



# NEWS



## News Headlines 8/17-20/2018

- San Bernardino County Fire Chief Mark Hartwig Discusses Proposed Fire Tax at a Community Meeting.
- LABOR DAY FAIR AND FIREWORKS SPECTACULAR SET FOR LANDERS SEPTEMBER 1
- HOMESTEAD VALLEY COMMUNITY COUNCIL TO DISCUSS FIRE FEE TODAY
- Driver airlifted after crashing into tree and utility pole in Victorville
- Contained: Forest Service firefighters respond to report of fire in Barton Flats area
- Man injured in head-on crash on Rancho Road in Hesperia
- Victorville man, 60, arrested for DUI after slamming into minivan
- Hesperia man dies from injuries suffered in crash on Highway 395
- Firefighters knock down fire at San Bernardino auto dismantling facility
- Fatal traffic accident takes place in Fontana on Aug. 17
- Firefighter Helmet Cam: San Bernardino House Fire
- County Fire chief touts parcel tax: Hartwig says department needs tax of \$157.26 per parcel just to maintain existing services

## **San Bernardino County Fire Chief Mark Hartwig Discusses Proposed Fire Tax at a Community Meeting.**

Susan A. Neufeld, ROTW News

Posted: August 20, 2018

Lake Arrowhead, CA – At a community meeting held Tuesday, August 14, 2018, at Rim of the World High School, **San Bernardino County Fire** Chief, Mark Hartwig discussed the proposal of a new fire tax for Service Zone FP-5. The tax will include all of the Service Zones in the County Fire area. These are all unincorporated areas of the County.

Chief Hartwig explained the the tax is expected to increase revenue for the San Bernardino County Fire District by about \$27 million. A \$29 million deficit is expected in 2019 and this tax is aimed at relieving that.

The San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors, who operate as the board for the county's fire district, were approached by Chief Hardwick who gave them 3 options to relieve the deficit.

First option is to operate within their current revenue, which is at a deficit. Second option to have the board guarantee \$17 million from the general fund, which the county has no legal obligation to provide. His third option is to expand FP-5 costing taxpayers more money.

After Hartwig's recommendations, the board decided in a 3-2 vote to pursue the expansion of FP-5.

Supervisor Janice Rutherford — one of the supervisors who voted against the proposal — had this to say in a statement.

"I believe voters should have the right to affirmatively decide whether this tax should apply to their property, and the process the Board adopted does not guarantee voters will have that opportunity. I also believe it is appropriate to have a public conversation about what level of fire (and) emergency services can be provided with the Fire District's existing tax revenue, so voters fully understand how funding shortfalls would impact staffing levels, response time, etc."

Chief Hartwig said they do have an algorithm which can predict response times, should a fire station close due to lack of funding. In our mountain communities they expect an increase of 36 minutes.

"I believe this is our best option", Hartwig said, "I'm asking a lot of every community".

If the proposal passes, it is important to note the tax is per parcel. So homeowners that have more than one parcel will pay more than the \$157.26 proposed tax.

For homeowners that also own parcels that are contiguous, there's a form online which can be filled out and taken to the county assessor. After submitting the form and paying a one-time fee of \$108, the county treats the property as a single parcel for the purpose of this tax. The form can be found at: <http://www.sbcounty.gov/uploads/arc/Forms/aoso47.pdf>

<https://rotwnews.com/2018/08/20/san-bernardino-county-fire-chief-mark-hartwig-discusses-proposed-fire-tax-at-a-community-meeting/>

## **LABOR DAY FAIR AND FIREWORKS SPECTACULAR SET FOR LANDERS SEPTEMBER 1**

Staff Writer, z1077news  
Posted: August 20, 2018

Morongo Basin's second annual Labor Day Fair and Fireworks Spectacular is Saturday, September 1. Reporter Mike Lipsitz has your invitation to get in on the food, the fun, and the biggest fireworks display in Landers history...

The Labor Day Fair and Fireworks Spectacular is at Homestead Valley Park at 1501 Belfield Boulevard in Landers. Gates open at 4 p.m. and live music with the down-home western sound of Cinch starts soon after. The Marine Corps Color Guard presents the colors at a 7:30 p.m. opening ceremony. Then enjoy more live music, kid's games and activities like face painting and a bounce house; meet first responders and tour the equipment of Morongo Basin Ambulance and **County Fire**. Enjoy cold beer and Rotary margaritas, funnel cakes, games of chance and skill, and other concessions during the buildup to what founder Chris Gubler says will be "the largest fireworks spectacular in Landers history." And the show will be synchronized to summer themed music. Entry and street parking are free, but donations of school supplies will be collected for students K through grade 6 at Landers Elementary School. VIP parking will be available for a \$5 donation.

<http://z1077fm.com/labor-day-fair-and-fireworks-spectacular-set-for-landers-september-1/>

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## **HOMESTEAD VALLEY COMMUNITY COUNCIL TO DISCUSS FIRE FEE TODAY**

Staff Writer, z1077news  
Posted: August 20, 2018

The new county-wide fire fee will be the topic of discussion at the Homestead Valley Community Council meeting Monday, August 20. The **county fire** department plans to expand Fire Protection District 5 to include all unincorporated areas of the county, as well as the Town of Yucca Valley. A \$157 annual fee will be added to every property owner's tax bill to cover the costs of fire protection. The meeting is set for 3 p.m. at the Yucca Mesa Community Center on Balsa Avenue in Yucca Mesa.

<http://z1077fm.com/local-news/todays-full-newscast/>

## Driver airlifted after crashing into tree and utility pole in Victorville

Staff Writer, VVNG

Posted: August 19, 2018



Helicopter H325 at the helipad of Victor Valley Hospital. (Photo Courtesy of San Bernardino County Fire)

VICTORVILLE, Calif. (VVNG.com) — One person was flown to a trauma center after crashing into a tree and a power pole early Sunday morning.

At 12:42 am, San Bernardino County Firefighters responded to a traffic collision in the area of Seneca Road and Mc Art Road in Victorville.

Upon arrival, County Firefighters found two vehicles involved in the crash. One of the sedans had major damage to the driver side with a female occupant in the driver seat.

Due to woman's injuries, firefighters requested the use of helicopter H-325 to airlift the patient to an out of area trauma center.

Fire Captain Jeff Allen said, "air transport to trauma centers is the preferred method in many areas of the county including the high desert. Ground transport times to trauma centers can exceed 1 hour in many cases. On this call, the patient arrived at the trauma center via Helicopter 325 in just over 40 minutes after the initial call time, which is exceptional".

No other injuries were reported and the official cause of the crash remains under investigation by the Victorville Police Department.

<https://www.vvng.com/driver-airlifted-after-crashing-into-tree-and-utility-pole-in-victorville/>

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## Contained: Forest Service firefighters respond to report of fire in Barton Flats area

Staff Writer, Big Bear Grizzly

Posted: August 19, 2018

UPDATE: 6:05 p.m. Sunday, Aug. 19 — US Forest Service reports that the Wildhorse Fire near Barton Flats has been contained.

UPDATE: 4:30 p.m. Sunday, Aug. 19 — Crews have confirmed that the Wildhorse Fire was started by lightning. It is centered on a tree with a 10x10 foot ground fire. Air attack has requested approval to have helicopter dip out of Jenks Lake to make a couple of drops on the fire.

UPDATE: 4:05 p.m. Sunday, Aug. 19 — Helicopter 534 has located the fire midslope on Heartbar Peak. It is a 5X5 spot with little potential for spread. Two engines remain along with Helicopter 534 to take care of the fire, now called the Wildhorse Fire. Other ground response teams are released from the fire. There is no threat to Big Bear Valley.

At 3:28 p.m. Sunday, Aug. 19, US Forest Service firefighters responded to a report of a fire in the Heart Bar Campground area near Barton Flats. Cal Fire and **San Bernardino County Fire** has also responded. As of 3:41 p.m. helicopter 534 is enroute from Heaps Peak.

According to the US Forest Service, the reporting party stated the fire was off of Forest Road 1N38 and was small in volume. The fire could possibly be a campfire or lightning snag. This story will be updated as more information becomes available.

[http://www.bigbeargrizzly.net/news/contained-forest-service-firefighters-respond-to-report-of-fire-in/article\\_378e898e-a402-11e8-9b75-a758c81940ec.html](http://www.bigbeargrizzly.net/news/contained-forest-service-firefighters-respond-to-report-of-fire-in/article_378e898e-a402-11e8-9b75-a758c81940ec.html)

## Man injured in head-on crash on Ranchoero Road in Hesperia

Staff Writer, VVNG

Posted: August 18, 2018



The head-on crash occurred on Ranchoero Road and Kiki Street in Hesperia. (Gabriel D. Espinoza, Victor Valley News) 2) A man was injured in a crash on Ranchoero Road in Hesperia. (Gabriel D. Espinoza, Victor Valley News)

HESPERIA, Calif. (VVNG.com) — A man was transported to a local hospital following a head-on crash in Hesperia Saturday afternoon.

The crash occurred in the westbound lanes of Ranchoero Road at the intersection of Kuki Street at about 4:20 p.m. on August 18, 2018.

**San Bernardino County Fire**, AMR, and the California Highway Patrol responded and located two vehicles, a blue Toyota 4Runner, and a white sedan.

The driver of the white sedan was transported to a local hospital with non-life threatening injuries.

California Highway Patrol officers quickly cleared the roadway to reopen lanes of traffic.

The cause of the crash remains under investigation at this time.

## **Victorville man, 60, arrested for DUI after slamming into minivan**

Staff Writer, VVNG

Posted: August 18, 2018



**UPDATE 8/20 @ 9:20 AM**– During the investigation, it was determined Pink Wright was the driver of the 2007 Kia Optima that collided with three vehicles, in separate incidents.

At approximately 3:22pm, Wright ran into the rear of a 2016 Ford Flex near Luna and fled the scene. He then collided with a 2012 Nissan Altima that was traveling south on El Evado, and again fled the scene.

At approximately 3:27pm, Wright rear ended a 2015 Kia Sedona at the intersection of Northstar and Petaluma. The vehicle Wright was driving had major damage and Wright was located at the scene.

None of the occupants of the vehicles hit by Wright requested medical attention. Wright was seen at a local hospital for an injury to his head. He was then arrested and booked at High Desert Detention Center for driving under the influence. The case will be forwarded to the District Attorney's office for review and consideration of additional charges.

According to public court records, Wright has a lengthy past involving arrests for driving while under the influence, the most recent conviction in December 2014. The case was filed in San Bernardino Superior Court, where he was charged with DUI, driving while license was suspended for a previous DUI, failure to install an ignition interlock device. A plea bargain convicted him of Drive Under Influence Alcohol/0.08% Or More, but dismissed the ignition device and other charges. He was sentenced to 3 years in State Prison, with the usual 50% credit.

In February 2006, he was arrested for DUI and for driving while license was suspended for a previous DUI. He was convicted of the DUI. A previous probation was continued, and he was ordered to attend a county approved alcohol program. By 2008 it was realized that he had not completed the program. He was already in prison for something else. That, and previous cases, were in LA County.

Anyone with information about this investigation is asked to contact the Victorville Police Department at (760) 241-2911. Callers wishing to remain anonymous are urged to call the We-Tip Hotline at 1-800-78CRIME (27463) or you may leave information on the We-Tip website at [www.wetip.com](http://www.wetip.com).

**VICTORVILLE, Calif. (VVNG.com)** — A 60-year-old Victorville man was arrested for DUI after slamming into the back of a minivan Friday afternoon.

It happened August 17, 2018, at about 3:30 pm, at the intersection of Petaluma Road and Northstar Avenue in Victorville.

Deputies with the Victorville Sheriff's Department and firefighters with **San Bernardino County Fire** responded to crash involving a black Kia Optima sedan and a white Kia Sedona minivan.

Based on preliminary reports, the minivan was rear-ended by the sedan as it waited at the three-way stop sign. The driver of the sedan, identified as Pink Wright, was treated at the scene for a minor head laceration. After he was bandaged up, he was placed in the back of a patrol unit and subsequently arrested for driving under the influence with a BAC over .08, officials said.

According to public arrest records, Wright was cite released and is no longer in custody as of August 18, 2018, at 7:32 pm.

No injuries were reported by any of the occupants from the minivan.

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

<https://www.vvng.com/victorville-man-60-arrested-for-dui-after-slamming-into-minivan/>

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## **Hesperia man dies from injuries suffered in crash on Highway 395**

Staff Writer, VVNG

Posted: August 18, 2018



(Hugo C. Valdez, Victor Valley News)

**HESPERIA, Calif. (VVNG.com)** — A 43-year-old man involved in a crash on US Highway 395 died from his injuries while at the hospital, officials said.

The San Bernardino County Coroner's Office identified the deceased man as Amadi David Arnold, of Hesperia.

The two-vehicle crash involving a white 2011 Toyota Camry and a black 2007 Scion happened on Highway 395, just north of Poplar Street on August 16, 2018, at about 7:00 pm.

Hesperia deputies and rescue personnel from the **San Bernardino County Fire** Department responded to the scene and located the driver of the Scion, later identified as Amadi suffering from major injuries and rushed him to Desert Valley Hospital via AMR ambulance. Despite life-saving measures, Amadi was pronounced deceased at 7:42 pm, according to the coroner's office.

The driver of the Camry, also an adult male, had major injuries from the collision and was flown to Arrowhead Regional Medical Center for treatment. He is expected to recover.

The Hesperia Station Major Accident Investigation Team (MAIT) responded to conduct the investigation.

"Investigators believe that for reasons still under investigation, the Scion was northbound on US Highway 395 when the driver left the roadway onto the right shoulder where he lost control. The vehicle re-entered the roadway, crossing over the double yellow line and directly into the path of the Camry which was southbound," stated a sheriff's news release.

The collision blocked all lanes of US Highway 395 which was closed in both directions from Main Street to Joshua until about 11:00 PM while investigators processed the scene for evidence and removed the debris.

The collision investigation is ongoing and anyone with information is asked to contact Deputy Eric Getts or Sergeant Doug Hubbard from the Hesperia Station at (760)947-1500.

<https://www.vvng.com/hesperia-man-dies-from-injuries-suffered-in-crash-on-highway-395/>

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## **Firefighters knock down fire at San Bernardino auto dismantling facility**

**Nathaniel Percy, SB Sun**

Posted: August 18, 2018, 3:06 p.m.

Firefighters knocked down a fire that started at a San Bernardino auto junkyard in about an hour and stopped the blaze from spreading beyond the facility Saturday afternoon, Aug. 18, authorities said.

About 12:45 p.m., firefighters with the **San Bernardino County Fire** Department received multiple calls of a commercial structure fire in the 1300 block of Rialto Avenue, spokesman Eric Sherwin said.

When firefighters arrived, they found multiple vehicles burning at an auto dismantling facility, Sherwin said. Firefighters controlled the blaze in about 30 minutes before the fire could expand beyond the property.

The fire was knocked down about 1:45 p.m., Sherwin said.

Firefighters remain on scene and are working to determine the cause of the fire and a cost estimate of the damage, Sherwin said.

There were no reported injuries to civilians or firefighters, he said.

<https://www.sbsun.com/2018/08/18/county-firefighters-knock-down-fire-at-san-bernardino-auto-dismantling-facility/>



## Fatal traffic accident takes place in Fontana on Aug. 17

Staff Writer, Fontana Herald News

Posted: August 17, 2018



A 22-year-old man died in a traffic accident in Fontana on Aug. 17, according to the San Bernardino County Sheriff Coroner's Division.

At 1:06 a.m., emergency personnel responded to the 17000 block of Valley Boulevard to investigate the report of a single vehicle traffic collision.

Ramiro Granados was driving westbound on Valley when he lost control of his vehicle, drove across the eastbound lanes, and struck a power pole, the Coroner's Division said.

Granados was declared deceased at 1:12 a.m. by **San Bernardino County Fire** Department personnel. The Fontana Police Department was investigating the incident.

[https://www.fontanaheraldnews.com/news/fatal-traffic-accident-takes-place-in-fontana-on-aug/article\\_fc4db410-a22d-11e8-8b39-63b3373f2322.html](https://www.fontanaheraldnews.com/news/fatal-traffic-accident-takes-place-in-fontana-on-aug/article_fc4db410-a22d-11e8-8b39-63b3373f2322.html)

## Firefighter Helmet Cam: San Bernardino House Fire

Staff Writer, Fire Fighter Nation

Posted: August 17, 2018



(San Bernardino Co FFs/YouTube)

San Bernardino Co FFs - On July 25th, 2018 at 5:20PM SBCoFD responded to a residential structure fire in the 100 block of West 13th St in the City of San Bernardino.

Medic Engine 221 arrived on scene in four minutes and reported heavy smoke and fire showing.

Initial priorities were to search for any occupants. Crews initially established an offensive fire attack to knock down the bulk of the fire. Truck crews supported this operation with vertical ventilation on the roof above.

The fire was ultimately declared out approximately 60 minutes later.

**San Bernardino County Fire** responded with 8 paramedic engines, 3 truck company, 1 medic squad, 2 battalion chief and 1 investigator for a total of 39 personnel.

There were no injuries to civilians or fire personnel. The cause is currently under investigation.

<https://www.firefighternation.com/articles/2018/08/firefighter-helmet-cam-san-bernardino-house-fire.html>

## County Fire chief touts parcel tax: Hartwig says department needs tax of \$157.26 per parcel just to maintain existing services

Martin Estacio, Daily Press

Posted: August 17, 2018, 1:17 p.m.



San Bernardino County Fire Chief Mark Hartwig speaks at last Thursday's MAC meeting about the proposed fire tax for unincorporated areas. [Martin Estacio, for the Leader]

**San Bernardino County Fire** Chief Mark Hartwig pleaded his case in front of a packed community center at the Lucerne Valley/Johnson Valley Municipal Advisory Council (MAC) meeting on Thursday evening, explaining the reasons for a proposed annual parcel tax and the effects on fire service if that additional revenue doesn't come in.

The department is planning to expand Fire Protection Zone 5 (FP-5) to include all unincorporated communities in the county. This would result in an annual fee of \$157.26 on each parcel, with a possible maximum increase of 3 percent a year, per parcel, vacant or not.

According to a County Fire Department flier, if the parcels are bordering, owners can file a form for \$108.00 and only pay one parcel fee.

Hartwig explained that his department is facing a \$29.3 million deficit, and that he's had to "dip into [his] own bank account," depleting reserve funds, to support existing fire services.

When he went to the Board of Supervisors to report on the situation in June, his options were either to "live within [his] means" — meaning cutting services — or to expand FP-5.

Hartwig expressed the seriousness of the situation if the proposal doesn't pass.

"I have to make some difficult decisions unless I get revenue," he said.

On one slide of his presentation, he noted that without the additional tax revenue, response times in the North Desert area — of which Lucerne Valley is included — could increase by 73 minutes.

When asked if this meant closure of local Station 8, Hartwig said he couldn't "guarantee" this would happen, but that it was a possibility.

Some of the reasons for the department's shortfall have been the increasing cost of service in fully staffing stations, and the lack of paid-call firefighters who had helped cut costs.

Hartwig suggested that the state's increased training requirements for paid-call firefighters contributed to this, and that after all the hours put in, most just took full-time positions instead.

MAC Chairman Roger Peterson worried that if the state reinstitutes their fire tax as well, he'd have to pay an extra \$300 per parcel.

Owning 80 acres in Lanfair Valley in the middle of the Mojave National Preserve, he doubted that the county would even respond promptly to his land if a fire broke out.

"It's kind of hard for me to see where I'm getting a benefit from that property," he said.

Hartwig acknowledged that his proposal might be a "hard sell" to some, as the revenue is being used solely to maintain existing services, and not to create new ones.

"I know I get the revenue on your backs," he said. "I know it isn't free and it isn't on trees."

But he also stressed how dire the department's financial situation is, and that he wouldn't have proposed the expansion of the tax to unincorporated areas and had meetings with community members if he didn't feel it was important.

"I wouldn't come to you here if I didn't feel like this was important and necessary," Hartwig said. "This isn't a fishing expedition for me."

Public notices will be sent to all parcel owners Sept. 14 with procedures on the protest process. If at least 25 percent do protest, an election will be triggered and the proposal will be put to a vote.

If 50 percent or more protest, the expansion will be terminated outright.

For more information, visit [www.sbcfire.org](http://www.sbcfire.org) and click on "Service Zone FP-5 Information" at the bottom.

<http://www.vvdailynews.com/news/20180817/county-fire-chief-touts-parcel-tax-hartwig-says-department-needs-tax-of-15726-per-parcel-just-to-maintain-existing-services>