



# NEWS



## News Headlines 9/2-5/2017

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## Man starts fire at mobile home Friday

Paola Baker, Daily Press

Posted: September 1, 2017, 4:49 PM



San Bernardino County Firefighters battle a mobile home fire in Hesperia on Friday. Ruben Barron reportedly called authorities, threatening that he was going to blow up the mobile home up. Barron was later arrested. [James Quigg, Daily Press]

HESPERIA — Authorities arrested a man who reportedly started a fire at a mobile home here Friday afternoon.

Ruben Barron, 44, of Hesperia, was arrested after San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department officials responded to reports of a man threatening to blow up a home in the 18900 block of Lindsay Street, at the Hesperia Mobile Home Estates, at around 1:41 p.m. Friday.

Hesperia Sheriff's Station Sgt. Eric Mello said deputies initially responded after a caller reported that someone was inside his home. The caller, later identified as Barron, then switched gears, saying he was the person inside the home and was going to blow it up.

"He claimed to have pipe bombs in the location," Mello said, adding that the home was red tagged. "Since the government was taking his house, he said he was going to blow it up."

Luisa Curiel, a neighbor, said she was inside her home when she heard a loud boom. Thinking it may have been a car crash, she went outside to check things out and saw smoke and flames coming from the mobile home.

"I heard about three other booms after that," Curiel said. "The guy then came out with his hands up and the deputies just pulled him up over the fence."

Mello said as deputies arrived and set up a perimeter as a precaution, they saw smoke and flames coming from the home. As deputies and fire personnel attempted to handle the blaze and evacuate nearby homes, Mello said they were able to see Barron inside.

"[The deputies] were able to talk him out and he was taken into custody without incident," Mello said.

Mello said the deputies heard explosions as they detained Barron, but didn't have further information on what caused them. The Sheriff's Bomb and Arson team was requested to respond.

"We don't know exactly how the fire started, but Barron stated on the line that he started the fire," Mello said.

Several **County Fire** personnel were requested to respond to the blaze, which briefly became dangerous due to live electrical wires under the home. While the flames were quickly extinguished, firefighters were expected to remain on scene for a few hours for cleanup.

A fire investigator was called to the scene, and the Bomb and Arson team arrive at around 4:15 p.m., according to scanner traffic. They were expected to remain on scene for another hour.

No injuries were reported, although a paramedic was seen treating Barron on scene, but further details weren't available Friday.

<http://www.vvdailynews.com/news/20170901/man-starts-fire-at-mobile-home-friday>

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## **Man threatens to blow up mobile home, sets it on fire**

*Officials said the home was previously red tagged*

**Victor Valley News Group**

Posted: September 1, 2017



(Photo by Amanda Gordon)

**UPDATE 9/1 @ 9PM** – Ruben Ibarra Barron, 44, a resident of Hesperia was arrested for PC451.5 (A) aggravated arson and PC148.1(A) resisting arrest. Barron is currently being held on a \$250,000 bail and is scheduled for arraignment in a Victorville courtroom on September 6, 2017, according to public arrest logs.

**HESPERIA, Calif. (VVNG.com)** A man who allegedly threatened to blow up his home and later started a house fire is in custody, officials said.

At about 1:45 p.m., deputies responded to the 18900 block of Lindsay Street in Hesperia and located a double-wide mobile home with smoke showing from the roof.

Per scanner reports, the male told dispatchers he had pipe bombs and planned on using them to blow up the house and he was ready to die. Scanner traffic also indicated the home had been previously red tagged by code enforcement.

A deputy observed a male occupant inside the residence looking from the window as the smoke continued to get thicker. The deputy also reported hearing a loud bang coming from the inside of the mobile home. After a brief stand-off, the male exited and was detained without incident.

Deputies secured the scene and firefighters went into a defensive mode and started fighting the fire. **San Bernardino County Firefighters** knocked down the fire within about 15 minutes and kept it from spreading to adjacent structures.

Sheriff's officials have one person in custody and no injuries have been reported.

Firefighters will remain on scene for several hours as they conduct extensive overhaul on the structure.

More information will be updated as it becomes available.

<http://www.vvng.com/man-threatens-blow-mobile-home-sets-fire/>

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## Fontana residents endure wild weather on Aug. 31; see photos

Mike Myers, Fontana Herald News

Posted: September 1, 2017, 10:43 AM



A sudden storm drenched Fontana on the afternoon of Aug. 31. Cars slowly moved through this wet intersection at San Bernardino Avenue. (Contributed photo by Mike Myers)

Fontana residents endured some wild weather on Aug. 31, including a strong thunderstorm in the late afternoon, and more of the same may be on the way during the Labor Day weekend.

Despite the extremely hot temperatures which soared over 100 degrees, rainfall suddenly pounded the city for a couple of hours before fading away on Thursday.

The Fontana Police Department and the **San Bernardino County Fire Department** were kept busy with calls of lightning strikes to power transformers. Police dispatchers received calls of trees falling on power lines, houses and in the street.

Many of the calls that first responders handled were hazard calls. However, they also continued to handle calls for service, such as medical aid and crime.

Throughout the city, streets and intersections were flooded.

There were some accidents, and a homeowner reported that the house's basement was filling up with water.

The Public Works Emergency Response Unit worked together with the Fire Department to clear a drain in the 17400 block of Granada Avenue in order to stop the water from running into the basement of a home in the 8900 block of Tamarind Avenue.

About 6:30 p.m., most of the rain had stopped. The temperature was cooler, but still hot, and traffic was moving smoother. Some businesses in the 15800 block of Foothill Boulevard were still without power, but Southern California Edison was working to restore it.

The National Weather Service said an excessive heat warning would be in effect until Saturday, Sept. 2, and there was a chance that showers would return on Sunday, Sept. 3.

----- HERE IS THE FORECAST for this weekend:

Friday, Sept. 1 -- Mostly sunny and hot, with a high near 111. North wind 5 to 10 mph becoming light and variable in the afternoon.

Friday night -- Mostly clear, with a low around 78. West wind 5 to 10 mph becoming light and variable after midnight.

Saturday, Sept. 2 -- Mostly sunny, with a high near 103. Light and variable wind becoming south 5 to 10 mph in the afternoon.

Saturday night -- Partly cloudy, with a low around 78. South wind 5 to 10 mph becoming north after midnight.

Sunday, Sept. 3 -- A 20 percent chance of showers and thunderstorms after 11 a.m. Partly sunny, with a high near 94. Northeast wind 5 to 10 mph becoming southeast in the afternoon. Winds could gust as high as 20 mph.

Sunday night -- A 20 percent chance of showers and thunderstorms. Mostly cloudy, with a low around 71.

Labor Day, Monday, Sept. 4 -- A 20 percent chance of showers and thunderstorms before 11 a.m. Mostly sunny, with a high near 95.

[http://www.fontanaheraldnews.com/news/fontana-residents-endure-wild-weather-on-aug-see-photos/article\\_07540f76-8f3d-11e7-8eea-0baff0afc899.html](http://www.fontanaheraldnews.com/news/fontana-residents-endure-wild-weather-on-aug-see-photos/article_07540f76-8f3d-11e7-8eea-0baff0afc899.html)

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## Firefighters make quick work of restaurant blaze

Hi Desert Star

Posted: September 1, 2017, 11:15 AM

TWENTYNINE PALMS — **County firefighters** made quick work of a blaze that broke out at Andrea's restaurant, Twentynine Palms Highway and Palo Verde, here Thursday morning, Aug. 31.

According to Fire Chief Scott Tuttle, the incident was reported at about 8:50 a.m. when a small fire was found behind the stove.

"It appeared there was debris behind the stove that caught fire," Tuttle reported.

Two fire engines and a battalion chief responded to the blaze, which was contained to the area behind the stove and did not spread to the building itself, Tuttle said.

"Within five minutes everything was under control," he said.

The restaurant was closed briefly after firefighters removed some drywall to confirm that the fire had not spread.

Restaurant owners, he said, had to wait for the health department to give them clearance to reopen.

[http://www.hidesertstar.com/the\\_desert\\_trail/news/article\\_80625bb2-8f41-11e7-900f-5fec3f63e010.html](http://www.hidesertstar.com/the_desert_trail/news/article_80625bb2-8f41-11e7-900f-5fec3f63e010.html)

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## Victorville's Measure K may mean choosing between two taxes

Shea Johnson, Daily Press

Posted: September 2, 2017, 3:10 PM



A San Bernardino County Sheriff's deputy escorts a man from a bridge that caught fire in Victorville in December. A proposed public safety tax is projected to add \$8.4 million yearly for more services, including additional deputies and firefighters. [James Quigg, Daily Press]

*Editor's Note: This is the first in a series of stories leading up to the Nov. 7 special election that will examine Victorville's Measure K ballot initiative. Other stories will look more closely at city finances, business impact and more.*

VICTORVILLE — In November, city voters will get to decide if a proposed half-percent sales tax increase exclusively for public safety is a justifiable expense. But shooting down the ballot initiative, Measure K, won't necessarily mean no new taxes.

In fact, if Measure K were to fail to garner the two-thirds majority support needed to pass, city officials have already acknowledged seriously considering a permanent agreement with San Bernardino County Fire, which it currently contracts for fire services.

While annexing into **County Fire's** Service Zone FP-5 for such an agreement is said to have its advantages — improved services and the city-to-county transfer of financial responsibility for certain fire protection and other related costs — it also would give birth to a \$153 yearly property tax on nearly 38,000 parcels in Victorville.

And Councilman Jim Kennedy has gone on record to say that Measure K's rejection essentially will force the city's hand into the annexation, although the return to a city-owned fire department is also being kicked around.

Come November, the choice for voters is likely to whittle to which special tax is preferred: One on transactions or one on property.

Measure K, technically a transactions-and-use tax, will bump the city's tax rate to 8.25 percent, effective April 1.

Officials have said its introduction was keen on the premise that public safety services were the shared responsibility of those who benefit from them, which extends to non-resident travelers through the city. By capturing 50 cents for every \$100 spent on purchases here to generate an estimated \$8.4 million yearly, officials say those services can be improved.

That includes adding 10 new deputies, 15 firefighter/paramedics, opening Fire Station 315 — built in 2008 on Eucalyptus Street but never fully staffed — adding a second paramedic squad and replacing safety apparatus.

“Our vibrant retail sectors need adequate law enforcement. The sales tax will ensure that non-resident visitors pay their fair share,” city spokeswoman Sue Jones said. “Visitors who stop to buy gas and shop in Victorville will share the costs. Measure K ensures that people who use the service pay for it.”

The tax does not apply to certain necessities of life, including purchases of food or medicine.

But should voters ultimately repudiate Measure K, property owners in the city stand the most to lose, left to alone shoulder the burden of augmenting the gap that exists between city coffers and public safety expenses.

The decision by city leaders to seek taxpayer intervention for supplemental funding comes at a critical juncture: Contract costs with County Fire and the Sheriff’s Department continue to rise, far outpacing city revenue, and the city’s population has grown significantly, officials say — up nearly 85 percent just since 2001.

Jones said officials believe Measure K and annexation to be “the most viable options” to generate funds necessary to bolster public safety amid the current predicament.

“The City Council may also consider reactivating the City Fire Department which studies show would be a slightly cheaper option,” she added, “but not enough savings to afford the needed expansion of services.”

<http://www.vvdailynews.com/news/20170902/victorvilles-measure-k-may-mean-choosing-between-two-taxes>

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## Marijuana grow discovered after garage fire in Hesperia

*Two women were seen running from the house*

**Victor Valley News Group**

Posted: September 2, 2017



(Hugo C. Valdez, Victor Valley News)

HESPERIA, Calif. (VVNG.com) A house fire in Hesperia turned out to also be an illegal marijuana grow operation, officials confirmed.

On Saturday, September 2nd at 9:58 a.m., **San Bernardino County Fire** responded to a house fire in the 15200 block of Orange Street.

Upon arrival, firefighters located light smoke showing from a single story structure and conducted a primary check of the residence and found no occupants inside.

The fire was determined to be a garage fire, and as firefighters were fighting the fire, they discovered a marijuana grow house, per scanner reports.

According to Battalion Chief Bobby Cox, firefighters were able to confine the fire to the garage and kept it from spreading to the house.

A witness told Victor Valley News they saw two women fleeing from the residence before any police or fire officials arrived on scene. "They were in a hurry and jumped in a small car and just left," stated the witness.

After the flames were extinguished, officials confirmed there was in-fact an illegal marijuana grow. Deputies at the scene remained tight-lipped and wouldn't comment on the incident.

A Fire Investigator said the cause of the fire was determined to have been an accidental electrical.

Information will be updated as it becomes available.

<http://www.vvng.com/marijuana-grow-discovered-garage-fire-hesperia/>

## Police Attempt to ID Man killed by train in Hesperia

*A man walking on train tracks with headphones was struck & killed by a train*

**Victor Valley News Group**

Posted: September 2, 2017



VVNG.com undated file photo. (Hugo C. Valdez, Victor Valley News)

HESPERIA, Calif. (VVNG.com) A man walking along the train tracks wearing headphones was struck and killed by a moving train Saturday morning, officials said.

At 7:34 a.m., deputies responded to the area of Hesperia Road and Muscatel Street near Lime Street Park in Hesperia reference a person struck by a train.

Deputies contacted BNSF and requested to stop any trains in the area as they searched the train tracks and locomotive for a possible victim.

“An unidentified male was located approximately 40 feet from the rail road tracks unresponsive,” stated San Bernardino County Sheriff’s spokesperson Adam Cervantes.

The male was pronounced deceased at the scene by **San Bernardino County Firefighters**. Cervantes said all attempts to identify the male have been unsuccessful.

According to Cervantes, “the unidentified male adult was walking northbound on the rail road tracks with headphones on and was struck from behind by a train traveling in the same direction.”

The unidentified male was wearing an orange mesh basketball jersey, black mesh basketball shorts, Nike shoes, and was carrying a basketball.

Anyone with information is urged to contact the Hesperia Sheriff’s Station at 760-947-1500.

<http://www.vvng.com/police-attempting-id-man-killed-train-hesperia/>

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## **Motorcyclist killed in Saturday afternoon crash on highway 138**

**Victor Valley News Group**

Posted: September 2, 2017

PINON HILLS, Calif. (VVNG.com) A motorcyclist was killed in a traffic collision along State Route 138 Saturday afternoon.

According to CHP incident logs, the crash was reported as a solo motorcycle crash at 2:10 p.m., near Oasis Road in Pinon Hills.

**San Bernardino County Firefighters** initially requested an air ambulance to transport the rider, minutes later the request was canceled. The rider was pronounced deceased at the scene.

The crash temporarily closed Highway 138 in both directions for approximately 30 minutes. Eastbound lanes were reopened as of 2:50 pm, CHP logs showed.

Officials are waiting for the San Bernardino County Coroners to respond to the scene.

Information will be updated as it becomes available.

<http://www.vvng.com/motorcyclist-killed-saturday-afternoon-crash-highway-138/>

## Second suspected serial arsonist arrested

Douglas W. Motley, *Alpenhorn News*

Posted: September 3, 2017



Smoke from the “Seine Fire,” allegedly set by accused arsonist Peter Granados, which broke out July 23 behind the Wal-Mart Center in Highland. (Photo by Douglas W. Motley)

Two suspected serial arsonists have been arrested in as many weeks, according to fire officials. Both suspects stand accused of setting a series of fires that have burned over 1,600 acres of tinder dry brush in the foothills of the San Bernardino Mountains over the past 13 months.

The most recent arrest came on August 23, when Peter Granados, 38, was taken into custody following a warrant search of his San Bernardino residence. “For the past year, **San Bernardino County Fire** investigators have been tracking a subject (Granados) who is believed to have started at least eight fires in the City of San Bernardino,” County Fire spokeswoman Tracey Martinez told *The Alpenhorn News* on August 24. Five of the wildland fires, Martinez said, were started in the foothills above Sterling Ave. and East Foothill Blvd. in the City of San Bernardino, dating as far back as July 3, 2016.

Following the execution of a search warrant at Granados’ home, investigators arrested him for the crime of arson. Upon questioning by County Fire and San Bernardino Police Department investigators, Granados reportedly admitted to starting all eight fires. Granados was subsequently booked into the sheriff’s West Valley Detention Center, with bail set at \$275,000. Investigators determined Granados used an open flame device to ignite combustibles. No injuries were reported as a result of the fires.

According to Martinez, seven of the fires, each of which burned anywhere from one to eight acres, were quickly extinguished. “However,” Martinez said, “on June 27, 2017, following the ignition of the ‘Mart Fire’ in the drainage east of Wal-Mart on Highland Avenue, wind quickly carried embers across Highway 330 into the dry vegetation.” The wind-driven Mart Fire – allegedly set by Granados – which charred 670 acres, quickly spread up the mountainside, endangering nearby homes and threatening hundreds more in the Running Springs area.

“Eyewitnesses are credited for their bravery in coming forward and sharing what they saw with investigators. It is due to their awareness and diligence that investigators were led to Granados,” Martinez said.

According to Superior Court records obtained by *The Alpenhorn News*, Granados pled not guilty on August 25 to one felony count of arson and one enhancement count alleging prior felony convictions. Bail was re-set at \$500,000. A pre-preliminary hearing on the charges is scheduled for September 5.

Two weeks prior to Granados' arrest, a 23-year old Yucaipa man, Jarrod Anthony Samra, had been charged with nine felony counts of arson related to a series of eight wildfires, some causing great bodily harm, and burning 900 acres of National Forest land and several structures. At least four of the fires posed an immediate threat to the Running Springs communities.

Like Granados, Samra admitted to setting several of the eight fires he had been charged with. One of the modern tools used by investigators to track Samra down was a license plate scanner. Officials said social media postings by Samra enabled investigators to trace the license plates on his vehicle once he became a person of interest in the case.

Despite previously admitting guilt to investigators after being advised of his "Miranda Rights," Samra pled not guilty to nine arson-related charges and denied six penalty enhancement allegations at his August 7 arraignment hearing. He's due back in court on October 5.

<http://alpenhornnews.com/second-suspected-serial-arsonist-arrested-p8321-170.htm>

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## Man slams into 7th Street buildings Saturday

Paola Baker, Daily Press

Posted: September 4, 2017, 1:29 PM



Officials investigate the scene of a hit-and-run crash on 7th Street late Saturday. The driver was found after a short search and arrested on suspicion of driving under the influence, officials said. [Submitted photo]

**VICTORVILLE** — Authorities arrested a man who they believe crashed into two buildings on Seventh Street while intoxicated late Saturday night.

Reported at around 10 p.m. Saturday, San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department officials responded to the 15100 block of Seventh Street that night after receiving reports of a hit-and-run crash. The driver was found and arrested after a short search, officials said.

The driver was headed north on Seventh Street in a gray Ford pickup truck when he reportedly lost control, jumped a curb, and slammed into two adjacent buildings in the area. The buildings housed several businesses, including Gonzalez Mattresses and Lety's Beauty Shop, which were all heavily damaged from the crash.

The Ford ended up wedged over a small cement wall between both buildings, and the driver fled the scene on foot. However, officials said witnesses were able to provide a description of the suspect to responding deputies and he was found and arrested.

"He was found to be under the influence of alcohol and subsequently arrested for driving under the influence and hit-and-run," officials said.

Personnel from **San Bernardino County Fire Department**, as well as City of Victorville Building and Safety personnel, were requested to the scene to assess the damage. No injuries were reported. Further details weren't available Monday.

The crash remains under investigation by the Victorville Sheriff's Station.

<http://www.vvdailynews.com/news/20170904/man-slams-into-7th-street-buildings-saturday>

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## **Vehicle fire causes traffic delays on the SB-15 freeway in Victorville**

**Victor Valley News Group**

Posted: September 4, 2017



(photo by Melanie Olson Zavala)

VICTORVILLE, Calif. (VVNG.com) A vehicle fire on the southbound 15 freeway is creating, even more, delays for an already congested freeway.

At 5:25 p.m., a small blue Nissan sedan with the engine fully engulfed pulled onto the shoulder of the freeway north of Bear Valley Road. The fire grew rapidly and consumed the entire vehicle.

**San Bernardino County Firefighters** arrived and extinguished the fire.

The incident temporarily blocked the no. 2 and 3 lanes causing southbound traffic to back-up for several miles.

Information will be updated as it becomes available.

<http://www.vvng.com/vehicle-fire-causes-traffic-delays-sb-15-freeway-victorville/>

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## Pepper spray fumes prompt evacuation of Victorville Hotel

*A can of pepper spray was "accidentally" set-off in a room on the 2nd floor.*

**Victor Valley News Group**

Posted: September 4, 2017



Guest were evacuated into the parking lot. Light sprinkles were falling at the same time.(Photo courtesy of Travis Dixon for Victor Valley News)

VICTORVILLE, Calif. (VVNG.com) Guest staying at a Victorville hotel were forced to evacuate their rooms after pepper spray fumes entered the AC unit.

At around 12:23 a.m., on Monday, September 4th, deputies, firefighters, and paramedics were dispatched to the Extended Studio Hotel at 14786 Monarch Blvd. in Victorville.

Per scanner reports, a male subject inside a guest room on the 2nd floor ‘accidentally’ set-off a can of pepper spray.

The spray entered the AC units and quickly spread throughout the second floor prompting the entire hotel to be temporarily evacuated. Many of the guests, including small children, were woken out of their sleep and rushed to the parking lot.

Two ambulances responded to treat as many as six patients experiencing the symptoms of pepper spray. After an evaluation, none of them required medical transportation and were cleared at the scene.

Pepper spray symptoms include intense burning sensation, causes eyes to swell shut, and non-lethal inflammation of mucous membranes.

**San Bernardino County Firefighters** were able to contain the pepper spray incident confined to the second floor. Guest on the 3rd and 4th floor were allowed to return to their rooms just before 1:00 a.m.

Firefighters continued to ventilate the 2nd floor and all guest were eventually allowed back into their rooms.

At this time it’s unknown if any arrests were made. Information will be updated as it becomes available.

<http://www.vvng.com/pepper-spray-fumes-prompt-evacuation-victorville-hotel/>