



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Fire Chief / Fire Warden*

DATE: *Thursday, December 31, 2015*
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County Firefighters Rescue Dog From Mine Shaft

Date/Time: Thursday, December 31, 2015 11:28 AM

Location: Powerline Rd at Meridian Rd
Lucerne Valley, CA

Incident Type: Technical Rescue

Just before 11:30 this morning, San Bernardino County Fire received a report of a fall victim in a mine south of Lucerne Valley. Further inquiries from dispatchers revealed that it was a small dog that had fallen down a shaft.

First units on scene met with a local family who stated they were on a hike when they encountered an entrance to a mine approximately 2 miles north of their present location. They said that they were crawling through the entrance when Julie, their fifteen pound poodle, ran ahead and fell down a shaft that was about thirty feet into the mine.

Heavy Rescue units from Hesperia and Fontana responded to the desert scene to reinforce the engine company, medic ambulance, brush patrol and chief officer already assigned for a total of sixteen personnel. The entrance to the mine is 30 inches high by 30 inches wide. It quickly opens up into a long horizontal drift along which the first shaft was located. Artificial light was required due to total darkness that existed when traveling more than ten feet from the entrance. Atmospheric monitoring was established to ensure adequate oxygen levels and the absence of any hazardous gases.

The shaft was located and determined to be thirty-five feet deep. Julie was visible at the bottom moving and yipping on the floor. A rope system was established, anchored into the hillside, and extended into the mine.

Just after 4:00 PM, Julie was brought out of the mine by County firefighters and reunited with her family. There were no injuries to Julie, rescue personnel, or civilians.

There are thousands of mines throughout San Bernardino County. County Fire averages four rescues per year in these environments, most with less favorable outcomes than Julie's. We remind the public that abandoned mines are extremely hazardous and ask that they be avoided.

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