



NEWS



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NIGHT HOIST RESCUE OF INJURED HIKER IN JOSHUA TREE NATIONAL PARK SATURDAY

Staff Writer, Z107.7 FM News

Posted: October 28, 2019

An injured hiker was rescued in Joshua Tree National Park via night-hoist rescue Saturday. According to Sheriff's reports, Sergio Betancur, a 23-year-old resident of Burbank, was hiking with friends in the Wonderland of Rocks area between Barker Dam and the Wall Street Mill in Joshua Tree National Park when the group began hiking off trail through the area's large boulders. Betancur fell while attempting to jump from one large rock to another, suffering a serious, but non-life threatening injury to his leg. Betancur's friends hiked to the park entrance and called 911. Members of the **San Bernardino County Fire** Department and Joshua Tree National Park Rangers responded, hiking with Betancur's friends back to the accident scene. Emergency responders assessed Betancur's injuries and determined that he needed to be hoisted out. A San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department patrol helicopter was called to assist. Sheriff's patrol helicopter 40 King 3 arrived at the location and assessed the situation. The helicopter crew conducted this operation at night and utilized night vision equipment. Betancur was secured into a rescue harness, hoisted from the rock, and transported via helicopter to a landing zone where he was transported by Morongo Basin Ambulance at approximately 7:30 p.m. to Hi-Desert Medical Center.

<http://z1077fm.com/night-hoist-rescue-of-injured-hiker-in-joshua-tree-national-park-saturday/>

Free collection event takes in nearly five tons of household hazardous waste

Robin Richards, News West/Needles Desert Star /Mohave Daily News

Posted: October 27, 2019

NEEDLES — A total of 9,393 pounds of household hazardous waste was brought in during a free collection event held Oct. 5 at the Needles City Yard, 112 Robuffa St., according to Needles City Manager Rick Daniels.

Erica Acosta, Household Hazardous Waste Event Coordinator for the **San Bernardino County Fire** Protection District, announced the upcoming event on Aug. 1 this year, allowing plenty of time for residents to prepare. The result? "This tonnage was almost double for the collection event held on Oct. 5, compared to the March 2, 2019, event," Daniels reported in an Oct. 19 prepared statement.

"This special effort by all represents the community's commitment to protecting our valuable Colorado River groundwater which is so precious here in the desert. Thank you to all of the participants and to the San Bernardino County Fire District. We look forward to seeing more household hazardous waste and electronics waste at the next event in Spring 2020," said Mayor Jeff Williams.

Guidelines for disposal and a list of items that would — and wouldn't — be accepted first appeared in the Aug. 7 edition of the Needles Desert Star; along with the county's statement that, "Dumping used oil or any chemical is a crime, legally and environmentally." A pint of used oil, according to the county, can create an acre-size oil slick on surface water.

The Oct. 5 event saw 595 pounds of motor oil brought in. That was eclipsed by electronic waste; including cathode ray tubes such as those found in now-obsolete televisions and computer monitors; and other miscellaneous "E-waste" that added up to more than half the total: 5,497 pounds.

Latex paint accounted for more than a half-ton of the waste collected; lead-acid batteries such as those used in automobiles and water craft added 821 pounds.

The list of items collected, provided by Daniels, also included 309 pounds of liquid or solid flammables; 264 pounds of oil-based paint; 219 pounds of fluorescent tubes; 135 pounds of household batteries; 110 pounds of a category labeled as “toxics;” 65 pounds of aerosols; 61 pounds of propane tanks or bottles; 60 pounds of antifreeze; 55 pounds of corrosive acids and 52 pounds of used oil filters.

A typical automotive oil filter can hold something approaching a pint of oil.

A critically important element to the collection event: sharps made up 28 pounds of the load hauled away for safe and proper disposal. That’s a lot of people protected from rusty razor slices or dirty needle punctures. See a letter by County Fire’s Tracey Martinez on the importance of safely handling, storing and disposing of sharps in the Desert Star’s Oct. 16 edition.

Collection events; sponsored by the San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors, city of Needles and County Fire and funded by CalRecycle; are typically held in fall and spring.

http://www.mohavedailynews.com/needles_desert_star/free-collection-event-takes-in-nearly-five-tons-of-household/article_754743b8-f908-11e9-8c9e-f3b7e3161169.html

Crews attack wind-driven vegetation fires in Rialto, San Bernardino areas

Staff Writer, San Bernardino Sun

Posted: October 27, 2019, 10:39 pm

Firefighters Sunday night were working on a wind-driven vegetation fire in the area of Base Line Street and Pepper Avenue, south of the 210 Freeway in the Rialto area — one of two such nearby fires to break out Sunday evening.

The **San Bernardino County Fire** Department said about 10 p.m. its units along with those from the Rialto Fire Department were attacking the first fire initially measured at about one acre.

At 10:28 p.m., the county Fire Department said crews were working on another vegetation fire in the 1000 block of Terrace Road in San Bernardino, southeast of the intersection of Base Line and Pepper. It was described as a quarter acre and wind-driven, with a full fire vegetation response ordered including hand crews and bulldozers.

The fires started as the San Bernardino area was under a high wind warning, the National Weather Service said. Other parts of Southern California were under red-flag warning conditions.

<https://www.sbsun.com/2019/10/27/crews-attack-vegetation-fire-in-rialto-area/>

Mercy Air marks 30 years in the skies

Scott Nordhues, Victorville Daily Press

Posted: October 27, 2019, 8:52 pm



Mercy Air staff and their families gather around their helicopters during their 30th anniversary event, [James Quigg, for the Daily Press]

VICTORVILLE — First responders turned out in force Sunday afternoon, but not to perform life-saving rescues or battle wildfires.

Instead, they took part in Mercy Air's 30th anniversary celebration at Hook Park, which featured a backdrop of the medical transport service's impressive helicopters.

The event drew personnel from several agencies, including fire departments from Victorville, **San Bernardino County**, and Kern County, Cal Fire, California Highway Patrol, and employees of local hospital emergency room and intensive care units. Including employees and former employees of Mercy Air, the private celebration drew more than 350 people.

Noting the number of emergency workers on hand, some of those attending said they "have never seen anything like this before," said Mark Driscoll, spokesman for Mercy Air.

He said helicopters that serve Mercy Air bases in Victorville, Barstow, Hesperia, Big Bear, Ridgecrest and Loma Linda Medical Center were on display at different times during the day. Refreshments were served, a raffle with a prize of a stay in Las Vegas and helicopter tour of the Grand Canyon was held, and drones took photos of the event from the air.

A citation issued by the San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors commemorated the anniversary and contributions Mercy Air has made to medical transportation in the area.

Driscoll said the images would be posted on social media.

Mercy Air began operations out of the Rialto Municipal Airport in 1989.

<https://www.vvdailypress.com/news/20191027/mercy-air-marks-30-years-in-skies>

Fine weather prompts cleaning spree

Robin Richards, News West/Needles Desert Star/Mohave Daily News

Posted: October 26, 2019



Justin Hashimoto, firefighter/paramedic; Grant Kovacovich, engineer; and Captain Dan Nelson (l to r); all of the San Bernardino County Fire Department, burn a giant pile of trimmings at the Route 66 Needles Wayside Rest Stop.

NEEDLES — With Saturday, Oct. 19, dawning cool and windless, Needles residents were out and about committing random acts of cleanup and deliberate beautification all over town.

The Needles Downtown Business Alliance had several hands in the work. Terry Campbell recruited volunteers from among his fellow members and several more from among the membership of Needles' Eagles Aerie 2599 to work on one of his favorite ongoing projects: preservation of Route 66 Needles Wayside Rest Stop. The group was picking up trash, trimming back growth, sprucing up walking paths, planting native vegetation and supplying the fire department's burn pile. The historic park on the original alignment of Route 66 at National Old Trails Road and Needles Highway offers a welcome respite for desert travelers and local residents with shady trees, picnic tables and more.

The facility is typically the target of multiple maintenance sessions each year. This one included **San Bernardino County Fire** Department Station 32 burning trimmings, blowdowns and dead vegetation to lessen potential for uncontrolled fire at the site.

Perennial beautification volunteer Cathy McConnell pointed out this round of work was strenuous: three rakes were broken on the unforgiving desert ground in about the first hour. She added that volunteer Jamie Lucas has formed a cleanup group of his own that has been tackling projects around the city.

Downtown, local painter Jimi Calderon was busily repainting the Needles sign at Broadway and G Street. Historically a looked-forward-to feature for travelers along Route 66 and a magnet for tourism photos to this day, its rich red upright between the stylized sun and river was fading a bit in the desert heat. Calderon noticed and contacted NDBA President Jan Jernigan to volunteer his skills to renew the landmark. Jernigan, he reported, wangled donation of paint for the sign from Sherwin-Williams.

Contacted via email, Jernigan reported: "Sherwin-Williams Paint Store of Bullhead City donated the paint. Jimi donated his time to paint. We appreciate the donations to help maintain the sign. It is a popular photo opportunity for Needles located on Route 66."

Dedicated to the preservation and beautification of historic downtown Needles, the NDBA meets the first Thursday of most months at 11:30 a.m. in the Wagon Wheel Restaurant along Needles Highway.

The public is invited. Their next meeting is to be held Nov. 7. Send e-mail to needlesdba@aol.com.

http://www.mohavedailynews.com/needles_desert_star/fine-weather-prompts-cleaning-spre/article_f43d8826-f836-11e9-b760-4765f72df144.html

Evacuations as Wildfire Roars Through California Wine Country

Staff Writer, Inquirer.Net

Posted: October 26, 2019



A fast-moving wildfire roared through California wine country early Thursday, prompting evacuations and threatening homes as authorities warned of the imminent danger of more fires across much of the state.

The Kincadee fire in a rural area of Sonoma County kicked up Wednesday night, quickly growing from a blaze of a few hundred acres into an uncontained 10,000-acre (4,000-hectare) inferno, California fire and law enforcement officials said.

Mandatory evacuation orders were issued for the town of Geyserville after the fire crossed a highway and moved towards homes, the Sonoma County Sheriff 's Office said.

"If you're in Geyserville, leave now," the sheriff 's office advised, citing an extraordinary threat to life and property.

Winds out of the north were driving the fire south as firefighters worked through the night to evacuate residents and protect structures.

"This fire is moving fast, please pay attention to evacuation orders," state Senator Mike McGuire said on his Twitter account.

The fire — 75 miles (120 kilometers) north of San Francisco — came amid official warnings that much of northern California and parts of the south were under imminent threat of fires into Friday because of blustery, dry weather.

Power was cut to some 180,000 customers in the northern part of the state Thursday and similar preemptive shutoffs affected thousands of customers further south because of conditions that are ripe for wildfires.

Power companies warned that additional power cuts could be ordered to reduce the risk of accidental fires.

The strong winds in the north were expected to subside Friday but are forecast to pick up again on Sunday, the National Weather Service warned.

In southern California, several wildfires were burning in the Los Angeles area on Thursday, and there was at least one fire near Pendleton, in San Diego County.

A fire in San Bernardino County, about 60 miles east of Los Angeles, prompted evacuation orders as it grew to about 100 acres.

The **San Bernardino County Fire Department** said the blaze had the potential to spread widely.

This week's fires have erupted as the state is still recovering from deadly wildfires in 2017 and 2018 that killed more than 100 people.

The fires have been fueled by years of drought and dry vegetation as well as high winds.

<https://usa.inquirer.net/44349/evacuations-as-wildfire-roars-through-california-wine-country>

What, exactly, does 'containment' mean on a wildfire?

Brian Rokos, Press Enterprise

Posted: October 26, 2019, 9:39 am

Perhaps no word is more misunderstood and misused in discussions of wildfires – even by firefighters themselves – than the word “containment.”

Simply put, the containment percentage is the amount of the fire area that is surrounded by a line that officials believe the flames will not jump.

“To say a fire is 100 percent contained is to say we have a spherical line such as rocks, roads, streets or fire line where there is no combustible material,” said Eric Sherwin, a spokesman for the **San Bernardino County Fire Department**.

Fire officials calculate the containment percentage by a variety of means. Aircraft crews with cameras and lasers will take measurements, as will firefighters walking the lines with a global positioning system, Sherwin said.

But the word containment requires context.

Theoretically, if firefighters build a big enough line, the fire could still rage out of control, threatening lives and property, yet be mostly contained. The public and even firefighters sometimes get containment and control mixed up, Sherwin said.

Conversely, a fire could be creeping along and no longer posing a threat yet still have a low containment percentage if factors such as terrain make it difficult to build the containment line, Sherwin said.

But generally, as firefighters gain more control of the fire – stopping its spread – the containment percentage will rise, sometimes very quickly in one day.

“Controlled means the fire is 100% contained with no chance of escaping the fire line,” Sherwin said.

Containment will come first, followed by control days, weeks or even months later. Not until rain pours down on a fire will it be declared out, Sherwin said.

“It's an arduous process that takes time. When you're talking about men and women carrying shovels to dig those lines, it takes quite a while,” Sherwin said.

<https://www.pe.com/2019/10/26/what-exactly-does-containment-mean-on-a-wildfire/>

Fire halted after burning through 5 acres near Redlands

Robert Gundran, San Bernardino Sun

Posted: October 25, 2019, 6:51 pm



Flames burn along the road and on the hillside near Live Oak Canyon Road in Redlands on Friday, Oct. 25, 2019. (Courtesy of Sandra Martinez)

A wildfire that ignited Friday evening, Oct. 25, near Live Oak Canyon Road and San Timoteo Canyon Road, was quickly halted.

The unified command of Cal Fire/Riverside County Fire Department and the Redlands Fire Department held the fire to five acres, and by 5:45 p.m. announced that forward progress of the Live fire had been stopped.

The blaze was reported at 5 p.m. near Live Oak Canyon Road and San Timoteo Canyon Road. Cal Fire noted that the fire was burning through light fuels.

San Bernardino County Fire Department was also assisting on the fire.

The blaze comes on a day when a high-wind warning was in place for much of the day and a red-flag warning also lasted through the day. In the coming days, although temperatures should drop some winds could stick around.

The Santa Ana winds that have been pummeling Southern California have fanned flames of the Tick fire in northern LA County, and have forced thousands to evacuate. In San Bernardino, the Old Water fire continued to smolder as firefighters worked to gain full containment.

<https://www.sbsun.com/2019/10/25/live-fire-burns-through-5-acres-near-redlands/>

Wildfire terms 101: A ‘complex’ topic made simple

Brian Rokos, San Bernardino Sun

Posted: October 25, 2019, 6:46 pm



A Forest Service engine is driven out by flames from the Tick fire Thursday, Oct. 24, 2019, just off Sierra Highway. (Photo by Mike Meadows/Special to the Los Angeles Daily News)

Branches, divisions, groups and complexes.

To many people, those firefighting buzzwords may as well be in a foreign language. To the chiefs in charge of putting out wildfires, they are important incident-management tools.

“It’s a way for us not to get overtaxed and manage rapidly growing incidents,” said Eric Sherwin, a spokesman for the **San Bernardino County Fire Department**.

Take “complex,” for example. Sometimes separate fires with separate names burn close to each other. To fight them more effectively and efficiently, officials will have one team manage all those fires and call them a complex, such as the Freeway Complex in 2008. That started as two fires that merged into one and burned several hundred homes in Anaheim Hills and Yorba Linda. But the fires don’t have to collide to be called a complex, Sherwin said.

“In Northern California, when they have a couple of dozen lightning strikes (in the same area), they call it a complex,” he said.

A “group” is defined by its function, such as a number of fire engines assigned to rescues or preventing homes from burning.

“Branches” and “divisions” are geographical locations on a fire. People listening to firefighting frequencies on scanners hear references to “Division Alpha” or “Division Zulu.” When a division has too many “assets” to manage, Sherwin said, such as fire engines and hand crews, a new division is created and is named based on the next letter available in the alphabet. The 27th division in a big fire would be named Alpha Alpha.

Branches identified by Roman numerals are composed of those lettered divisions. In the 2016 Blue Cut fire, the Cajon Pass divided the branches, Sherwin said.

These separations chop big fires into small pieces that are easier to manage.

“Each person reports to only one person,” Sherwin said.

<https://www.sbsun.com/2019/10/25/wildfire-terms-101-a-complex-topic-made-simple/>

San Bernardino National Forest restrictions in effect as fires burn

Martin Estacio, Victorville Daily Press

Posted: October 25, 2019, 9:40 pm



Looking north from downtown San Bernardino, the Old Water Fire rekindles on Thursday afternoon. [Martin Estacio, Daily Press]

A two-month restriction on campfires and related activities in a nearby national forest were enacted Friday.

San Bernardino National Forest officials announced the restrictions amid an over 140-acre wildfire burning on its border.

The restrictions, set to expire Dec. 31, prohibit all campfires, smoking and the use of portable stoves on SBNF land.

A U.S. Forest Service fire official said the restrictions were a “precaution” to prevent potentially destructive wildfires that historically have started around the second half of this month.

“If you look back at the last days of October over the years, it was conditions like these when the most explosive fires on the National Forest have occurred,” Acting Deputy Fire Chief Scott Howes said in a statement.

A fire ignited about 2 a.m. Thursday in the area of Highway 18 and Old Waterman Canyon Road, straddling the line between San Bernardino city and SBNF land.

The Old Water Fire forced the evacuation of homes as firefighters battled the early morning blaze.

The fire rekindled the following afternoon, sending up a thick column of grey smoke. Six air tankers and six helicopters assisted ground crews, SBNF reported.

As of Friday morning, the fire had burned 145 acres. Containment was 55%, and evacuation orders had been lifted, according to the **San Bernardino County Fire** Department.

The Old Water Fire started in the same vicinity as the Old Fire, which charred over 91,000 acres in October 2003. That conflagration destroyed 975 buildings and caused six deaths.

The Old Water Fire has not destroyed any buildings or resulted in any deaths, according to officials.

A red-flag warning was issued for the San Bernardino Mountains and other Southern California areas. The warning was lifted Friday evening, according to the National Weather Service.

Also on Friday, the NWS predicted 25 to 35 mph winds, with gusts up to 50 to 70 mph or higher and single-digit humidities.

The forest restrictions came as Gov. Gavin Newsom declared a state of emergency in both Sonoma and Los Angeles counties due to raging wildfires.

The Tick Fire, which started Thursday, has burned nearly 4,300 acres and destroyed six homes, the Los Angeles Times reported.

Burning in Santa Clarita, the fire was 5% contained as of Friday evening.

In Northern California, the Kincade Fire has burned 23,700 acres and destroyed 49 structures. Containment was also at 5% as of Friday evening, according to Cal Fire.

<https://www.vvdailypress.com/news/20191025/san-bernardino-national-forest-restrictions-in-effect-as-fires-burn>

San Bernardino "Old Water Fire" Update – Saturday

Rick Dulock, KVCR News

Posted: October 26, 2019

According to a report from the San Bernardino Sun Newspaper, by Friday evening, containment on the Old Water fire in San Bernardino grew to 85% .

San Bernardino County fire officials said the blaze had scorched 145 acres along Highway 18 in Waterman Canyon. Fire spokesman Eric Sherwin said Friday that the department had no information to announce on how and where the fire started as the investigation continues.

Firefighters worked overnight to build a strong line around the Old Water fire on the edge of the San Bernardino National Forest. A red-flag warning expired at 5 p.m.

Fanned by strong winds, the blaze prompted about 80 homes to be evacuated. However, residents were allowed to return late Thursday, when fire officials announced they were lifting the evacuation orders at 8 p.m.

All roads are now open, however, fire officials warn motorists to be cautious when in the areas near the fire footprint. "Use caution, as fire crews will be in the area building fire containment lines," they said via Twitter.

The wind-driven vegetation blaze ignited after 2:00 AM on Thursday, very close to where the Old Fire started on Oct. 25, 2003, and crept into neighborhoods.

No structures were reported to have been damaged although the flames did come close to homes. No injuries have been reported.

As the blaze continued into its second day, it marked the 16-year anniversary of another major fire in the area, the similarly named: Old Fire. That fire went on to burn thousands of acres when it merged with the Grand Prix fire and led to six deaths.

This was the second fire in San Bernardino in less than a week driven by powerful Santa Ana winds. On Monday, the Little Mountain fire destroyed two homes, damaged six others and resulted with half a dozen people being injured.

Because of high fire danger, officials with the San Bernardino National Forest, citing elevated fire danger, have banned campfires on forest lands starting Friday, Oct. 25. The campfire order is due to expire Dec. 31.

<https://www.kvcrnews.org/post/san-bernardino-old-water-fire-update-saturday>

Old Water Fire 55% Contained After Burning 145 Acres in San Bernardino, Sending Residents Fleeing Homes

Nouran Salahieh, KTLA 5 News

Posted: October 25, 2019

The Old Water Fire burning in San Bernardino was about 55% contained by Friday morning, the **San Bernardino County Fire** District said.

The fire erupted just after 2 a.m. Thursday near Old Waterman Canyon Road and Highway 18, and spread rapidly to consume 145 acres by Friday morning.

Fanned by strong winds, the flames threatened neighborhoods, forcing residents in about 80 homes along Mariposa Drive, David Way and Arrowhead Road to flee their homes as officials issued mandatory evacuation orders.

All orders were lifted by 8 p.m. and roads were reopened for residents with identification to return to their homes.

Residents were told to be cautious returning to their homes while weather conditions continued to pose a threat.

A Red Flag Warning remains in effect until 5 p.m. with gusty Santa Ana winds and low humidities expected to last through much of Friday, county officials said.

In a bid to prevent additional fires, Southern California Edison switched off power to 5,790 customers in San Bernardino County, including in San Bernardino, Fontana, Rialto, Rancho Cucamonga, and Chino Hills.

The San Bernardino County Unified School district canceled classes Thursday and Friday for Paakuma' K-8 School in San Bernardino due to the power shutoffs. The school is expected to reopen Monday.

California State University San Bernardino also canceled classes Thursday due to high winds, but reopened Friday, according to its Facebook page.

<https://ktla.com/2019/10/25/old-water-fire-55-contained-after-burning-145-acres-in-san-bernardino-sending-residents-fleeing-homes/>