



NEWS



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Squatters may be responsible for San Bernardino house fire, home declared unsafe

The Sun, Doug Saunders

Posted: March 28, 2017, 3:36 pm



A fire destroyed a vacant home Tuesday afternoon in the 700 block of Trenton Street in San Bernardino. JOHN VALENZUELA — STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

SAN BERNARDINO >> Firefighters battled a fire Tuesday afternoon at a vacant two-story home in the 700 block of Trenton Street.

Shortly after 12:30 p.m., firefighters received multiple 911 calls of smoke and flames coming from the home.

Firefighters began an aggressive attack, but soon thereafter the roof and sub-floor began to give way.

[Video: San Bernardino house fire](#)

About 30 minutes later, the fire was considered knocked down. Fire officials on scene declared the building unsafe. This isn't the first time the home has burned.

Fire officials said there was a fire in the home recently which is why the building was boarded up.

Neighbors said there are numerous homeless people going in and out of the home daily. City crews were asked to evaluate the property to determine if it could be demolished by the end of business Tuesday.

Arson investigators were on scene to determine the cause of the fire.

<http://www.sbsun.com/general-news/20170328/squatters-may-be-responsible-for-san-bernardino-house-fire-home-declared-unsafe>

Our View: Time to start preparing for wildfire season

VV Daily Press, Daily Press Editorial Board

Posted: March 28, 2017, 10:15 am

After six years of drought, this year's wet winter was welcomed by Californians from south to north and beach to desert.

You know things are serious when water becomes so scarce that the governor mandates major reductions in usage for all residents, as Gov. Jerry Brown did nearly two years ago.

Thankfully, much of the state has moved out of drought status. Even here in the High Desert the aquifer we depend on for our water appears to be coming back to more normal levels, according to water officials. (That's not true yet of Barstow, however.)

But as happy as we've been to see substantial rainfall this year, it also brings its own problems, experts say.

Chief among them is an increase in grasses, brush and weeds — the fuel that can turn wildfires into the kind of monsters we saw last August in the Pilot and Bluecut fires. That is a very real concern to firefighters and their commanders, who already are worrying about what they expect to be a busy fire season in 2017.

San Bernardino County Fire Department, Barstow Fire Protection District and Apple Valley Fire Protection District officials already are gearing up and they urge residents to do so too.

"With the increase in rain, we've got lots of desert grass — those light, flashy fuels that burn faster and spread quicker," said Barstow FPD Interim Chief Jamie Williams.

Apple Valley FPD Chief Sid Hultquist said it only takes 2 inches of grass to spread a wildfire from one yard to the next, so it is imperative for residents who have seen their yards overtaken by weeds in recent weeks to clear them now.

More than that, fire officials recommend the following:

- maintaining 100 feet of clearance around all structures and having a 100-foot hose on your property;
- keeping wood piles, fuel tanks and other combustible materials at least 30 feet from your home;
- locating storage sheds away from your home, particularly if they are being used to store combustible materials;
- cleaning and screening your chimney;
- removing dead trees from your property;
- removing tree and brush trimmings, leaves and pine needles from your property.
- ensuring your address is clearly visible from the street in case firefighters need to respond in an emergency.

Last year was one of the worst in history for the High Desert in terms of wildfires. Let's do everything we can to prevent 2017 from matching or even exceeding that.

Authorities identify body of 38-year-old man recovered from aqueduct

VV Daily Press

Posted: March 28, 2017, 10:28 am Updated: 8:44 pm

HESPERIA — Authorities on Tuesday identified a 38-year-old Phelan man as the victim whose body was recovered from the California Aqueduct on Monday evening.

San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department deputies said the body of Alfonzo Mercado was pulled from the aqueduct.

Sheriff's spokeswoman Jodi Miller said dispatch received reports at 5:15 p.m. about a possible body floating in the aqueduct in the area near El Centro Road and Cottonwood Avenue. Witnesses told the Daily Press the body could be seen floating toward Rancho Road.

Authorities quickly arrived and members of the Sheriff's Dive Team and County Fire personnel were able to pull Mercado's body from the waters near Rancho Road and 11th Avenue.

Detectives from the Specialized Investigations Division, Homicide Detail, responded and assumed the death investigation, officials said.

Anyone with information regarding this investigation is asked to contact Detective Jon Cahow or Sgt. John Gaffney with the the Specialized Investigations Division, Homicide Detail at 909-387-3589. Callers wishing to remain anonymous may call the We-Tip Hotline at 1-800-782-7436 or visit www.wetip.com.

<http://www.vvdailynews.com/news/20170328/authorities-identify-body-of-38-year-old-phelan-man-recovered-from-aqueduct>

Can emergency responders find your home?

ROTW News, Susan A. Neufeld

Posted: March 28, 2017, 5:03 am

Is your home easy for emergency responders to find? If you have guests that have a hard finding your home remember, every minute counts when emergency responders are trying to find you.

Make sure that your house numbers are visible and easy to read. Numbers should be posted near the front door, above eye level. Number should be basic Arabic numerals at least four (4) inches high. Make sure the numbers contrast the paint color of the house. Light color houses should have dark numbers.

TIPS FOR HOUSE NUMBERS

Make sure that your house numbers are easily seen from 150 feet

If your house is at the end of a long lane, or driveway, post house numbers at the street, where cars enter your property.

Numbers should be easily read in both day and night.

Periodically make sure they are not obscured by tree, bushes or shrubbery.

These tips could save your life because, in an emergency, every second counts.

<http://rotwnews.com/2017/03/29/can-emergency-responders-find-your-home/>
