



NEWS



News Headlines 4/1-3/2017

- Fiery crash near Dale Evans Parkway closes most of northbound I-15 for 5 hours
- Toppled power lines lead to blaze, evacuations Thursday
- Woman dies in Needles apartment fire
- Trump extends FEMA help for flooded California counties
- Fire damages T-shirt shop in Fontana on April 2

Fiery crash near Dale Evans Parkway closes most of northbound I-15 for 5 hours

Jose Quintero, Desert Dispatch

Posted: March 30, 2017, 7:45 AM



A 2017 Freightliner catches fire on northbound Interstate 15 near Dale Evans Parkway early Thursday morning after a collision with a toyhauler. Lanes were closed for about five hours, but no injuries were reported. [Photo courtesy of Apple Valley Fire Protection District]

APPLE VALLEY — A fiery crash shut down all northbound Interstate 15 lanes near Dale Evans Parkway for over five hours early Thursday morning.

California Highway Patrol logs show a tractor-trailer rear-ended a pickup truck hauling a trailer a little before 4 a.m., causing both vehicles to catch fire.

Authorities issued a SIG Alert at 4:51 a.m., shutting down all northbound lanes. The northbound No. 3 lane was reopened at 7:50 a.m. and all lanes were reported open just before 10 a.m.

Authorities said a 45-year-old Las Vegas man driving a 2017 Freightliner was heading northbound at 75 mph when, according to a witness, he failed to slow for slower traffic ahead and rear-ended a fifth-wheel trailer, hauled by a 2000 Chevrolet 3500 driven by a 64-year-old Glendora man. Authorities said the Freightliner was traveling at an “unsafe speed.”

“(The Freightliner) then veered to the left and struck the concrete Jersey wall in the center median,” CHP officials said in a statement. “The Freightliner became fully engulfed, blocking the median and No. 1 lane. (The Glendora man) drove his vehicle to the right shoulder and came to a stop. The fifth-wheel trailer became fully engulfed on the right shoulder.”

Apple Valley Fire Protection District Chief Sid Hultquist said the Chevrolet was towing a “toy hauler” that had a race car inside of it, along with racing fuel.

“The family was en route to Las Vegas for the drag races,” Hultquist said. “The impact caused the toy hauler and semi to burst into flames along with spilled fuel burning on the roadway. ... Firefighters were able to save most of the contents of the semi trailer.”

San Bernardino County Fire Department personnel assisted AVFPD, according to Hultquist.

Alcohol or drugs to not appear to be a factor in the collision, CHP said. The collision remains under investigation.

<http://www.desertdispatch.com/news/20170330/fiery-crash-near-dale-evans-parkway-closes-most-of-northbound-i-15-for-5-hours>

Topped power lines lead to blaze, evacuations Thursday

Paola Baker, Desert Dispatch

Posted: March 30, 2017, 8:05 PM



Barstow firefighters douse a house fire that apparently started when high winds toppled power lines on Thursday afternoon. [Kay Lovato, Desert Dispatch]

BARSTOW — Amidst swift winds and downed power lines, firefighters battled a blaze that tore through one home before spreading to another Thursday afternoon, authorities said.

The blaze, which occurred at a home in the 900 block of Lillian Drive, was reported just before 3 p.m. Thursday. The flames eventually spread to an adjacent home, Barstow Fire Protection District Captain Jesse Griego said, and the entire block was evacuated due to downed power lines in the area, including one that snapped over a home.

“There were about five or six power poles that were snapped because of the wind, which directly related to the fire,” Griego said.

While firefighters quickly arrived on scene, Griego said their efforts were hampered by the toppled power lines, with crews unable to enter the home until electricity was turned off.

“We had to wait to get the power turned off so we could enter and extinguish the fire,” Griego said.

The first home was fully engulfed in flames which spread into the attic of an adjacent home, but firefighters were able to keep the flames from spreading further. Crews spent almost three hours getting the blaze under control.

One BFPD firefighter suffered an injury to his leg while combating the blaze, Griego said. He was taken to a local hospital for treatment and released on Thursday evening. No other injuries were reported.

Griego said BFPD personnel received “about 12 calls” for downed power lines throughout the Barstow area as firefighters fought the blaze. As of 7 p.m. Thursday, all but two of those incidents had been cleared, Griego said, with units waiting for Southern California Edison personnel to secure the lines.

The toppled power lines caused several power outages throughout the region, with over 4,000 customers affected, according to SCE’s outage map.

While Thursday’s blaze was related to the downed power lines, Griego said the official cause remains under investigation. Several fire personnel responded, including units from the Marine Corps Logistics Base, **San Bernardino County Fire Department**, and Fort Irwin.

<http://www.desertdispatch.com/news/20170330/toppled-power-lines-lead-to-blaze-evacuations-thursday>

Woman dies in Needles apartment fire

Saul A. Flores, Mohave Daily News

Posted: April 2, 2017, 12:08 AM



San Bernardino County Fire Department, Bullhead City Fire Department, Fort Mojave Mesa Fire Department, Mohave Valley Fire Department and Golden Shores Fire Department responded to the fire at the Mesa Grande Apartments on March 30 at about 5 p.m.

NEEDLES — An elderly woman died Thursday in a fire that gutted a Needles apartment building.

During a search of one unit involved in the fire at the Mesa Grande Apartments, 1600 Lilyhill Drive, firefighters found the body of an elderly woman who reportedly lived in the apartment.

On Friday, a man who identified himself only as “Joe” came into the Needles Desert Star office and claimed he was the husband of the victim. He said he now lived in Las Vegas but identified the woman as Pamela Massey.

A dog in the residence also reportedly died in the blaze, which was reported around 5 p.m. on Thursday.

One firefighter suffered smoke inhalation and was taken to a local hospital for evaluation.

Three apartments were destroyed by the blaze and a fourth unit sustained smoke and water damage.

San Bernardino County Fire Department, Bullhead City Fire Department, Fort Mojave Mesa Fire Department, Mohave Valley Fire Department and Golden Shores Fire Department responded to the fire.

With wind gusts blowing over 50 mph and a private fire hydrant on the property not functioning for some time, initial attacks on the fire were not working.

“The fire hydrant has two 2 1/2-inch caps on both sides. The fire department was trying to take off the four-inch cap on top instead of the 2 1/2-inch cap on the sides,” said Jerry Porter from the Needles City Water department. “I got there and I took off the 2 1/2-inch cap and they were able to hook up to it.”

The firefighters were able to mount an attack on the fire and were able to save two units in the complex. Temporary housing for the residents displaced by the fire was being handled by the Needles Housing Authority.

The cause of the fire remains under investigation through the San Bernardino County Fire Marshal and the San Bernardino County Sheriff’s Bomb/Arson unit.

http://www.mohavedailynews.com/news/woman-dies-in-needles-apartment-fire/article_1d038afa-1773-11e7-ae89-9b36c794727b.html

Trump extends FEMA help for flooded California counties

Anna M. Phillips, LA Times

Posted: April 2, 2017, 9:50 AM



San Jose resident Rob Souza surveys damage to a guest house on William Street near Coyote Creek on Feb. 2.

After approving federal disaster funds to help California counties recover from weeks of flooding in January, President Trump has extended the aid to include damage from storms in February.

The decision will make aid available to 42 counties where winter storms, flooding and mudslides have damaged homes and other property.

After five years of drought, last winter brought relief to the state, creating one of the largest snowpacks in California's recorded history.

But the weeks of heavy rain and snow that blanketed the Sierra Nevada also inundated low-lying cities and towns along the Sacramento and Russian rivers. In January, several people died in weather-related incidents, and a number of hillsides collapsed and closed off mountain passes.

In response, 34 counties and the Hoopa Valley tribe sought federal assistance, according to the Federal Emergency Management Agency. The agency announced that up to 75% of the recovery costs could be covered by federal funds and that additional assistance might be available to prevent further damage.

But the rain didn't stop falling.

In February, one of the most powerful storms to hit Southern California in years flooded freeways, triggered dramatic mudslides and downed hundreds of trees and power lines. At least four people died, including a man who was electrocuted by a downed power line in Sherman Oaks. In Victorville, rescuers found a person dead inside a submerged vehicle, according to the **San Bernardino County Fire Department**.

The president's latest disaster declaration, announced on Sunday, will cover damage incurred from Feb. 1 to 23.

<http://www.latimes.com/local/education/la-me-ln-fema-help-california-20170402-story.html>

Fire damages T-shirt shop in Fontana on April 2

Mike Myers, Fontana Herald News

Posted: April 2, 2017, 12:07 PM



Firefighters respond to a Fontana business to put out a fire in the early morning hours of April 2. (Contributed photo by Mike Myers)

A fire damaged a T-shirt shop in Fontana in the early morning hours of April 2, according to the **San Bernardino County Fire Department**.

There were no injuries to civilians or firefighters during the blaze, but damage to the contents of the business was estimated to be \$30,000 to \$40,000 in merchandise, mostly due to smoke damage, said Captain Dan Nelson.

At 1:03 a.m., fire crews responded to a single-story strip mall fire on the 9700 block of Sierra Avenue. They found smoke and active fire coming from a T-shirt shop located within the strip mall.

Crews forced entry into the business and began their fire attack, Nelson said. Ventilation crews were sent to the roof to cut ventilation holes, releasing heat and smoke from the building. It took crews 28 minutes to have the fire completely extinguished.

Firefighters were able to keep the fire from spreading to the adjacent businesses. A search of the business for victims came up negative, Nelson said.

In total, 24 firefighters arrived on scene to battle the fire. In addition, a fire investigator responded. The cause of the fire is currently under investigation.

http://www.fontanaheraldnews.com/news/fire-damages-t-shirt-shop-in-fontana-on-april/article_96727e5a-17d7-11e7-8cc1-ab50d8286e68.html