



NEWS



News Headlines 09/30/2016

- Residents Catch And Detain Arsonist
- Governor's Office of Emergency Services issues earthquake advisory for surrounding areas
- Overturned motor home causes road closure on Peach Avenue in Hesperia
- The blaze that won't die: How Monterey County wildfire became one of costliest to fight
- San Bernardino County rolls out its new Seismic Simulator earthquake exhibit
- San Manuel tribe contributes \$150K to Blue Cut fire relief fund

Residents Catch And Detain Arsonist

Steve Cassling, KBHR 93.3 & 102.5FM Big Bear News

Posted: September 28, 2016



San Bernardino, CA, September 28, 2016 – On Sunday, Sept. 25, at about 8:15 p.m., firefighters from **San Bernardino County Fire** and the US Forest Service responded to a reported vegetation fire in lower Waterman Canyon in San Bernardino. Upon their arrival, the fire had been extinguished by a resident. The resident stated a male subject had started the fire and gave fire authorities a description. A search of the area turned up negative for the subject described.

Later the next morning just after midnight, another vegetation fire was reported in the same vicinity. While firefighters fought to contain the fire, investigators were notified that two residents had caught the suspected arsonists and had him detained near the creek. A San Bernardino County Fire Investigator and a US Forest Service Investigator responded and took custody of the subject.

Investigators determined the subject, later identified as 20 year old Edwin Lizano, is suspected of deliberately setting both fires. Lizano was charged with two counts of arson, and booked at the West Valley Detention Center by San Bernardino Police Officers in lieu of \$250,000 bail.

Residents quick actions may have saved their neighborhood from going up in flames and helped put an arsonist behind bars. SBCoFire thanks these residents for being vigilant, “seeing something, and saying something”.

<http://kbhr933.com/current-news/residents-catch-detain-arsonist/>

Governor's Office of Emergency Services issues earthquake advisory for surrounding areas

Jose Quintero, Daily Press

Posted: September 29, 2016, 8:41 AM

Small magnitude earthquakes near the Salton Sea earlier this week prompted state officials to issue an advisory on the possibility of similar or larger earthquakes in the near future.

“California is earthquake country. We must always be prepared and not let our guard down,” said Governor’s Office of Emergency Services Director Mark Ghilarducci in a statement. “The threat of an earthquake on the San Andreas Fault hasn’t gone away, so this is another important opportunity for us to revisit our emergency plans and learn what steps you need to take if a significant earthquake hits.”

Ghilarducci asked the California Earthquake Prediction Evaluation Council, which includes scientists from the California Geological Survey, University of California at San Diego, Southern California Earthquake Center at USC and the United States Geological Survey, to discuss and evaluate a sequence of small earthquakes that recently hit the Salton Sea area.

According to the Governor's Office of Emergency Services, the council “concluded that stresses associated with this recent earthquake swarm may slightly increase the probability between 0.03 percent and 1.0 percent of an additional earthquake as large, or larger, than the Sept. 26 magnitude 4.3” occurring until 9 a.m. on Oct. 4.

The Governor’s Office of Emergency Services has issued an earthquake advisory for the San Bernardino, Kern, Los Angeles, Riverside, Imperial, San Diego, Orange and Ventura counties based on the discussions.

“Local emergency management, government, schools and the public should review their earthquake preparedness plans, maintain awareness and be prepared to take action should the earthquake occur,” the Governor’s Office of Emergency Services said.

USGS Research Seismologist Robert Graves told the Daily Press that these types of advisories should serve as a reminder to residents to take precautionary measures.

“In general, advisories are not common. They have been issued in the past in situations like this where we see somewhat unusual behavior, particularly near our large active faults,” Graves said. “Living in Southern California we are in this together and have to acknowledge and recognize that earthquakes are a part of life.

“They are unpredictable in terms of when, where or how large. But past history has shown us you don’t go very long within a time span where you don’t have a strong or major earthquake.”

The San Andreas Fault, which runs through the Cajon Pass, stretches 700 miles through California, and the southern end is estimated to be 50 to 100 years overdue for a large earthquake.

The San Andreas Fault suffered two major quakes in the 19th century — a 7.5 magnitude in 1812 and a 7.9 earthquake in 1857. The San Andreas Fault in Southern California has been quiet since and Southern California hasn’t had a true “Big One,” which is a quake greater than a 7.7 magnitude, since 1857.

Other nearby fault lines include the San Bernardino fault zone near Oak Hills, the Helendale Fault and a fault line that goes through Lenwood. Graves said most of the faults in the High Desert are active faults.

“The San Andreas Fault is a major player but it is not the only fault. But the rate in which (the other faults) have earthquakes is far lower than the San Andreas Fault,” Graves said. “In 1992, there was a large earthquake (magnitude 7.3) called the Landers Earthquake which ruptured north of Indio and east of Barstow. That quake ruptured on a series of faults that prior to that event, the previous earthquake was maybe 60 or 80 thousand years ago. So very infrequent, but obviously an active fault.

“Prediction in a precise sense is not and may never be possible, but with a fault like the San Andreas — (it's) had large earthquakes in the past and will have large earthquakes in the future.”

<http://www.vvdailypress.com/news/20160929/governors-office-of-emergency-services-issues-earthquake-advisory-for-surrounding-areas>

Overtured motor home causes road closure on Peach Avenue in Hesperia

Monica Solano, Daily Press

Posted Sep 29, 2016 at 5:51 PM

HESPERIA — A motor home overturned on its side after crashing into another vehicle and shutting down the roadway for a short period of time Thursday afternoon.

Just after 4 p.m., Hesperia Sheriff's Station deputies and **San Bernardino County Fire Department** responded to a traffic collision near the corner of Donert Street and Peach Avenue in Hesperia involving a silver Chevy Silverado pick up truck and a Gulf Stream motor home pulling a buggy.

According to Officer Chris Johnson, the driver of the motor home was traveling eastbound on Donert and attempted to make a left turn onto Peach.

However, the breaks on the motor home failed to work, causing the motor home to hit the pickup traveling southbound on Peach and overturn onto the front yard of a residential home.

"The driver inside the motor home just barely chipped the front of the pickup truck, causing it to turn over on it's side," Johnson said. "Thankfully there was only one occupant inside both vehicles and they came out alright. It could have been much worse."

Both the driver of the motor home and the pickup truck suffered no injuries, but both vehicles sustained moderate damage.

"I'm in shock right now," the driver of the motor home told the Daily Press. "I'm just thankful I'm OK, he's OK and tomorrow will be a better day. Sadly that motor home was my retirement."

Witness Ramona Casillas and her daughter Victoria Quintero said they were on their way home from the grocery store when they happened to notice the traffic and officials blocking off the road.

"This isn't the first accident that's happened on this street," Casillas said. "There's always too many cars speeding down this road and we've even had a child attempting to cross the street at the crosswalk who sadly died. I'm just glad no one was hurt, but people should really learn how to slow down."

Peach Avenue was shut down for a short period of time as deputies attempted to clear the scene and tow both vehicles out of the roadway.

<http://www.vvdailynews.com/news/20160929/overtured-motor-home-causes-road-closure-on-peach-avenue-in-hesperia>

The blaze that won't die: How Monterey County wildfire became one of costliest to fight

James Queally, LA Times

Posted: September 30, 2016, 8:35 AM



Growing up in the scenic Carmel Valley Village, Vanessa Radley has seen her share of fires spread across the picturesque mountains and ranch land east of Big Sur.

But the blaze burning through the rough terrain has left even the most resilient Monterey County residents rattled and on guard.

She and thousands of others in the coastal hillside have spent a good chunk of their summer dodging the Soberanes fire, a blaze that simply will not die. California has seen larger and more destructive fires, but the Soberanes fire has become infamous because of the myriad difficulties firefighters have faced in trying to tame the out-of-control inferno.

With hundreds of firefighters on the lines for two months now, it has become one of the most expensive wildfires in U.S. history, costing at least \$229 million, officials said.

Moving through nearly impossible-to-access terrain and fed by drought-shriveled fuels that are all but desperate to burn, the Soberanes fire has swallowed up more than 126,000 acres and destroyed several dozen homes since it was sparked by an illegal campfire on July 22, officials said.

“We’ve never had that feeling of ‘we’re out of the woods,’” said Cmdr. Bob Moses, who heads the Monterey County Sheriff’s Department’s SWAT team and has been involved in fire operations.

That leaves people like Radley on edge, not sure when wind gusts might send the fire surging back in her direction. She knows other communities have been evacuated in the middle of the night, and Radley said she’s been doing laundry nearly every day to ensure her family is ready to flee.

“I make sure to have the phone by the bed at night,” she says with a nervous smile.

Radley’s home is located near what firefighters hope to be one of the last battlegrounds in a two-month struggle.

The stubbornness of the Soberanes fire is the latest sign of how years of drought have contributed to a difficult fire season. Major fires across the state — in Lake and Kern counties, along the San Diego County border with Mexico and in the Cajon Pass area near San Bernardino, have destroyed hundreds of homes and left

six people dead. Fire officials said the situation could get worse as Santa Ana winds pick up in Southern California in the coming months.

From the beginning, the blaze has proved difficult to battle. When it started, firefighters had to hike nearly two miles just to access the flames lapping hungrily at brush near the Soberanes Creek Trail. As the blaze surged in size, growing between 5,000 and 6,000 acres each day during the first week, firefighters struggled to get in close enough to stop its advance.

“What ultimately creates containment lines is boots on the ground. There’s a misconception that aerial operations extinguish fires,” said Steve Kliet, a spokesman for the Soberanes fire response. “We have essentially a giant campfire that will not be penetrated completely by air resources.”

In ideal conditions, firefighters would be able to approach the blaze directly and battle the flames just feet from the body of the fire. But the steep rocky ridges of the Los Padres National Forest and Garrapato State Park, where the bulk of the fire has burned, have made direct access nearly impossible for hand crews. Aside from the difficulty of getting personnel near the body of the fire, the treacherous slopes also make it tough for firefighters to escape if the flames advance toward them.

Containing the fire has been less about battling the blaze up close and more about trapping it, officials said. Response teams have strategically set fire to swaths of dry grass and cut down patches of trees that would allow the blaze to travel toward more populated areas. Last week, officials were hopeful that a final so-called “burnout” along the ridges over Arroyo Seco would pin the fire inside the forest, where it can be monitored until rains come and completely extinguish it later this year.

While firefighters had planned to use strategic burns to keep the fire away from Arroyo Seco, officials said a favorable weather shift last weekend allowed firefighters to get in close and establish containment lines by directly attacking the blaze. Evacuation warnings for the Arroyo Seco area were lifted on Monday, officials said.

While the fire is mostly confined to wilderness now, it was far more destructive in its early days. From July 22 to July 30, more than 50 homes were destroyed along the Palo Colorado Canyon near the Pacific Coast Highway and in the Carmel Highlands. A bulldozer operator, Robert Reagan, was killed in an accident while working on a rugged slope, fire officials said.

Some officials have described the fire as the most expensive the U.S. Forest Service has ever fought. But Jennifer Jones, a spokeswoman for the National Interagency Fire Center, said that’s likely not true because those figures don’t account for inflation. Firefighting equipment, the cost of setting up base camps for firefighters around the county and the sheer duration of the blaze have driven up costs, according to Elaine Briggs, a spokeswoman for the California Interagency Management Team that has overseen much of the blaze.

The cost of just the firefighting equipment being used is roughly \$69 million, according to Briggs. Officials also have had to house firefighters in four camps — with laundry facilities, sleeping quarters, showers and other necessities — which Briggs said accounted for roughly 32% of the entire bill.

The fire has advanced toward sparsely populated areas since then, which has helped minimize threats to property and public safety, but also made the blaze even tougher to battle.

An acrid smoke odor hangs thick in the air along Chews Ridge, a mountain peak near the Tassajara Hot Springs resort that provides one of the best points to see the massive ash cloud rising from the belly of the fire. A series of surprise wind gusts caught firefighters off guard last week, launching embers toward Chews Ridge and creating a second fire that burned several hundred acres while first responders were in the midst of a shift change, said Brentwood Reid, another spokesman for the firefighting effort.

The secondary fire was sparked deep in a valley where there is little to no space for a helicopter to land, meaning firefighters had to hike down extremely steep ridges and along ground that tends to shift underfoot as they walk.

“This is just unforgiving country,” said Jake Cagle, a Kern County fire captain on hand to battle the blaze.

While the fire has caused pockets of panic whenever it approaches an area where homes may be threatened, most Monterey County residents seem confident that fire crews have it penned inside the forest.

And tourists and locals can be seen perusing the shops and restaurants along Monte Verde Street, one of Carmel-by-the-Sea’s main thoroughfares, as if oblivious to the hint of charcoal in the air and smoke cloud hanging over heads. Signs praising the firefighters’ efforts are ubiquitous along Carmel Valley Road, while a simple message of “Thxs Heros” is painted in graffiti stylings along a mountain ridge lining the scenic Laureles Grade Pass.

Jenny Angier, a waitress at the Running Iron restaurant in Carmel Valley where many firefighters enjoy a meal between shifts, said she’s less concerned about the fire’s advance and more about the long-term effects of the blaze. The fire destroyed several hiking trails and closed large swaths of state park land along the coast, which blunted tourism revenues in the area and put some locals out of work. The weeks spent breathing in smoke have also tested her patience at times.

“I have asthma. I’ve been using my medication more than I ever have in my entire life,” she said.

Other residents say panic has followed the path of the fire. Ernie Long, a 58-year-old mediator from Sacramento who spends his weekends at a home in the Carmel Valley Village area, remembers the fear he felt as the fire advanced toward his one-story ranch home on Paso Hondo Road in July. Ash rained down on Long’s home while firefighters remained stationed on a nearby baseball diamond, a last line of defense between his home and tongues of hungry yellow flames.

“If the fire had come over this ridge, there would have been absolutely no way to stop it,” Long said, pointing out his living room window to a row of houses that would have served as tinder.

The fire has moved in the opposite direction in recent weeks, moving southeast toward Arroyo Seco. But the mere sight of fire can still stoke fear in the community. Last week, crews burned away grass and other fuels on a mountain ridge to stop the fire’s advance, and smoke clouds wafted into the Carmel Valley again, causing Long to wonder if he was in danger for a second time.

“When they did that burn it was like ‘Oh, lord,’” Long said. “Is it coming back?”

<http://www.latimes.com/local/lanow/la-me-ln-soberanes-fire-20160926-snap-htmlstory.html>

San Bernardino County rolls out its new Seismic Simulator earthquake exhibit

Fontana Herald News

Posted: September 30, 2016 9:09 AM



Participants had a chance to experience the Seismic Simulator on Sept. 28. (Contributed photo by San Bernardino County Fire Department)

The latest and greatest in earthquake education was unveiled Sept. 28 outside the San Bernardino County Government Center.

Officials from the **San Bernardino County Fire Department** Office of Emergency Services introduced a new mobile earthquake educational exhibit called the Seismic Simulator.

The Seismic Simulator is a mobile earthquake simulator that simulates the lateral movement and violent physical shaking experience of a very strong, major earthquake. Up to four passengers can be seated at one time within the exhibit. Passengers are shown a brief educational video on the importance of practicing "Drop, Cover and Hold On!" before experiencing the simulated force of an earthquake within a mock living room setting.

"It's not a question of 'if,' but 'when' the next damaging earthquake will occur in San Bernardino County," said Michael Antonucci, Emergency Services manager. "The Seismic Simulator shows residents just how crucial it is to be prepared before another earthquake strikes in our region."

Representatives from the Office of Emergency Services highlighted how the Seismic Simulator was created through a \$148,500 grant from the Federal Emergency Management Agency. The earthquake exhibit will be made available to partner agencies and other jurisdictions.

"Promoting disaster preparedness is what the Seismic Simulator is all about. The more residents we have prepared, the better chance our communities have to recover after an earthquake," said Michael A. Ramirez, Emergency Services officer.

Officials also encouraged residents to download the county's new disaster preparedness app called Ready SB County, now available in the Google Play and Apple Store. The new app, Ready SB County, provides residents with multiple resources and step-by-step instructions that will assist them in preparing for a disaster.

Persons can contact the Office of Emergency Services at (909) 356-3998 to request the Seismic Simulator be made available.

Residents are also asked to register for the worldwide Great ShakeOut Earthquake Drills scheduled for 10:20 a.m. on Oct. 20 by visiting sbcfire.org/ShakeOut.

http://www.fontanaheraldnews.com/news/san-bernardino-county-rolls-out-its-new-seismic-simulator-earthquake/article_35f3aa80-8728-11e6-9d8b-5ba1b3b46486.html

San Manuel tribe contributes \$150K to Blue Cut fire relief fund

Doug Saunders, San Bernardino Sun

Posted: September 30, 2016, 1:13 PM



San Bernardino County Firefighter/Engineer/Paramedic Jeremy Pendergraft helps a couple evacuate out of their home as she cries off of Hess Road as the Blue Cut fire off of Highway 138 quickly approaches Tuesday. (Will Lester/SCNG-INLAND VALLEY DAILY BULLETIN)

SAN BERNARDINO >> The San Manuel Band of Mission Indians contributed \$150,000 to the Blue Cut fire Relief Fund, the United Way announced Friday.

This donation, along with contributions from Southern California Edison, The California Endowment, and Tesoro Southern California on behalf of its ARCO, USA Gasoline and Shell-branded gas stations throughout San Bernardino County, have brought the relief fund total to more than \$380,000.

“Our hearts go out to all those who were impacted by the Blue Cut fire,” said Chairwoman Lynn Valbuena of the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians. “We applaud the efforts of the Inland Empire United Way and other service organizations who are working diligently to assist those affected by the fire.”

The massive Blue Cut fire ravaged through the Cajon Pass devouring nearly everything in its path in August.

More than 100 homes were destroyed and thousands of acres charred as flames swiftly moved up Highway 138 and throughout areas of Lytle Creek.

Sheriff’s officials evacuated nearly 80,000 residents from their homes as the fire spread into communities.

Fire officials have not yet determined the cause of the fire.

<http://www.dailybulletin.com/general-news/20160930/san-manuel-tribe-contributes-150k-to-blue-cut-fire-relief-fund>