



# NEWS



## News Headlines 8/17/2017

- San Bernardino river bottom fire contained, 1 arrested
- Accused firebug linked to more fires
- Helicopter Rescues Rock Climber
- Sheriff and fire officials spar over emergency helicopter rescues

## **San Bernardino river bottom fire contained, 1 arrested**

**Doug Saunders, The Press-Enterprise**

Posted: August 16, 2017, 2:25 PM

SAN BERNARDINO >> One person was arrested after firefighters responded to a vegetation fire in the bottom of the Santa Ana river on the outskirts of the city Wednesday.

Shortly before 1:30 p.m. firefighters raced to Hospitality and Hunts lanes for a report of a brush fire.

They quickly surrounded the blaze with hose lines and put the fire out, officials announced on Twitter.

One person was arrested, but details were limited at the time of this report.

<http://www.pe.com/2017/08/16/san-bernardino-river-bottom-fire-contained-1-arrested/>

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## **Accused firebug linked to more fires**

**Inland News Today**

Posted: August 16, 2017

SAN BERNARDINO – (INT) – The arson case against a young Yucaipa man has been expanded as prosecutors have now linked Jarrod Samra to 14 fires, according to court documents.

Samra, 23, is accused of going on a month-long, fire-fueled spree in the foothills of the San Bernardino Mountains between July 7th and August 3rd. The fires were fought between Devore and Yucaipa. The largest covered 460 acres and seriously injured one firefighter.

Samra was arrested near the origin of the last fire in Mentone off Highway 38.

His next court date has been set for October 5th.

<http://www.inlandnewstoday.com/story.php?s=47396>

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## Helicopter Rescues Rock Climber

Mountain News

Posted: August 17, 2017



In an attempt to climb the rocks below State Highway 18 and Crest Forest Drive, a Long Beach visitor fell 40 feet down and air rescue was needed.

A visitor from Long Beach plummeted approximately 40 feet as she attempted to climb on the rocks below State Highway 18 and Crest Forest Drive on Aug. 13. According to a press release from the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department, Air Rescue 7 performed the rescue by helicopter.

Jessica Christenson, 46, suffered moderate injuries, but was unable to walk out of the area where she fell. **County Fire Department** paramedics were first to arrive on the scene, before the rescue crew arrived.

When fire department personnel located Christenson, they determined that she needed to be hoist-rescued, due to the nature of her injuries and the remote location. Dispatchers summoned Air Rescue 7 at approximately 9:00 a.m. to assist with the rescue.

Once the helicopter was in position, Crew Chief S. Miller lowered Air Medic B. Horak down to Christenson. After a brief medical assessment, Horak placed Christenson into a rescue harness and she was hoisted into the helicopter, followed by Horak.

The rescue crew transported Christenson to Loma Linda University Medical Center for treatment of non-life-threatening injuries.

[\(Print Edition\)](#)

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## Sheriff and fire officials spar over emergency helicopter rescues

Nick Gerda, Jose Ochoa, Voice of OC, LA Times

Posted: August 10, 4:00 PM



An air rescue by the Orange County Sheriff's Department. (Courtesy of Orange County Sheriff's Department)

An ongoing dispute between the county Sheriff's Department and Fire Authority over helicopter rescues is escalating after an agreement between both sides fell apart and county supervisors sided with the Sheriff's Department, giving it joint responsibility with the Fire Authority for rescuing people in remote areas.

Fire Authority officials say they've been performing air rescues for over 20 years and are well-equipped for the job, but that in recent years sheriff's helicopter crews have been racing to the scene and taking control.

The Fire Authority says that causes confusion on the ground, expensive duplication of efforts, and a risk of mid-air collisions.

"The last thing we want is to have two helicopters collide in the air because there's an air dispute over who got there first or whose jurisdiction it is," said Marc Stone, a battalion commander and spokesman for the Fire Authority.

"They'll just come right in and take over the whole thing," he said of the sheriff's helicopter crews. "What is happening now is causing such a divide" between the two agencies.

The Sheriff's Department, meanwhile, says its involvement is important because Fire Authority helicopters are sometimes out of the county assisting with other emergencies, and that the Fire Authority simply doesn't want the Sheriff's Department doing any medical emergency work.

Fire Authority helicopters have paramedics on board, and the sheriff's helicopter crews now include paramedics who can assist with medical treatment while patients are being flown to the hospital.

After meeting dozens of times about the issue, a new agreement was reached last month in which the two agencies would take turns on alternate weeks being in charge of air rescues across the county.

But the Fire Authority's board rejected it, instead wanting to maintain an existing agreement from March 2016 that has sheriff's officials handle searches and the Fire Authority handle rescues.

Sheriff's officials wanted a different approach. They recently proposed a new plan that defines both agencies as equal when it comes to the main kind of airlift at issue: off-road rescues in which the location of the person is known.

After a contentious debate at Tuesday's supervisors' meeting, and strong support from the sheriff's deputies' union, supervisors approved the sheriff-requested plan on a unanimous vote.

County supervisors are involved in the issue because under state law, they decide whether the Sheriff's Department has authority to conduct search and rescue operations. The supervisors also set overall policy for when sheriff's crews conduct rescues.

Tuesday's decision is essentially a policy change that officially puts the sheriff's helicopter crews on equal footing with the Fire Authority as being the lead agency when responding to off-road medical emergencies, without clarity about who should handle the calls.

The supervisors' action seemed to only escalate tensions.

The supervisors' lead attorney, Leon Page, had offered a menu of ideas for how to diffuse the tensions. They included having his County Counsel's office hire a trusted mediator, like a retired judge, to listen to both sides and offer recommendations for how to resolve the dispute.

Those ideas were publicly supported by Sheriff Sandra Hutchens and Fire Chief Jeff Bowman. Hutchens said she likes the idea of some type of third party mediator, because trying to continue talks without it "would be a waste of time." Bowman agreed.

The mediation idea was also supported by Supervisors Todd Spitzer and Lisa Bartlett. But the rest of the five-member board didn't support an outside mediator.

Supervisor Andrew Do, whose election last year was supported by \$100,000 in deputies' union campaign spending, said supervisors should be in charge of studying the helicopter issue, deciding the facts, and determining how the departments use search and rescue helicopters. He said the board should use a closed-door process involving two of the five supervisors, known as an ad-hoc committee.

Spitzer and Bartlett pushed back.

"I mean, two supervisors as an ad-hoc ... in my opinion, is not a good idea," Spitzer said of Do's proposal for the helicopter dispute. "I don't think two supervisors should play that role."

Bartlett noted both agencies want to go through a mediation process, and urged her colleagues to give a directive about entering mediation.

Without clear guidelines in place, Bartlett said, "We are putting everybody at risk," including the Fire Authority, sheriff's officials and the public.

"It would be a huge black eye on every agency and the County of Orange if we do not provide clear direction" on how this should proceed, she said.

But Bartlett's motion was not supported by a majority of the board, so there was no direction to hire a mediator.

Supervisor Shawn Nelson, meanwhile, said supervisors can help ensure the issue is dealt with by threatening to rescind the new agreement if both sides don't work out the issues in the next 30 days.

<http://www.latimes.com/socal/daily-pilot/entertainment/tn-wknd-et-helicopter-rescue-20170810-story.html>