



NEWS



News Headlines 7/21/2016

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Caltrans will contract irrigation repair, cleanup for area impacted by fire near I-15 and Palmdale Road interchange

Landscaping at least a year out; district director also lauds city for earlier Palmdale Road project

Shea Johnson, Daily Press

Posted: July 20, 2016, 4:25 PM



Caltrans will put out an emergency contract to repair some irrigation damage and clean up the area around the Interstate 15 and Palmdale Road interchange following a 4-acre fire late last month, District 8 Director John Bulinski said Tuesday night. David Pardo, Daily Press

VICTORVILLE — Caltrans will put out an emergency contract to repair some irrigation damage and clean up the area around the Interstate 15 and Palmdale Road interchange following a 4-acre fire late last month, District 8 Director John Bulinski said Tuesday night.

A follow-up contract to repair landscaping in the area is "another year or two out," Bulinski told the City Council.

A fast-spreading vegetation fire June 30 began on the northbound I-15 off-ramp near Mariposa and Palmdale roads before jumping the freeway overpass. **San Bernardino County Fire** crews contained the blaze to 4 acres and prevented the fire from reaching multiple commercial buildings that were threatened.

Bulinski's update on follow-up efforts came as he presented the Council and city Public Works Department with a certificate of appreciation for teaming up with Caltrans to finish a 1.5-mile slurry seal on Palmdale Road two days ahead of schedule last month.

The project stretched from El Evado Road to Green Tree Boulevard and it's seen as a predecessor to next summer's major \$3 million paving job from the I-15 to Highway 395.

"We plan to stick to that" timeline, Bulinski said.

The road was initially planned to be repaved in 2014, but funding and additional project requirements contributed to delays. Bulinski credited Councilman Ryan McEachron with drawing Caltrans' attention to the immediate need to address the road's condition prior to next summer.

He also thanked Caltrans officials for expediting the slurry seal project's completion in one day June 21; Caltrans and city officials who notified residents and businesses of the project's impact; and also those residents and businesses who were understanding and cooperative throughout the process.

"I think this is a shining example of a partnership," Bulinski said, "where we work together toward a common goal."

McEachron said Caltrans did an "amazing job" to "ease the pain" for motorists traveling on Palmdale Road until 2017's repaving can occur, yet also deflected the credit offered by Bulinski.

"I know for a fact that everybody up here on the dais was aware of the condition of the road," McEachron said. "I think many of my fellow council members had brought this to city staff attention."

<http://www.vvdailynews.com/article/20160720/NEWS/160729973>

Firefighters Quickly Put Out Brush Fire in Victorville

Victor Valley News
Posted: July 20, 2016

VICTORVILLE:(VVNG.com)- **San Bernardino County Fire** responded to a brush fire in an empty field at the corner of Hesperia Road and Seneca Road.

The fire was reported at about 8:30 p.m. on Wednesday, July 20th.

Per scanner traffic, the fire is approximately a quarter-acre in size and the forward rate of spread has been stopped.

No structures are threatened and no injuries have been reported.

At this time the cause of the fire is under investigation.

<http://www.vvng.com/firefighters-quickly-put-out-brush-fire-in-victorville/>

Fire Destroys Car

Spot Fire Quickly Doused

Mary-Justine Lanyon, Mountain News
Posted: July 21, 2016, 6:00 AM



This car, which caught fire at the lower part of Highway 330, was totally destroyed. An adjacent spot fire was quickly extinguished.

Rapid response by three agencies kept a spot fire, caused by a vehicle that caught on fire, from burning up a slope on the lower part of Highway 330 on Monday, July 18.

The car—believed to have been a Lexus—caught fire at mile marker 55 on Highway 330. The CHP’s incident report indicated that the driver and passengers had safely escaped and were outside trying to put the flames out.

Engines from a **County Fire** station in San Bernardino were the first on scene, although off-duty personnel from the Forest Service’s Deerlick station had stopped to help.

“The vehicle was totally involved,” said County Fire PIO Mike McClintock.

The fire had spread to the adjacent brush, creating a 20x20-foot spot fire.

“It was in a bad place, on the bottom of a slope,” according to Chief George Corley of the Running Springs Fire Department. A Running Springs engine responded but “didn’t put any water on it,” Corley said, as the fire had already been knocked down by County Fire.

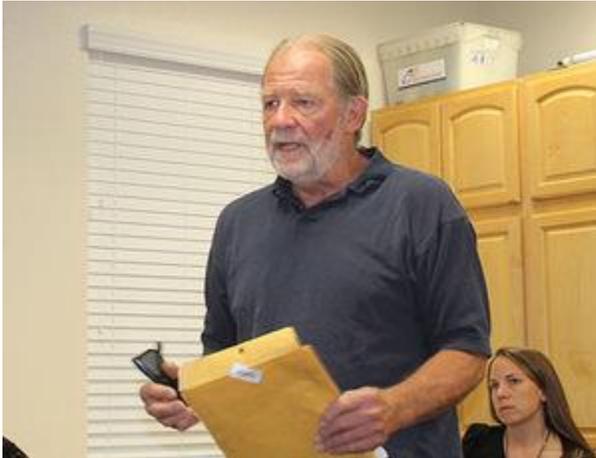
The vehicle was towed away by Mountain Auto Service and Towing. It was, they said, totally destroyed. “It might be a Lexus but we can’t tell what it is anymore.”

http://www.mountain-news.com/news/article_dfddf096-4ed4-11e6-9737-0f1e87c59bc3.html

Questions Raised About Fire Protection

Mary-Justine Lanyon, Mountain News

Posted: July 21, 2016, 6:00 AM



Nick Williams raised concerns about the availability of water during a fire.



Chief Kat Opliger

It's a question that's been weighing on Lake Arrowhead resident Nick Williams' mind for some time. During the 2007 Grass Valley Fire, he told the commissioners of the Lake Arrowhead Municipal Advisory Council at their July 7 meeting, "there was a problem with water being available for some firefighters because of the power going out."

Williams wondered if there have been any changes to rectify this problem. "If we had a fire that started tomorrow morning, we'd be in the same boat," he said, adding he had spoken to several agencies but "no one has taken any action."

Kat Opliger, Mountain Division chief for **County Fire**, said she wasn't here during the '07 fire and so wasn't privy to information firefighters had problems with water at that time. Where she lives, she noted, they have water storage tanks that rely on gravity so they have water with or without power.

She added that much of the system on the mountain is gravity fed, which is a great help. In addition, Opliger said, "we order a lot of water tenders to support the effort."

When Williams said there weren't any in 2007, the chief begged to differ. "I'm sure there were," she said. "They come on our initial attack ticket. Each ticket has a water tender attached to it. I'm willing to bet Cal Fire has a water tender on their ticket, too."

Opliger noted there are water tenders in Crestline, Lake Arrowhead and Green Valley Lake. In addition, Cal Fire has several engines that will augment the water need.

Williams said he was told by whichever water company he talked with that they are not responsible for anything other than having enough water for one structure and that "they are not in the forest fire suppression business."

Catherine Cerri, the interim general manager for the Lake Arrowhead Community Services District, said there was power generation at all their water facilities during the 2007 fire.

"It's about being able to maintain water pressure," she said. "The hydrants were open, homes were being burned down, pipes were exposed."

LACSD Operations Manager Matt Brooks noted that "the fire burned so hot, a lot of pipes melted and streamed water.

"There was lots of activity up there," Brooks said. "They were drawing off the system very hard. The fire came through like a fire storm—the whole neighborhood was on fire. Guys had to do what they could to save their own lives."

Mike Blackwood, LACSD's field operations manager, said when their crew was finally able to get into the area, "we found fire hoses that appeared to be severed still connected to the hydrants. We were having difficulty recharging the system. We were slowly gaining pressure and investigated why it was taking so long. We found hoses connected with no nozzles, flowing water.

"We closed the hydrants and disconnected hoses that appeared to be damaged."

"Our requirement," said Cerri, "is to maintain a certain pressure to help with a structural fire. A wildfire is a completely different situation. This was an extreme event."

What they are required to maintain, noted Brooks, is a minimum of 20 psi during fire flow situations. "Normal fire flow wouldn't be what we saw. There were multiple hydrants open at the same time. We couldn't achieve 20 psi based on the hydrants having been left open."

He reiterated: "The firefighters had to do what they could to save their own lives."

Generators are already in place, Brooks said. The same situation today would be similar. "The water system is not designed to fight a whole tract of 30 to 40 homes. Even water systems down the hill would have problems. That's why they bring in aircraft to do water drops in situations like that."

Blackwood noted the 2007 fire was a learning experience for the mountain and the water district. "We are looking at alternative ways to supply water to areas that run short. That's part of the district's game plan. We are looking at opening zones that typically don't feed an area."

Battalion Chief Mark Barr of Cal Fire told Williams and the others at the MAC meeting that “we don’t just stop because there’s no water coming out of the hydrants.

“We use lakes, rivers, can set up tanks.”

Williams suggested a coordinated effort between all the water districts and fire departments might be in order. Opliger said she would bring some answers to the next MAC meeting, scheduled for Aug. 4.

Lake Arrowhead resident George Hatt told the commissioners that water is just one part of fire suppression. “We have no defensible space around homes. I don’t care how much water you have available; it’s very hard to defend a house if it’s surrounded by trees.”

The retired firefighter noted that he has “defended hundreds of homes with no water but that in my truck. The firefighters need help. If you want them to protect your house, cut down some of the trees.”

To that end, Battalion Chief Chris Norton of County Fire described the residential assessment program (RAP). “We’ll come out for free and help you identify trees that should be cut down,” he said. The firefighters who make the educational visit will check that the house’s address is clearly visible, that weeds and grasses are cut to an appropriate height, that combustible debris has been removed from the property, that branches are not hanging over the house.

“If you give us a place to protect,” Norton said, “we’ll stay there all day long.”

http://www.mountain-news.com/news/article_7598edca-4ed5-11e6-bb36-6f24c98d5004.html

Temps to top 100s today in Southern California, but 10 years ago was even hotter

City News Service/ The Sun

Posted: July 21, 2016, 6:28 AM



Cristina Carrillo, 18, holds hands with Aileen Mokay, 10, Wednesday, July 20, 2016, inside the cool LA Kings’s Valley Ice Center rink in Panorama City as triple-digit heat descended on the valleys. The hot spell should continue through Tuesday, forecasters says. (Photo by John McCoy/Los Angeles Daily News)



Areas in orange on this National Weather Service forecast map for Thursday, July 21, 2016, are expected to experience temperatures of 100 degrees or more.

LOS ANGELES — This week’s heat wave will pick up more momentum today, scorching the Southland with triple-digit temperatures in many areas and prompting heat advisories and increased fire danger through the weekend.

National Weather Service forecasters said high pressure building over the area will be in full force by Friday and Saturday, bringing temperatures well above normal.

The system will result “in daytime high temperatures around 10 degrees above what is normally the hottest time of the year,” according to the NWS. “Temperatures between 100 and 108 degrees will be common in the valleys and lower mountains of Los Angeles and Ventura counties ... with only modest relief at night.”

Today’s highs are expected to reach the 80s at the beaches, the 90s inland and above 100 degrees in the valleys.

An excessive heat watch will be in effect from Friday morning through Saturday night in the Los Angeles County Mountains, Santa Mountain Mountains Recreational Area and the Santa Clarita, San Fernando and San Gabriel valleys.

The Los Angeles County Department of Public Health issued a heat alert through Saturday for the Santa Monica Mountains and the San Fernando, Santa Clarita and East San Gabriel valleys. A separate heat alert is in effect today and Friday for the Antelope Valley, and for Friday in the Los Angeles Basin.

A fire weather watch will be in effect Friday afternoon and evening in the Los Angeles County mountains and Angeles National Forest due to anticipated gusty winds and low humidity.

Forecasters warned that triple-digit heat could present a danger to some residents, and demand for electricity could be high, creating the possibility of outages.

“Never, ever leave people or pets in enclosed vehicles, even for a short period of time,” the NWS warned. “Take extra precautions if you work or spend time outside. When possible, reschedule strenuous activities to early morning or evening. Know the signs and symptoms of heat exhaustion and heat stroke. Wear light weight and loose-fitting clothing when possible and drink plenty of water.”

NWS officials noted, however, that there’s not much chance of any heat records being broken.

“Friday through Sunday mark the 10-year anniversary of one of the hottest events on record for any month -- Woodland Hills hit 119 on July 22, 2006, the all-time high for any of our climate stations,” according to the Weather Service.

Today’s high-temperature forecasts around the region are:

Big Bear: 87

Downtown Los Angeles: 94

Lancaster: 105

Long Beach: 87

North Hollywood: 99

Northridge: 103

Ontario: 101

Palmdale: 101

Pasadena: 102

Rancho Cucamonga: 100

Redlands: 103

San Bernardino: 104

San Gabriel: 98

San Pedro: 82

Santa Clarita: 106

Torrance: 85

Van Nuys: 101

West Covina: 101

Whittier: 98

Woodland Hills: 105

Inland areas could see higher-than-normal temperatures as late as next Tuesday, although coastal areas should see some cooling beginning Sunday, forecasters said.

<http://www.dailynews.com/general-news/20160721/temps-to-top-100s-today-in-southern-california-but-10-years-ago-was-even-hotter>