



NEWS



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Early Morning Yucca Mesa Fire Burns Outbuildings

Staff Writer, z1077news
Posted on January 16, 2018

Firefighters from Yucca Firefighters from Yucca Mesa, Yucca Valley, and Joshua Tree were called out to a fire early this morning. According to **San Bernardino County Fire** Battalion Chief Mike Snow, The call about a residential structure fire came in at 12:49 a.m. to the 59000 block of Lutz Lane in Yucca Mesa. Yucca Mesa firefighters were first on the scene and determined that a couple of outbuildings, a detached garage, and recreational trailers were burning out of control. It took the 15 firefighters nearly an hour to get the fire knocked down, and they managed to save the family's primary residence. Snow said a resident had been burning yard waste in a barrel located too close to the exterior of the garage and the light winds caused flames to spread into surrounding structures. The structures and contents, valued at about \$50,000, are a total loss.

<http://z1077fm.com/local-news/todays-full-newscast/>

Eleven small fires are set near base of Cajon Pass; Fontana area man is arrested on arson charges

Staff writer, Fontana Herald News
Posted: January 15, 2018



The San Bernardino County Fire Department reported that 11 small fires were extinguished in the base of the Cajon Pass on Jan. 15.

Eleven small fires were set near the base of the Cajon Pass on the morning of Monday, Jan. 15, and a local man has been arrested on arson charges, authorities said.

The fires were reported between the hours of 6 a.m. and 10 a.m. and burned a total of six acres before being extinguished, according to the **San Bernardino County Fire** Department.

One of the fires was near the Interstate 15 Freeway and Glen Helen Parkway, said Public Information Officer Eric Sherwin.

There were no injuries to civilians or to firefighters, and no structures were damaged. The blazes, which burned local, state, and federal lands, were put out with help from the U.S. Forest Service and Cal Fire.

The San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department reported that Central Station deputies have arrested 29-year-old Ricky Whipple, a transient from the Fontana area. Whipple was identified as the suspect allegedly responsible for starting the vegetation fires.

http://www.fontanaheraldnews.com/news/eleven-small-fires-are-set-near-base-of-cajon-pass/article_d4f92802-fa46-11e7-82d1-bfcbd31890a7.html

Authorities investigating fatal head-on crash on Mariposa Road in Hesperia

Kevin Trudgeon, Daily Press

Posted: January 15, 2018, 9:17 a.m.



Emergency personnel from the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department and Fire Department responded to a call of a "head-on major injury crash" near the intersection of Mariposa Road and Mojave Street in Hesperia at approximately 8:33 p.m. Saturday. [Submitted photo]

HESPERIA — One person was killed and another severely injured in a head-on crash along Mariposa Road on Saturday evening, authorities said.

Emergency personnel from the **San Bernardino County** Sheriff's Department and **Fire** Department responded to a call of a "head-on major injury crash" near the intersection of Mariposa Road and Mojave Street at approximately 8:33 p.m.

"Deputies and fire personnel arrived on scene and found two vehicles, a 2015 Kia Forte and a 2003 Buick Century, that were involved in the collision," sheriff's officials said. "Both adult male drivers were suffering from major injuries and the driver of the 2003 Buick was trapped inside the vehicle due to the damage from the collision."

Despite life-saving efforts, the driver of the Buick died at the scene, authorities said. The driver of the Kia was extricated and flown to Arrowhead Regional Medical Center, where he remains in critical condition.

"Based on physical evidence found at the scene, investigators believe that the driver of the 2003 Buick was traveling north on Mariposa Road when for unknown reasons (he) crossed over into the southbound lane of travel, striking the southbound Kia head on," sheriff's officials said.

"The impact caused major damage to both vehicles and blocked both north and southbound lanes of travel." The Hesperia Sheriff's Station's Major Accident Investigation Team responded and Mariposa Road was closed in both directions until approximately 2 a.m. The crash remains under investigation and it is unknown if alcohol was a contributing factor, authorities said.

Anyone with information is urged to contact the Deputy Scott LaFond or Sgt. Doug Hubbard at the Hesperia Sheriff's Station at 760-947-1500. Callers wishing to remain anonymous may call the We-Tip Hotline at 1-800-782-7463 or visit www.wetip.com.

<http://www.vvdailynews.com/news/20180115/authorities-investigating-fatal-head-on-crash-on-mariposa-road-in-hesperia>

Fatal Accident Shuts Down Mariposa Road

Staff Writer, VVNG

Posted: January 13, 2018



At least one person is confirmed dead following a traffic collision in Hesperia. (Photo: Gabriel D. Espinoza)

HESPERIA, Calif. (VVNG.com) A portion of Mariposa Road remains closed following a fatal traffic collision Saturday night.

The San Bernardino County Hesperia Sheriff's Station and **SB County Fire** Department personnel responded to a two-vehicle traffic collision at around 7:40 p.m. on Mariposa Road, just north of Main Street.

Upon arrival firefighters located a white 2015 Kia Forte and a dark-colored 2003 Buick Century with major front-end damage in the middle of the roadway.

Per scanner traffic, two airships were initially requested to transport two critically injured occupants. However, one of the requests was later cancelled.

A yellow tarp was draped over the driver side door of the Buick just after 8:00 p.m. Additionally, firefighters had to use the hose to put out the burnt-out remains of smoldering engine parts of both vehicles.

Mariposa Road between Avenal and Mojave Street will remain closed for several hours as the Sheriff's Department investigate the cause of the crash.

<https://www.vvng.com/fatal-accident-shuts-mariposa-road/>

Mudslide rescue team led by local chief

Stacy Moore, Hi-Desert Star

Posted: Friday, January 12, 2018, 3:55 p.m.

MONTECITO — Wading through muck and probing through piles of rocks and trees, members of an urban search and rescue team from **San Bernardino County Fire** are looking for mudslide survivors in the coastal town of Montecito.

Leading them is Battalion Chief Donny Vilorio, who is usually assigned to the Morongo Basin. Vilorio is the regional coordinator for Task Force 6. There are 12 task forces in California, and No. 6 is all San Bernardino County Fire personnel.

“This area got a significant amount of rainfall in a short period of time. There's a great deal of damage,” Vilorio said by phone Friday.

“There are areas where we’re working where up on the trees, 20 feet up, you can see where the mud moved through.”

It’s not regular mud, either.

“It’s all black earth, wet and mucky, and there’s hazardous waste in all that muck,” the chief said.

After Hurricane Harvey, people talked about the “toxic soup” that floodwaters created — a poisonous mix of chemicals, waste, flesh-eating bacteria and other pathogens. Viloría compared it to the mud in Montecito. “It’s like a porridge. That’s what our guys are walking in.”

Downed power lines and broken gas pipes pile on the hazards.

Viloría and his crew are working in 30 square miles of destruction created when a storm early Tuesday morning sent mud barreling down hillsides charred by wildfires.

At least 17 people were killed ranging in age from a 3-year-old girl to an 89-year-old man. The latest report from search leaders is that five people are still missing, but a local sheriff’s report said the number will continue to fluctuate.

It’s the job of Viloría and his crew to find those people.

“We’re working through piles of rocks, mud, trees. We’re poking through those to try to determine if there was a life involved,” he said.

The mudslides were a moving wall of mud and debris. “You have boulders the size of fire engines moving through, and a person doesn’t have much chance, the chief admitted.

“We’ve seen several bridges twisted and damaged,” he said. “These are large pieces of metal and concrete.”

Anyone who survived the mudslides Tuesday morning would have faced three days without water, food or shelter. As hours pass, it’s less likely that they’ll find anyone alive but Viloría’s crew isn’t giving up hope yet. Fire Department spokesman Eric Sherwin described Task Force 6 as an all-risk, multi-disciplinary team. The 30 professional firefighters are also specialists trained in shoring up collapsed buildings and making rescues in confined spaces, trenches and floods.

Members have additional training as paramedics, hazardous materials specialists, heavy equipment operators, technical search specialists, structure specialists and commanders.

They also have a drone, but Viloría said it can only do so much, as the firefighters have to physically move debris to look for people.

“It’s rather arduous,” Viloría said.

Just slogging through the mud becomes draining over the course of the shift. The captain described it as “a soft, mucky soil.”

“It’s a bit of a strain on our workforce,” he added.

Hazards are hidden in the mud itself.

“Up here, you have sewage, you have the potential for deceased victims, humans and animals, as well as chemicals that were in the houses,” Viloría explained.

“Where you put your hands is important.”

After their shift, the task force members undergo a quick cleaning — “gross decontamination” in the parlance of hazmat response. “It gets the bulk of mud and muck and chemicals and nastiness off you,” the chief explained.

They proceed to another area for a more detailed decontamination.

There’s also danger in what lies beneath the mud. “There’s open manhole covers, open swimming pools, open pits, and it’s like quicksand if you fall into it,” he explained.

They were on 24-hour shifts but scaled back because it is too dangerous to work at night.

Viloría expects the team to stay in Montecito for several more days looking for survivors, and then the deceased.

http://www.hidesertstar.com/news/article_0ad77046-f7f4-11e7-94ba-c3cf3f7a6b31.html

Fontana woman dies in rollover crash; South Gate woman arrested on suspicion of DUI

Jim Steinberg, San Bernardino Sun

Posted: January 12, 2018, 5:37 p.m.

An 18-year-old Fontana woman was killed and a South Gate woman was arrested on suspicion of DUI following a two-vehicle rollover collision Thursday evening in Fontana, CHP and coroner’s officials said. Rebecca Ann Barrasa died at Arrowhead Regional Medical Center in Colton following an 8:39 p.m. two-vehicle collision Thursday evening on Arrow Boulevard near Cherry Avenue, according to separate releases from the California Highway Patrol and San Bernardino County Coroner’s Office.

Barrasa was driving eastbound on Arrow Boulevard in a 2005 Toyota Corolla and turning left on Cherry Avenue.

There, she collided with a 2014 Nissan Pathfinder heading westbound on Arrow Boulevard approaching Cherry Avenue at a high rate of speed, CHP officials said witnesses told them. The Pathfinder rolled onto its roof.

The driver of the Pathfinder, Maria Gonzalez, of South Gate, was arrested on suspicion of driving under the influence of alcohol in that 8:39 p.m. crash, the CHP statement said.

Two juvenile passengers were removed from Gonzalez’s Pathfinder by the **San Bernardino County Fire Department** and transported to Loma Linda University Children’s Hospital for minor injuries.

Gonzalez was also removed by county fire and taken to Arrowhead Regional for major injuries, the CHP report said.

The traffic collision is still under investigation, pending further witness information, the report said. The CHP asks that witnesses contact Officer K. Simmons at 909-980-3994.

<https://www.dailybulletin.com/2018/01/12/fontana-woman-dies-in-rollover-crash-south-gate-woman-arrested-on-suspicion-of-dui/>

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