senior Hazard Scientist

Posted: November 8, 2016

Figure 1: Total Number of U.S. Wildfires and Acres Burned - 1993 to 2016*



In 2015, the amount of area consumed by wildfires in the U.S. topped 10 million acres for the first time, recording an annual total of 10,125,149 acres burned according to the National Interagency Fire Center.¹ By comparison, the average burned acreage per year over the previous 20 years (1995-2014) was 5,820,402 acres.¹ As of October 21, 2016, there were 4,989,330 acres burned in the U.S. and the total number of wildfires so far in 2016 is about 26,000 fewer than the 20-year average of 76,429.¹ It is clear that barring the most catastrophic wildfire event in recent history, the yearly totals for 2016 will probably be at or slightly below average in terms of number of fires and wildfire acreage, and will almost certainly fall well below the record set in 2015.

It is also clear that it does not require a record-setting year in order for wildfires to cause substantial property loss. The losses for individual fires so far in 2016 are not of the same magnitude as the 1,955 structures lost in the 2015 Valley Fire or the 921 structures destroyed in the September 2015 Butte Fire,² but that provides little comfort to the homeowners who have experienced wildfire damage this year. The Erskine Fire burned 386 structures northeast of Bakersfield, California this past June and 318 structures were destroyed in the Blue Cut Fire north of San Bernardino in August.²

Does this mean that the wildfire activity in 2015 was an anomaly that is unlikely to be repeated? The answer is most certainly no. In fact, as seen in Figure 1, seven of the previous 12 years (2004-2015) totaled more than 8 million acres burned. The cyclical nature of wildfire activity tends to result in a mixture of lower and higher activity years over a given span of time. But wildfire burned acreage statistics do indicate an increasing trend in burned acreage. So while the lows are not necessarily getting lower, the higher acreage years do appear to be showing an increase based on annual totals. Like all natural hazards, it is not possible to predict the specific date or magnitude of these events, much less the annual totals, but overall trends for wildfire activity seem to indicate an increase in acreage, even though there is an apparent decline in the number of fires.

The cause of these trends is often difficult to determine, and this is especially true for a hazard such as wildfire that can occur due to naturally occurring ignitions as well as both intentional and unintentional human-caused ignitions. However, it is well documented that at least some of the blame can be attributed to the ongoing drought in parts of the western U.S. which is providing an increased volume of readily available fuel. While all vegetation is considered a fuel to some degree, the accumulation of dead and dry material due to the prolonged extreme drought conditions serves to increase the opportunity for ignition as well as contribute to an increase in fire intensity.

Alternatively, the drop in the number of fires could be the result of several factors. In recent years, homeowners have taken on an active role to mitigate the risk of wildfire to their property. This reduces the opportunity for fires to start and, more importantly, minimizes the ability of the fire to ignite the homes. The Firewise Communities program is an example of a successful effort to educate and involve property owners in effectively minimizing the risk in their communities.

In addition, the emergency personnel response to wildfire ignitions is nothing less than phenomenal. The amount of effort expended on preventing fires from growing out of control, especially the effort of ground and air crews to divert fires from encroaching upon cities and communities, has certainly reduced the number of large scale and potentially damaging wildfires.

But it still must be emphasized that there are more than 1.8 million homes in the western U.S. at an elevated risk of wildfire damage. Since even a small wildfire can potentially cause property damage, the concern should not be misplaced as only applying to years in which we see record numbers of wildfire acreage. Each year brings wildfire activity and any home that is at risk must consider that threat. With annual wildfires often totaling more than \$1 billion in property damage in the U.S., it is imperative to understand the level of risk for your property and prepare for the threat—even if it is not currently a record-setting year.³

<http://www.insurancejournal.com/blogs/corelogic/2016/11/08/431720.htm>