



NEWS



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A FULL HOUSE IN JOSHUA TREE HEARS A PITCH FOR NEW COUNTY FIRE FEES

Staff Writer, Z107.7 News

Posted: August 28, 2018



The **San Bernardino County Fire** Department held another community meeting last night to discuss the what, why and how of expanding Service Zone FP-5. Reporter Heather Clisby was there...

In last night's well-attended meeting at the Joshua Tree Community Center, all eyes and ears were on County Fire Chief Mark Hartwig. As he'd done in 13 other public meetings, Hartwig laid out the scenario: The San Bernardino County Fire Protection District, which provides fire and emergency medical services to more than 60 communities in 10 service zones covering over 19,000 square miles, is currently operating with a \$29 million dollar budget shortfall. Both Hartwig and the Board of Supervisors believe that expanding the boundaries of Service Zone FP-5 will bridge that funding gap.

In June of this year, a resolution was passed and Hartwig is now on a road show to let residents know what is coming, namely, an increase in property taxes, specifically \$157.26 per parcel with a possible annual increase of 3 percent with no cap.

As it stands now, Hartwig explained, more populated communities are subsidizing remote areas for services and they see this proposed expansion as a balancing solution.

Giving the community a plaintive head's up, Hartwig said, "I don't need to make a budget presentation to the board until next June but I don't need to wait until then to let you know I'm in trouble."

Service Zone FP-5 currently includes Helendale, San Bernardino, Needles, Twentynine Palms, Upland, and San Antonio Heights. New boundaries would include Grand Terrace, Yucca Valley and unincorporated areas such as Joshua Tree, Pioneertown, Landers and Wonder Valley, among others.

Questions were raised around staffing costs, the status of certain stations and how this might affect those on a low or fixed income. While one attendee suggested a sales tax, another proposed a GoFundMe page.

On September 14, public notices will be mailed to all property owners and there will be a 30-day protest period concluding with a public hearing on October 16.

For more information on this issue, visit sbcfire.org.

Chief Hartwig and Battalion Chief Scott Tuttle will be the guests on the Z107.7 Up Close Show this Friday morning at 10 a.m.

Holy Fire Flares Up in Cleveland National Forest

Jonathan Lloyd, NBC News

Posted: August 27, 2018, 1:52 p.m.



A Santiago Peak camera image provided by HPWREN/UC San Diego shows a Holy fire flare-up Monday Aug. 27, 2018.

Firefighters responded Monday to a flare-up of the nearly 23,000-acre Holy Fire that sent a towering smoke plume over Cleveland National Forest.

The fire was 95 percent contained as of Saturday, but some small spots continued to smolder in rugged terrain along the rim of the burn zone. Crews have been working to establish containment lines since the alleged arson blaze erupted on the afternoon of Aug. 6 in the Holy Jim Canyon area, on the Orange County side of the national preserve.

The flare-up was deep within an area that burned earlier, but the fire crossed containment lines and burned about 150 acres by late Monday afternoon.

Air tankers, water-dropping helicopters and hand crews were dispatched to the flare-up. Firefighters are attempting to prevent flames from burning near communications towers on nearby Santiago Peak.

"Their objective will be to protect communication towers, but there are no residential structures threatened," said Orange County Fire Authority Capt. Tony Bommarito.

Winds in the area were gusting to 26 mph, but temperatures were cooler than earlier this month when firefighters faced sweltering triple-digit heat.

By the evening, the flare-up was 10 percent contained.

The fire has blackened an estimated 22,986 acres -- about 36 square miles -- in Orange and Riverside counties. Flames damaged or destroyed 24 structures, officials said.

The remaining crews assigned to the blaze were digging and filling in pits made by bulldozers to starve the flames of fuel.

Forrest Gordon Clark, 51, is charged with aggravated arson resulting in damage to at least five inhabited structures, arson of inhabited property, arson of forest and criminal threats in connection with the blaze.

Clark has a cabin in Holy Jim Canyon, and arson investigators allegedly uncovered evidence indicating the fire was ignited in the immediate vicinity of his property, according to the Orange County Fire Authority.

A volunteer fireman, Mike Milligan, who has a cabin near Clark's, told reporters the defendant has had a long-running feud with a neighbor and other cabin owners. In the days prior to the fire, Clark ran through the area screaming and sent Milligan a message warning that "this place will burn," he said.

Clark is being held in lieu of \$1 million bail and is undergoing a court-ordered evaluation for mental illness.

The Holy Fire bore down on Lake Elsinore and surrounding communities for six days, prompting mandatory evacuations and road closures. The Ortega (74) Highway between San Juan Capistrano and Lake Elsinore was closed from Aug. 8 to Aug. 14 due to the monster blaze.

Several firefighters were injured battling the flames, though none of the injuries were life-threatening.

Along with USFS crews, Cal Fire, Riverside County, Corona, **San Bernardino County** and personnel from other agencies deployed to the brusher, aided by multiple air tankers and water-dropping helicopters.

The OCFA asked anyone who may have been in the Holy Jim Canyon area on Aug. 6 around the time the fire began to contact investigators at 714-573-6700 or 714-573-6709.

<https://www.nbclosangeles.com/news/local/Holy-Fire-Wildfire-California-Containment-Firefighters-491813691.html>

22,000+ acre Holy Fire fully contained

Staff Writer, KESQ.com News

Posted: August 27, 2018, 9:11 a.m.



LAKE ELSINORE, Calif.- - The nearly 23,000-acre Holy Fire in the Cleveland National Forest that burned for almost 20 days was fully contained today, according to U.S. Forest Service rangers.

Firefighters spent the last few days extinguishing stubborn hot spots smoldering in the more rugged terrain along the rim of the burn zone.

The fire blackened an estimated 22,986 acres in Orange and Riverside counties, as well as damaged or destroyed 24 structures, officials said.

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<https://www.kesq.com/news/22-000-acre-holy-fire-fully-contained/786933994>

One airlifted after single-vehicle rollover crash in Victorville

Staff Writer, VVNG

Posted: August 27, 2018



(Photo courtesy of San Bernardino County Fire)

VICTORVILLE, Calif. (VVNG.com) — One person was airlifted to a trauma center following a rollover crash Sunday afternoon in Victorville.

At about 2:08 pm, on August 26, 2018, firefighters with **San Bernardino County Fire** and American Medical Response (AMR) were dispatched to the area of Hopland Street and Amethyst Road. Medic Engine 312 arrived on scene within 6 minutes of dispatch and located a single vehicle off the roadway with major damage.

San Bernardino County Fire Captain Jeff Allen said, one occupant was still in the vehicle with serious injuries and a second occupant was outside the vehicle with minor injuries.

Helicopter H325 was requested and landed near the scene to airlift the critically injured passenger to an out of area trauma center. The driver of the vehicle was transported via AMR ambulance to Victor Valley Global Medical Center.

“The goal with any victim of a major trauma is to have them transported to the trauma center as quickly as possible. In this case, the patient arrived at Arrowhead Regional Medical Center via Helicopter 325 in 38 minutes. We strive for a patient to arrive at a trauma center within 60 minutes from time of injury so 38 minutes from Helicopter dispatch time to arrival at ARMC with the patient is efficient” stated Allen.

According to Allen, seatbelts without a doubt appeared to have decreased the severity of injuries to both occupants. “Seatbelts save lives. As we approach the Labor Day weekend and you travel to your destinations please buckle up!”

H325 is a public/private partnership staffed with a pilot from Reach Air Medical and a County Fire Flight Nurse and Paramedic.

The official cause of the accident remains under investigation by the Victorville Police station.

<https://www.vvng.com/one-airlifted-after-single-vehicle-rollover-crash-in-victorville/>