



NEWS



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- Pickup catches on fire after veering into the desert

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Monica Solano, Victor Valley Daily Press

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A Chevrolet pickup truck caught fire causing a small vegetation fire in an open field near Main Street and Escondido Ave on Thursday. The cause of the fire is under investigation. David Pardo, Daily Press

HESPERIA — A male driver was transported to a local hospital after his vehicle veered off the road and caught fire Thursday evening, officials said.

Just after 6 p.m., **San Bernardino County Fire Department** and Hesperia Sheriff's Station deputies responded to reports of a white Chevy pickup on fire in the desert just north of Main Street and Escondido Avenue in Hesperia.

For reasons still under investigation, the driver of the truck veered off the roadway on Main Street and into the desert. The truck then hit a large sand hill and became stuck in a hole, according to Deputy Brian Lovasco.

Per scanner traffic, the truck appeared to be hanging near the edge of the California Aqueduct in Hesperia and a cloud of thick black smoke could be seen from Interstate 15.

The fire quickly began to spread to vegetation in the surrounding desert, but firefighters were able to extinguish the fire in five minutes, according to County Fire spokesperson Ryan Vaccaro.

Witnesses Wesley and Donna Howard of Hesperia said they were driving down Main Street to stop for dinner when they noticed the truck drive off the road and into the desert.

“We saw a cloud of dust coming up from Main Street, it was everywhere. After, we saw a truck drove off into the desert and hit a lose beam and the truck bounced up the hill,” Wesley Howard said. “We then saw the man fall out of the truck and we tried making contact with him but we couldn't understand what he was saying.”

According to Wesley Howard, the driver then got back into his truck and started his car again attempting to try to get it unstuck. However, the man was forced to leave the pickup again as the flames began to get more intense.

“We saw he was spitting up blood and he was bleeding internally. So we called 9-1-1,” Donna Howard said.

The driver of the truck sustained moderate to major injuries and complained of chest and stomach pains, Lovasco said.

“We still don’t know if the injuries were external or internal,” Lovasco said. “But the driver was transported to Desert Valley Hospital for treatment.”

Firefighters were on scene for 30 minute as they continued to mop up the area.

The cause of the crash remains under investigation.

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