



# NEWS



## News Headlines 12/17/2019

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## Two dead as storm lashes Southern California

Staff Writer, Wellston Journal

Posted: December 17, 2019

### Two dead as storm lashes Southern California

A powerful Pacific storm left two people dead in California as winds of more than 70mph downed power lines and brought trees down.

Evacuations of homes in some neighbourhoods were requested due to the potential for mudslides and debris flows.

More than 300 arriving and departing flights were delayed or cancelled at Los Angeles International Airport.

In the Sherman Oaks area of Los Angeles, a falling tree downed power lines and hit a car.

A 55-year-old man was electrocuted and pronounced dead at hospital, police and fire officials said.

Later in the same neighbourhood, a sinkhole swallowed two cars, the second on live TV as viewers watched it teeter on the edge before plunging in.

Firefighters rescued one person from the first car, and the driver got out of the second before it fell. No-one was injured.

Winds gusting to 70mph or more lashed parts of the region, and heavy rains turned creeks and rivers into brown torrents and released large volumes of mud from hillsides burned barren by wildfires.

Several stretches of highways were closed by flooding.

“It’s crazy,” said Robin Johnson, an academic adviser at the University of California, Santa Barbara.

“It’s just pouring down rain. The wind is just going nuts.”

In the desert town of Victorville, several cars were washed down a flooded street.

A helicopter rescued one person from the roof of a car but another motorist was found dead in a submerged vehicle, **San Bernardino County fire** spokesman Eric Sherwin said.

Elsewhere in the county, a 20-mile stretch of State Route 138 in the West Cajon Valley was closed at the scene of a summer wildfire.

Mud sloshed over concrete rail barriers and about two dozen vehicles, including lorries and a school bus, were either mired in mud or became unable to turn around on the closed road and some were abandoned.

Two people in a car were rescued and four students on the bus were removed and taken to a school office, Mr Sherwin said.

<https://wellstonjournal.com/two-dead-as-storm-lashes-southern-california.html>

## Toy drive aims to ‘spark’ light in Trona during holidays

Jessica Weston, The Daily Independent

Posted: December 16, 2019, 1:41 PM



(l-r) Azelle Hale, Bruce Groves and Susan Groves are surrounded by Sparks of Love toy donations at San Bernardino County Fire Station 57 in Trona on Thursday. More toys were stored inside; a total of four truckloads had been donated as of Dec. 12. – Jessica Weston/Daily Independent

TRONA — Spark of Love is once again collecting toys for kids in the Searles Valley area this holiday season. Arzell Hale from Searles Valley Minerals and Susan Groves and Bruce Groves from the **San Bernardino County Fire** Department met with the Daily Independent Thursday at San Bernardino County Station 57 in Trona to talk about this year’s toy drive. Susan Groves (who is married to Bruce) also manages the security department for Searles Valley Minerals.

Spark of Love is a Southern California toy donation charity event put on by ABC7 and local firefighters. Hale and the Groves said four truckloads of toys have been donated so far, and donations are still being accepted. All toys will go to needy children in Trona, according to Hale.

Presents will go to kids of all ages, and this year people were asked to provide information on children with special needs and what they would like for Christmas, according to Susan Groves.

Toys were donated by Searles Valley company employees, according to Hale. He said each of the Searles Valley plants has a Christmas luncheon, at which employees donate toys.

“The Argus plant donated 18 bicycles!” Hale said. In addition, donations were also received from the Ridgecrest Regional Hospital, Brahma Construction, the Trona Gem and Mineral Society and the Trona Community Chest “plus a lot of individuals donated gift cards” for a total of \$1,650 in donations. The San Bernardino Fire Department held a fundraiser in front of Walmart in Ridgecrest and raised \$804 for a total of \$2454.

This year the need may be greater than ever because of the aftermath of the Ridgecrest earthquakes in July. Although the quakes were named for Ridgecrest, many in Trona bore of the brunt of them.

“A lot of our employees were financially damaged by the earthquakes also, but they donated like you wouldn’t believe,” Hale said.

According to Hale, approximately 500 Searles Valley employees live in Ridgecrest and 200 live in Trona out of a total population of around 1500.

Toys for Tots will also be distributing toys from Fire Station 57 on Dec. 20. They will be contacting approved Trona families to pick up toys.

Spark of Love will distribute toys Dec. 21.

<https://www.ridgecrestca.com/news/20191216/toy-drive-aims-to-spark-light-in-trona-during-holidays>

## Illegal marijuana grow operation discovered during Phelan house fire

Hugo Valdez, Victor Valley News

Posted: December 16, 2019



(Photo courtesy of San Bernardino County Fire)

PHELAN, Calif. (VVNG.com) — Firefighters responding to a Phelan home that caught fire Sunday night discovered an illegal marijuana grow operation.

It happened on Sunday, December 15, 2019, in the 13200 block of Pacific Road in Phelan.

According to a **San Bernardino County Fire** news release, “Crews immediately deployed multiple hose lines and initially took a defensive approach, due to significant involvement. Once crews were able to transition to an offensive approach they noticed there was an illegal marijuana grow operation.”

Crews were also faced with electrical hazards during the firefight. A life hazard alert was initiated and Edison was immediately requested, officials said.

Firefighters were able to get knockdown on the fire approximately one hour after it started.

No civilian or firefighter injuries were reported. SBCoFD responded one Battalion Chief, three Engines, one Truck and one Medic Ambulance assisted by one engine from Cal Fire.

<https://www.vvng.com/illegal-marijuana-grow-operation-discovered-during-phelan-house-fire/>

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## Explosion and fire cause major damage to apartment complex in Fontana on Dec. 16; two injuries reported

Staff Writer, Fontana Herald News

Posted: December 16, 2019



An explosion and fire caused major damage to an apartment complex in Fontana on Dec 16. (Contributed photo by Mike Myers)

An explosion and fire caused major damage to a small apartment complex in Fontana on the morning of Dec. 16.

Later that afternoon, two civilians were identified as being injured as a result of the incident, according to the Fontana Police Department. Both civilians went to Kaiser Hospital prior to the arrival of fire and police units.

"It was a huge explosion -- it felt like an earthquake at first," said Nick Chandler, who was lying down in his room on the second floor of the two-story building at the time. "Everything in the room got destroyed."

Chandler was uninjured by the blast.

At 11:32 a.m., the **San Bernardino County Fire** Department responded to multiple reports of the explosion in the 17200 block of Barbee Street, the Fire Department said.

ME 2 arrived shortly after dispatched and reported smoke and fire showing from the rear of the apartment complex. Firefighters quickly made access and noticed the building appeared to have significant damage. The first floor was inaccessible due to the potential of collapse. The fire spread to the second story and attic space.

Firefighters were able to get a quick knock down while performing a primary and secondary search of the entire complex. The blaze was extinguished in about 20 minutes, said Ryan Vaccaro, Fire Department engineer and public information officer.

Four units from the apartment complex were heavily damaged and red tagged from the explosion.

The cause of the incident is under investigation, but it may have been related to "illegal activity," according to Fontana Police Officer Rich Guerrero, because several people were seen running away from the location after the explosion occurred.

No firefighter injuries were reported. Five engines, two truck companies, one chief officer, one medic squad, and one rescue totaling 29 personnel from the Fire Department were assigned to the incident.

[https://www.fontanaheraldnews.com/news/explosion-and-fire-cause-major-damage-to-apartment-complex-in/article\\_4d7d2188-2048-11ea-a597-c3b2eec4a6f0.html](https://www.fontanaheraldnews.com/news/explosion-and-fire-cause-major-damage-to-apartment-complex-in/article_4d7d2188-2048-11ea-a597-c3b2eec4a6f0.html)

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## **Blast rocks Fontana apartment building; possible link to drugs investigated**

**Richard K. De Atley, The Press Enterprise/Daily Bulletin**

Posted: December 16, 2019, 4:15 PM



Firefighters at the scene of a ground-floor explosion Monday, Dec. 16, 2019 at a Fontana apartment building. Police said the blast may have involved a drug lab. (Courtesy San Bernardino County Fire Department)

An explosion rocked a two-story apartment building in Fontana late Monday morning, sending residents fleeing and at least one man, sought by police, running away from the scene in flames, authorities said.

“There is a possibility it could be related to drugs,” Fontana Officer Daniel Romero said at the scene.

At least two people were reported injured, police said, with neither being an officer or firefighter.

Detectives were waiting Monday afternoon for **San Bernardino County firefighters** to shore up the building so they could enter the scene of the explosion – what appeared to be a first-story garage and laundry area – to look for a possible drug lab, Romero said.

The explosion was reported at 11:20 a.m., Romero said, and “we got a bunch of 911 calls, with panicked folks calling” about the blast at 17221 Barbee St.

Firefighters knocked down the fire in 20 minutes.

Four units of the apartment building were so damaged they had to be red-tagged, meaning no one can live in them until repairs are completed.

“It was obvious that something exploded in the garage area – all the walls were blown out,” Romero said. “Luckily, we did not find anyone inside. ...

“But at least one person was seen running down an alley, actually still on fire,” Romero said.

Police had started looking for the man, believed to be in his late teens or early 20s, when they received word a man had just checked himself into a local hospital, suffering from burns.

Detectives were to try and interview the man.

Residents were allowed to go inside their apartments briefly to retrieve items.

<https://www.dailybulletin.com/2019/12/16/blast-rocks-fontana-apartment-building-possible-link-to-drugs-investigated/>

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## **County Firefighters respond to abandoned house fire in Hesperia**

**Hugo Valdez, Victor Valley News**

Posted: December 16, 2019



(Photo courtesy of San Bernardino County Fire)

HESPERIA, Calif. (VVNG.com) — An abandoned home in Hesperia was damaged during a Monday morning fire.

At about 10:30 am **San Bernardino County Fire** responded to reports of smoke coming from a boarded-up single-story structure in the 10080 block of Choiceana Avenue.

“Firefighters quickly deployed lines and gained access to the interior to find a small contents fire that had yet to extend into the attic space of the building,” stated Public Information Officer Jeremy Kern. “Crew’s initial priorities were to clear the building of any potential occupant.”

Kern said the primary and secondary searches were all clear and knockdown of the fire was achieved in approximately 15 minutes.

No injuries to civilians or firefighters were reported.

Two engines, one truck company, one chief officer, one medic ambulance, and one medic squad totaling 14 personnel from County Fire were assigned to the incident. Apple Valley Fire District assisted with one engine.

The official cause of the fire remains under investigation.

<https://www.vvng.com/county-firefighters-respond-to-abandoned-house-fire-in-hesperia/>

## Man arrested on suspicion of shooting and killing 16-year-old in Crestline

Robert Gundran, San Bernardino Sun

Posted: December 16, 2019, 8:16 pm

A boy was shot and killed on Saturday morning, and the Crestline man suspected of shooting him was arrested Sunday morning.

Deputies with the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department responded to the 700 block of Deer Trail in Crestline at around 8:15 a.m. Saturday in response to a male down in the driveway of a residence, officials said.

The Sheriff's Department said the **San Bernardino County Fire** Department also responded to the area and pronounced the boy dead.

That boy was identified as 16-year-old Kaleb Aurelio, of Twin Peaks.

A San Bernardino County Coroner's Office investigator found that the boy had a gunshot wound, and the Sheriff's Department said investigators identified Joshua Camacho, 36, of Crestline, as a suspect responsible for Kaleb's death.

Investigators obtained a search warrant for Camacho's residence on the 700 block of Big Oak Road. The search warrant was served on Sunday and authorities said evidence was found connecting him to the killing.

Camacho was found at a residence in Orange County and interviewed by investigators after he was transported to the Sheriff's Department. He was arrested on suspicion of murder at the end of the interview.

Camacho was booked into the Central Detention Center in San Bernardino with a bail of \$1 million.

The Sheriff's Department said the motive for the shooting is under investigation.

<https://www.sbsun.com/2019/12/16/man-arrested-on-suspicion-of-shooting-and-killing-16-year-old-in-crestline/>