



NEWS



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Tenants deal with aftermath of devastating Upland apartment complex fire

Quinn Wilson, San Bernardino Sun

Posted: May 5, 2021 at 7:40PM



A resident walks through debris as he removes belongings after a fire that destroyed more than 40 units at the Courtyard at Upland apartments in Upland on Wednesday, May 5, 2021. (Photo by Watchara Phomicinda, The Press-Enterprise/SCNG)

As moving crews, safety inspectors and displaced tenants scoured through the remnants of The Courtyard at Upland on Wednesday, May 5, Sean Alves — who lost everything in Tuesday’s devastating fire at the apartment complex — hung around the complex looking for his beloved cat, Kitty.

“The firefighter told me that the cat ran out of the building when they were here putting out the flames,” Alves said. “She’s a total indoor cat, she does not like outdoors, so I’m worried about her — but she’s been seen, so that’s good.”

Alves was receiving dialysis treatment on Tuesday afternoon when he heard the news of the blaze that ripped through his complex at 968 West 7th Street, significantly damaging more than 40 apartment units and displacing about 200 people. When he arrived back at his home of three years, Alves learned the fire had started just three units away from his.

“One kid that lives next door showed me several videos, and what do I see on it? I see a fireman’s head popping out of my apartment,” Alves said. “I knew right then there was nothing left.”

“You see this stuff on the media all the time, but you never see it happen to you. It’s devastating.”

Fifty-four units were impacted by smoke, water or fire damage, the **San Bernardino County Fire** Department said Tuesday.

Tim Jones, building inspector with the City of Upland, said the horseshoe shaped building directly affected by the fire that broke out in its communal attic space was looking like a “total loss.”

“It’s a shame,” Jones lamented. “People want to live in Upland and to have this happen is just a shame.”

Jones spent most of Wednesday ensuring the complex’s electricity was off and coordinating the next steps with the City of Upland and the apartment complex’s management, Macroreal Commercial Inc. Some of these include hiring security for the decimated building and getting a fence around the property.

An adjacent building on the complex was not damaged in Tuesday’s fire and Jones said the property managers and city officials were working to make that building habitable again.

Some residents and their families spent the day hauling out surviving items such as furniture, suitcases and bags of clothing. While some of the lower units were not burned by the fire, water and smoke damage wreaked havoc on their personal items.

Ghasem Farahani, a seven-year resident at the complex, said that he and his wife's unit was heavily damaged by smoke and water. He said that he had spent between \$12,000 to \$15,000 on new furniture and appliances in the last month.

"It all has water damage and the smoke — it's useless," Farahani said.

Farahani's wife was home in their downstairs apartment when the fire broke out on Tuesday around 2:45 p.m. She was alerted when a maintenance worker came knocking on every door in the complex.

The American Red Cross has provided the displaced tenants with temporary lodging at a local hotel. It was unclear how long the American Red Cross would provide temporary shelter for the residents for.

"We all know how difficult it is for us to find a place (in Upland) — two or three days is impossible, let alone a week," Farahani said.

Alves said that he will likely live with a friend after the lodging from the American Red Cross is no longer available. With the task of finding a new apartment looming in the interim, Alves was grateful that nobody was hurt or killed in the fire.

"I've just been trying to figure things out step by step," Alves said. "You know, when something like this happens, you don't know what the first step is to take, so you've just got to try and piece it together."

Neither Farahani nor Alves had renter's insurance. Farahani said that he was never encouraged by the apartment's property management to purchase his own policy while Alves said it was not something, he thought he would ever need.

California does not have any laws requiring renter's insurance, but some landlords may require it for tenants to live in their building, according to Nationwide Insurance. It was unclear if the apartment's property management required it for tenants or not.

San Bernardino County Fire Department officials said the cause of the fire remained under investigation. A dollar amount of the damage caused by the fire wasn't immediately available.

<https://www.sbsun.com/2021/05/05/tenants-deal-with-aftermath-of-devastating-upland-apartment-complex-fire/>

Fire damages 40 units at California apartment building

Staff Writer, Associated Press

Posted: May 5, 2021



UPLAND, Calif. (AP) — Authorities say a fire at a Southern California apartment building damaged 40 units, killed pets and injured a firefighter.

The blaze was reported shortly before 3 p.m. Tuesday in the shared attic of a two-story building on 7th Street in Upland.

The **San Bernardino County Fire** Department says more than 40 apartments were damaged by fire, smoke or water damage before the blaze was extinguished.

A firefighter was taken to a local hospital with a heat-related injury, and KCBS-TV says an unknown number of pets died in the blaze.

No residents were hurt. It's unclear what sparked the fire.

<https://www.turnto23.com/news/state/fire-damages-40-units-at-california-apartment-building>

Fire Crews Extinguish 3-Alarm Fire at Upland Apartment Complex, 51 Units Damaged

Riley Chloe, NY Press News

Posted: May 5, 2021



UPLAND (CBSLA) — Fire crews Tuesday battled a blaze at an apartment building in the 900 block of West 7th Street in Upland.

According to the **San Bernardino County Fire** Department, the blaze started at about 2:45 p.m. in the shared attic space of a two-story apartment building.

“It went by really fast,” Debra Perez, a victim, said. “It started upstairs in one of the corner apartments, and then it rushed to the middle and then it just went all the way around until they were able to stop it.”

Firefighters said the large attic space combined with local winds to create conditions for the fire to spread.

“It really pushed it really quick through there,” Mike McClintock, a spokesperson for the fire department, said. “So, a lot of damage.”

McClintock said 51 units had suffered some sort of damage — smoke, water or fire damage directly.

The department said one firefighter was taken to a local hospital with a heat-related injury, and an unknown number of pets died in the blaze.

“Awful thing is that we did lose some animals in the building that their families were at work and they weren’t able to get them out,” Perez said.

Others lost everything, including Miguel Hernandez and Celine Mason.

“We barely moved into this place two days ago, and now we’re gonna have to find a new home again,” Hernandez said.

“We just got settled in basically last night and now we have to do it all over again,” Mason said.

The Red Cross and local schools were helping those displaced find shelter.

It was not immediately clear what sparked the fire.

<https://nypressnews.com/news/usa/los-angeles/fire-crews-extinguish-3-alarm-fire-at-upland-apartment-complex-51-units-damaged/>

Driver Escapes Car Fire Northbound I-15 In The Cajon Pass

Staff Writer, Pain in the Pass

Posted: May 5, 2021



CAJON PASS, CA. (Pain In The Pass) >> A car caught fire on northbound Interstate 15 Freeway in the Cajon Pass Wednesday morning.

California Highway Patrol and **San Bernardino County Fire** Department were getting calls of a vehicle on fire on the right shoulder about a mile and a half after Highway 138 exit. The car fire was reported about 10:53am Wednesday May 5, 2021 with flames coming from the engine compartment.

California Highway Patrol and firefighters were on the scene and had to temporarily shut down the slow lane, while they worked on getting the vehicle fire put out. CHP issued the slow lane closed for about a half a hour due to the cleanup and removal of the car. The vehicle was reported to be a gold/brown Honda Accord sedan.

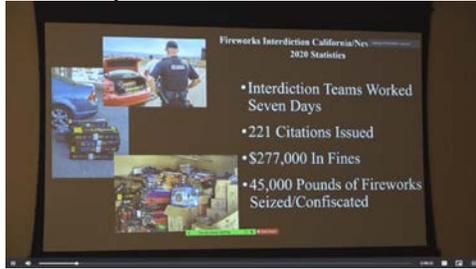
Everybody did escape the vehicle before it became fully engulfed. No injuries were reported at the scene. The cause of the vehicle fire is unknown at this time.

<https://paininthepass.info/2021/05/05/driver-escapes-car-fire-northbound-i-15-in-the-cajon-pass-2/>

Yucca Valley Town Council Hears 5g Concern, Allocates \$45k To Non-Profits

Staff Writer, z1077fm.com

Posted: May 5, 2021



Following a closed meeting, the Yucca Valley Town Council held its public meeting last night. Reporter Joshua King has the details on what was covered...

Prior to the start of the business part of the Yucca Valley Town Council meeting, council members heard a presentation from the **San Bernardino County Fire** Department about illegal fireworks in the county.

The council then recognized Bill Carter for 26 years of service to the town.

The meeting began with discussion surrounding the Tri-Valley Little League involvement in the T-Mobile Techover Contest, spurring a member of the public to voice their opposition, citing concerns about the dangers of 5G towers being built in town should they win the contest. A member of Tri-Valley Little League offered a counterpoint by stating that the Little League could use a stronger mobile network and the grant money from the contest.

The Town Council then approved a partial allocation of Measure Y funding totaling \$45,000 towards local non-profit organizations. The Town then received and filed their staff's report of their Special Revenue Funds for the fiscal year 2021-2022.

Next, a presentation was held for the Annual Animal Care and Control Report, which was subsequently received and filed by the Town Council. The meeting concluded with the acceptance of a bequest totaling \$59,733.92 towards the Yucca Valley Animal Shelter from the trust of Jean Laurie Davis.

<http://z1077fm.com/yucca-valley-town-council-hears-5g-concern-allocates-45k-to-non-profits/>