



NEWS



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Two cars collide in Fontana on June 21; one person is hurt

Mike Myers, Fontana Herald News

Posted: June 22, 2019



This was one of the vehicles involved in a collision in Fontana on June 21. (Contributed photo by Mike Myers)

Two vehicles were involved in a late-night collision in the southern part of Fontana on June 21.

At about 11:30 p.m., the Fontana Police Department and the **San Bernardino County Fire** Department responded to the accident in the 14400 block of Cherry Avenue.

According to authorities, the driver of a white Acura was southbound on Live Oak and was making a right turn onto Cherry when the driver of a white BMW traveling westbound on Cherry allegedly ran the red light and struck the front of the Acura.

The driver of the BMW came to a stop in the eastbound lanes of Cherry.

At least one person was treated by emergency medical responders and transported to a hospital with unknown types of injuries.

A small fuel spill ran into the gutter; however, crews were able to apply an absorbent to keep it from spreading. Both vehicles had moderate front end damage.

The Fontana P.D. is investigating the accident.

https://www.fontanaheraldnews.com/news/two-cars-collide-in-fontana-on-june-one-person-is/article_40534c1c-9529-11e9-846c-5f69f02081e9.html

Sugarloaf woman identified as motorist who died in rollover crash in San Bernardino Mountains

Jonah Valdez, Daily Bulletin

Posted: June 22, 2019, 9:21 PM

A woman died at the scene of a rollover crash Saturday evening on Highway 38 in the San Bernardino Mountains, officials said.

The driver of the car was identified Sunday as Sharon Phelps, 69, of Sugarloaf, a small unincorporated community near Big Bear, said the San Bernardino County Coroner's office.

Her small sedan overturned in the solo crash, killing the woman, the car's only occupant, according to Eric Sherwin, spokesman for the **San Bernardino County Fire** Department; and a California Highway Patrol incident log.

Calls about the crash came in at 6:41 p.m., with callers reporting the overturned car blocking northbound lanes on Highway 38 at mile marker 37, Sherwin said. The crash site is southeast of Big Bear.

Paramedics declared Phelps dead at the scene, he said.

<https://www.dailybulletin.com/2019/06/22/1-dead-in-rollover-crash-in-san-bernardino-mountains/>

Advance Disposal in Hesperia evacuated Friday morning after explosion

Staff Writer, Victor Valley News

Posted: June 21, 2019



(Photos courtesy of Michael Bailey with Above & Beyond Landscaping)

HESPERIA, Calif. (VVNG.com) — Employees at Advance Disposal in Hesperia were evacuated following a small explosion within their facility Friday morning.

It happened just after 8:30 am, on June 21, 2019, in the 17100 block of Mesa Street in Hesperia.

San Bernardino County Firefighters arrived on scene and located the employees who had already evacuated the facility prior to their arrival.

County Fire spokesperson Eric Sherwin said the explosion took place in some kind of sorting machinery and it was possibly a compressed vessel or container like a fire extinguisher that went through the machine and failed and exploded.

“Out of an abundance of caution, they sealed it off. We do have hazmat personnel onsite. They made entry into the facility to test the air and check for any hazardous conditions,” stated Sherwin.

Sherwin said there was no hazard to the public and everything was contained within the facility.

The air samples returned negative and the command was terminated at 10:37 am. According to Sherwin, “it was an aerosol can that inadvertently went through a sorting machine.”

No injuries were reported by the public or firefighters.

<https://www.vvng.com/advanced-disposal-in-hesperia-evacuated-friday-morning-after-explosion/>

Edison and fire chief warn of dangers

Turiya Autry, The Desert Trail/Hi-Desert Star

Posted: June 21, 2019



Chris Abel talks about fire risk areas and what Southern California Edison is doing to help reduce risks during a community meeting at Yucca Valley High School Wednesday. Turiya Autry The Desert Trail

YUCCA VALLEY — Firefighters and Southern California Edison officials urged the people of the Morongo Basin to be prepared for wildfires and power outages during a community meeting at Yucca Valley High School Wednesday.

“We are taking a number of significant steps to reduce the wildfire risks with our system,” said Jennifer Cusack, government relations manager with Southern California Edison.

The utility recently announced it may turn off the power during hot, windy weather to reduce the danger of starting a wildfire like the Camp Fire, which was sparked in 2018 by Pacific Gas and Electric power lines.

Many have expressed concerns about power shut-offs. Representatives from SCE explained the process.

“We’re not planning any power outages right now,” Cusack said.

“We have a protocol called the Public Safety Power Shut-Off and, when certain weather or fire conditions are met, then that is something that we might enact, if we feel like the weather and our power lines would pose a threat to the safety of the public,” Abel added.

In an ideal scenario, people will receive alerts starting 48 hours in advance. Then there would be follow-up alerts the day of the shut off and once power is restored.

SCE is taking other steps to improve safety this year.

Utility workers are monitoring power lines using both helicopters and ground crews. Their coverage area includes approximately 400,000 poles.

Workers are also replacing the old wood poles with new ones made out of composite material.

“Most of our wires are bare wires out there, so we’re putting this coating over them that’s called covered conductor,” said Chris Abel, principal manager of local affairs for SCE. “So if a palm frond flies into this, it’s not going to ignite. If this falls down, there’s less of a chance that it is going to cause an ignition if it has this coating. We’re shooting for 7,500 circuit miles of the covered conductor.”

Residents at the community meeting asked about brush control.

“I’ve got a bunch of trees growing under their power lines and normally they would come by, see that they’re getting close to the power lines and cut them,” said Ray Truver, who has lived in the area for more than 30 years.

“Well, they’re getting really close now and I haven’t seen anyone come by to do anything.”

The SCE spokespeople said the utility removes hazardous trees and vegetation and clears brush 12 feet away from distribution power lines.

“That’s a ton of tree trimming work. We’re going to trim on the lines of 900,000 trees this year,” Abel said.

Changes in climate mean all seasons are potentially fire seasons. Added vegetation from plentiful rains adds even more risk.

“2018 was the worst wildfire season in California history in terms of lives lost, homes destroyed and acres burned,” said Scott Tuttle, a battalion chief with the **county fire** department.

“More than 100 people lost their lives, almost two million acres were burned and thousands of structures were destroyed.”

Tuttle said wildfire danger is high this year.

“All that green grass and wildflowers from spring, that all dried up, and it’s ready to burn,” he said.

“We’ve already seen several fires here in the Morongo Basin, several small fires: one, two, five acre fires and it’s pretty early in the season.”

There are two critical aspects of wildfire awareness: prevention and preparedness.

“The vast majority of fires are human caused. That means that most fires are preventable. We can’t prevent all fires, but what we can do is be prepared,” said Tuttle.

Tuttle also stressed the importance of timely evacuations.

“One of the difficulties we have, when we’re going into a fire area, is people who stay behind thinking they would be OK until the last minute, when they’re all congested in streets while we’re trying to go into neighborhoods. So please, go early.”

http://www.hidesertstar.com/news/article_2f776e0a-9475-11e9-a606-f71ab76d1403.html

OP-ED: THE RED BRENNAN GROUP CONCERNING FIRE PREVENTION ZONE 5 (FP-5) SPECIAL FIRE TAX

Staff Writer, Z107.7 FM News

Posted: June 21, 2019

Starving the County

On Tuesday June 11th, the San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors voted to take six days of food off the tables of county residents – and hand it over to **County Fire**.

According to the California Budget and Policy Center, a family of four in San Bernardino County spends \$773 per month, or \$25.77 per day, to feed itself.

Via a four-to-one vote, county supervisors approved placement of the Fire Prevention Zone Five (FP-5) special tax on the rolls for the next fiscal year. Residents located largely, but not entirely, in the unincorporated areas of the county will pay an additional \$157.26 per year to fund County Fire – six days of meals for a family of four.

Hungry residents may have a chance to get those meals back after a multi-year wait.

In response to the outcry from residents affected by the tax, the Board modified the motion presented by County Fire. The motion initially called for a three percent increase in the FP-5 tax, to 161.98, in addition to placing the tax on the roll for the next fiscal year. The special tax was to remain on the rolls in perpetuity with the potential for a three percent increase each year.

Rather than grant the three percent increase, the Board held the line at the current fiscal year charge and added two items to the resolution.

The motion, as amended by the board, “Directs the CEO and interim Fire Chief to explore funding mechanisms to pay for fire and emergency services in San Bernardino County that must be put to voters by January 1, 2021, and return to the Board within 90 days to discuss those funding alternatives.” In addition, the motion “directs staff to set a date on which funding for FP-5 will sunset.”

What is FP-5’s backstory?

In June of 2018, the Board approved a course of action to expand Service Zone FP-5. The plan, floated by senior leadership within the county bureaucracy, was to use Fire District law and expand FP-5 to include the entire unincorporated area of the county, along with some incorporated areas. Originally approved by 1,022 voters in Helendale, the tax tied to FP-5 is a per parcel special tax. The resulting annexation would yield a \$26.9 million increase to County Fire’s coffers – with the potential to increase at three percent per year indefinitely.

Senior county leadership reasoned this scheme could also be accomplished without voter approval. By leveraging a poorly reasoned and overly broad interpretation of *Citizens Association of Sunset Beach v. Orange County Local Agency Formation Commission*, and borrowing a so-called “protest procedure,” the county concocted an approach to impose the tax without approval by residents.

There was, however, an inconvenient truth. Article XIII C, section 2, subsection d, of the Constitution of the State of California states:

No local government may impose, extend, or increase any special tax unless and until that tax is submitted to the electorate and approved by a two-thirds vote.

Affected residents, roused by this blatant attempt to circumvent their Constitutional rights, fought the expansion in both the political and legal arena over the course of the year.

What did county residents actually gain in their effort to assert their rights? The supervisors decided not to extract an additional \$4.72 from county residents. They decided to place an illegal tax on the roll that was imposed in violation of the California Constitution. The board members then “gave” voters their rights by approving an unenforceable promise that would put a County Fire funding mechanism on a ballot by 2021 – two tax years and 36 meals down the road.

A thoughtful skeptic may find little to please, and much for concern in the Board of Supervisor’s motion.

<http://z1077fm.com/op-ed-the-red-brennan-group-concerning-fire-prevention-zone-5-fp-5-special-fire-tax/>