



NEWS



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Fontana holds race to honor heroes who died on 9/11

Russell Ingold, Fontana Herald News

Posted: October 31, 2019



San Bernardino County firefighters run toward the finish line, joined by a firefighter from France, Anthony Locks, during the Tunnel to Towers 5K Run. SBCoFF gather for a photo with Jacquelyn Morenberg Rodriguez. (Contributed photo by Mike Myers)

More than 100 local residents, joined by a very special guest from France, participated in the first-ever Fontana Tunnel to Towers 5K Run at Fontana Park on Oct. 26.

The event was one of several Tunnel to Towers 5K races that are held throughout the country to pay homage to the many firefighters, first responders, military members, and civilians who lost their lives in New York on Sept. 11, 2001.

The Tunnel to Towers 5K began in 2002 and symbolizes firefighter Stephen Siller's final footsteps from the foot of the Hugh L. Carey Tunnel (formerly known as the Brooklyn Battery Tunnel) to the Twin Towers site. The race raises funds for programs which benefit survivors of first responders killed in the line of duty, military Gold Star families, and catastrophically injured combat veterans.

"It was a moving and successful event that we're looking to build on for next year and beyond," said Danny Marquez, the local event organizer.

Marquez was thankful to receive assistance from other volunteers, including military members and community groups, and said he was particularly pleased that Anthony Locks, a French firefighter, was in attendance.

Marquez said that one of the New York firefighters who died on 9/11 was named David Fontana, and Locks asked if he could have an extra shirt to give to firefighter Fontana's widow.

"This shirt will have our city's and his family's name intertwined and connected every year," Marquez said. Locks, who serves as an international goodwill ambassador for Tunnel to Towers, said it was important for him to show support for his firefighter friends and for Fontana's family.

Also at the event, Marquez honored Inland Empire resident Jacquelyn Morenberg Rodriguez as the Stephen Siller Follow The Footsteps Community Service award recipient.

"It's an honor to be able to remember the sacrifices and service of our nation's first responders," Rodriguez said after finishing the race.

Rodriguez, a technical sergeant in the U.S. Air Force Reserve, has established the Jack Morenberg Foundation in memory of her father, a Colton Police Department detective. The foundation provides scholarships to law enforcement children or teenagers volunteering for police agencies in the local area.

https://www.fontanaheraldnews.com/news/fontana-holds-race-to-honor-heroes-who-died-on/article_e7aa0c4c-fbfb-11e9-889b-27212fe8904c.html

Man Revived by Hesperia Deputies and Emergency Medical Personnel

Staff Writer, 24/7 Headline News

Posted: October 31, 2019

HESPERIA, Ca. – A male victim who had went into full arrest (losing breathing and a pulse) was revived by deputies and emergency medical personnel.

On Wednesday, October 30, 2019, at around 5:22 p.m., deputies from the Hesperia Station and emergency medical personnel with the **San Bernardino County Fire** Department responded to the 14700 block of Orange Street in response to the report of a male subject who had stopped breathing. Within minutes deputies arrived at the scene and found the man lying on the street not breathing and without a pulse. They initiated CPR until paramedics took over to take over.

Within minutes of taking over CPR the male regained a heart rate and began breathing on his own. Authorities said that the man was transported to the hospital for further treatment. The man was speaking with hospital staff, alert, and is expected to fully recover.

<https://247headline.com/man-revived-by-hesperia-deputies-and-emergency-medical-personnel/>

SBD Fest 2019 ready to fly high this weekend in San Bernardino

Michel Nolan, San Bernardino Sun

Posted: October 31, 2019, 2:00 am



The Patriots Jet Team performs for the crowd during the Third annual SBD fest air show at San Bernardino International Airport in San Bernardino, Ca., October 21, 2017. (John Valenzuela/The Sun/SCNG)

The skies above San Bernardino will be spectacular Saturday and Sunday, Nov. 2-3, when they come to life with precision aerobatics, exciting jet aircraft performances and fireworks.

And that's just overhead. On the ground, you'll find concerts, amazing car shows, motorcycles and feats of strength with the SB Strong Public Battle of the Badges Tug-o-War.

SBD Fest, now in its fifth year, is a jaw-dropping two-day celebration of aviation featuring the return of the Patriots Jet Team, as well as other exciting aircraft at San Bernardino International Airport – the former Norton Air Force Base.

Catherine Pritchett, director of administration for the airport and air show administrator, said they are hoping for 10,000 in attendance over the two-day event.

“The airport is honored to host this incredible family-oriented event here in our safe and exciting environment. We really want to showcase the airport for people who have not been here before,” she said.

“Although we have been informed the Marine Corps Harrier will not be at the event, there is so much going on – so many other great acts on the ground and in the air,” Catherine added.

In their effort to give back to the community, the 2019 Fest is supporting the San Bernardino City Unified School District in two distinct ways.

The first is through socks to benefit homeless and foster children in the district's Access to Learning for All Students (ATLAS) program. The public can participate in "Socktober" by bringing two pairs of new and unused socks to the main gate of SBD Fest. In exchange, donors will receive a free general admission ticket.

In addition, SBD Fest has partnered with Teen Music Workshop, an award-winning music performance program comprised of about 250 students from throughout the Inland Empire. Last month, one of the program's trailers was stolen, and with it, thousands of dollars of musical equipment. Through a partnership with Fender Guitar, SBD Fest has donated a custom-made SBD Fest Fender Guitar to the program to help replace the loss.

Raffle tickets will be sold at the event and a winner will be announced Sunday following the student performance at SBD Fest. Teen Music Workshop's bands Alive in the Lights and Soul Point are scheduled to perform from gates open until opening ceremonies both days of the event.

Both Saturday and Sunday will feature not only aerobatic performances but a car show as well. Car buffs Steve Portias, Mike Williams and John Coute – as well as other volunteers from Over the Hill Gang-Berdoo – will manage the car show component of the event.

Steve will drive his 1932 Plymouth Coupe, which is a bright magenta. "It's not pink," he insists, "it's magenta."

This year's edition of the car show will be awarding more than \$11,000 in cash divided Saturday and Sunday among show winners, thanks to the generous sponsorship from Stater Bros. Markets.

In addition to the huge air and car shows are static airplane displays, pro-wrestling contests, the Battle of the Badges Tug-o-War between the fire and police departments, the Red Bull Motorcycle Jumpers, food and beer vendors, Kidz Zone, and a VIP area.

For its opening ceremonies, the car show will feature more than 300 vehicles, with a mind-boggling entrance that begins with six cars from six different decades, following 700 Harley Davidson Motorcycles from Quaid Harley screaming down the runway.

Entrance for the car show and spectators is through the Victoria and Third Street entrance. Follow the signs.

You'll hear the funny cars (dragsters) because they are unbelievably loud, but look for the Batmobile.

Music will resonate throughout the festival as concerts feature American reggae band, The Expendables and Latin Soul Legends, Tierra. Look for the one-of-a-kind, award-winning, concert stage built out of a Boeing 737 aircraft. On stage you will find The Expendables on Saturday with folk artist Johnzo West opening for the Expendables. Latin Soul Legends, Tierra, close out SBD Fest 2019 on Sunday afternoon. Stone Soul, a Motown Tribute Band, will open for Tierra.

Many businesses are sponsors of this fifth annual event, including Stater Bros., San Manuel Band of Mission Indians, Unical, Luxivair, City of San Bernardino Parks and Recreation, 7-Up, Kingsford Charcoal, Crest

Chevrolet, **San Bernardino County Fire Department**, San Bernardino Police Department, the Patriots Flying Team and the Over the Hill Gang.

Fireworks will light up the sky at the end of Saturday's festivities.

SBD FEST: QUICK FACTS

When: 11:30 a.m. – 8 p.m. Saturday; 9 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. Sunday

Where: San Bernardino International Airport, 1601 E. Third St., San Bernardino

Cost: \$10 (half-price) general admission ages 13-adult; \$5 military veterans, family of active military and senior citizens (ID required); free active military with ID. Parking is free; same-day car registration is \$25.

Information: Go to SBDfest.com for details.

<https://www.sbsun.com/2019/10/31/sbd-fest-2019-ready-to-fly-high-this-weekend-in-san-bernardino/>

Man hurt and mobile homes evacuated in Tuesday blazes

Stacy Moore, **Hi Desert Star**

Posted: October 30, 2019



A San Bernardino County firefighter lays down a line as flames burn outbuildings at a Yucca Valley property Tuesday. Cindy Melland Hi-Desert Star

MORONGO BASIN — Two fires burned in Yucca Valley and Joshua Tree, Tuesday, injuring one man and forcing the evacuation of mobile home park residents.

Flames were reported on a property at Cibola and Yuma trails in Yucca Valley about 9:30 a.m. Tuesday.

Battalion Chief Donny Vilorio with San Bernardino County Fire said the fire started in one of the outbuildings in the back of the property. Firefighters were able to stop it from moving into the main home.

Four adults were living on the property, Vilorio said. One of them, a 25-year-old man, suffered burns on his arms and was taken to Hi-Desert Medical Center.

“It was a pretty large fire that extended partially into an attached addition to the home,” Vilorio said.

Nine firefighters from the downtown Yucca Valley, Yucca Mesa and Joshua Tree stations responded initially.

The county fire and sheriff's departments and Yucca Valley's code enforcement officer are all investigating the cause of the flames.

“There were some code enforcement issues associated with the property,” Vilorio said. “A lot of it has to do with whether there's not enough clearance or there might be too much extra stuff on the property.”

Crew finds two buildings on fire

The second fire was reported at 11 p.m. in the 61900 block of Commercial Street in Joshua Tree. An engine company from that community was first to arrive and found a property with four buildings, two of which were burning.

“They get on scene and they’re confronted with large flames from two structures,” Viloría said. “In those initial first seconds, no one knows what building is occupied or not.”

It turned out the structure with the heaviest fire was an abandoned home. Viloría said it was completely destroyed by flames.

The other burning building was a large barn and storage structure.

Next to the abandoned home was a residence whose occupants were at home. “That was of great concern to us,” Viloría said.

Immediately north of the property is a mobile home park, causing even more concern.

As the fire raged, the Sheriff’s Department evacuated some mobile home residents.

There was so much fire burning that crews used both hoses and deck guns — high-velocity water jets attached to the fire engines.

They were hampered by the electrical service drop line to the occupied house, which was compromised by fire.

“We couldn’t get under it and we couldn’t put fire hoses there, so we had to have our efforts on either side and there was a lot of cooperation between the engine companies to make that happen,” Viloría said.

“We had a lot of high-impact human momentum,” Viloría said. “If that fire had extended into the mobile home park, it would have been a bad, bad, bad show.”

It took about 30 minutes for firefighters to get the upper hand, he said. “Then there was an extensive mop up and overhaul.”

No one was hurt and the cause of the fire remains under investigation by the fire and sheriff’s departments.

“There was nothing that was readily apparent to what the cause was,” the chief said. “It was an abandoned structure, so we certainly have our suspicions.”

http://www.hidesertstar.com/news/article_a0887990-fb72-11e9-a2bf-3f9b013c7461.html

Fast Moving Brush Fire Damages Homes in San Bernardino

Mike McClintock, Battalion Chief/SBCoFD PIO, San Bernardino City News

Posted: October 30, 2019



San Bernardino Fire have been dispatched to a small vegetation fire near Little Mountain, the five acre fire is rapidly spreading and both police and fire officials are actively doing their part to contain and evacuate the affected area.

At 4:52pm **San Bernardino County Fire** crews were dispatched to a reported vegetation fire in the area of 39th Street & North Severence Way near Little Mountain, in San Bernardino. ME227 arrived within 4 minutes of dispatch to find a 5-acre vegetation fire, that was slope and wind driven, with a rapid rate of spread. The fire was rapidly spreading up Little Mountain towards nearby homes. First arriving crews immediately responded to Edgerton Drive & Skylark Drives to find the fire impacting multiples homes and spreading due to the erratic winds. Crews immediately deployed on structure defense, protecting homes, rescuing victims and completing evacuations of the immediate area. San Bernardino Police Department also responded with multiple officers to assist with road closures and evacuations.

A second alarm was quickly struck bringing more apparatus, crews and equipment to the fast-moving fire. San Bernardino Sheriff Department's Helicopters were also requested to assist with water drops. Additional fire crews responded and engaged in structure defense to keep the fire away from the homes. While engaging in structure defense, multiple residents were rescued or assisted with evacuation to a safe area. Initial crews also encountered power lines that had fallen or were comprised, making access more difficult.

Crews continued to work on perimeter control & structure defense for multiple hours. By 9PM the fire's progression had been stopped at 17 acres. Of the 40 homes immediately threatened, 3 homes were heavily damaged and an additional 6 structures received minor to moderate damage. Two firefighters received minor to moderate injuries, were treated at a local hospital and since have been released. A family of 4 (2 adults and 2 children) were also transported to a local hospital with smoke inhalation and minor burns. They were injured while evacuating their home. Red Cross was requested to assist with displaced residents & to facilitate their needs.

Fire Investigators responded to determine cause and origin. Fire crews remained on scene throughout the evening and will be in place today to work on hot spots and increase containment. A #SBCoFD Damage Assessment will be heading to the scene Tuesday to complete a damage assessment. No estimates were available at the time of the release. Tuesday morning will also bring a day shift with (5) #SBCoFD engines, hand crews & a team of fire investigators.

Ultimately San Bernardino County Fire responded (9) Engines, (6) Chief Officers, (1) Dozer, (2) Water Tenders, (4) Hand Crews, (3) Overhead Personnel & (2) Fire Investigators. While crews were engaged in the "Little Mountain" fire, move-up crews were brought in to ensure there was seamless Fire/EMS coverage to San Bernardino.

#SBCoFD received multiple engines from our cooperator fire agencies to assist in the fire fight and to provide for structure defense. CalFire provided (2) Chief Officers & (3) Engines. Cal-Fire / City Of Highland-(1) Engine, Redlands FD-(1) Engine, San Manuel -(1) Engine, Colton FD-(1) Engine, Rialto FD-(2)Engines. American Medical Response assisted with multiple ambulances.

Being prepared for a wildfire or other fire disaster starts with making a plan. That's why the San Bernardino County Office of Emergency Services created the 'Ready SB' app. Download the Ready SB app today and it will guide you step-by-step in creating your customized family disaster plan. During a disaster, use Ready SB to receive emergency alerts, evacuation and shelter information, live up-to-date traffic reports, contact information of nearby resources, and everything you need to know to stay safe before, during, and after a disaster.

For further information on wildfire prevention, “Ready set go,” or our Residential Assessment Program (RAP), visit our website at sbcfire.org.

<http://sanbernardino.citynewsgroup.com/articles/fast-moving-brush-fire-damages-homes-in-san-bernardino>

INJURY, SIGNIFICANT DAMAGE FROM FIRE IN YUCCA VALLEY YESTERDAY

Staff Writer, Z107.7 FM News

Posted: October 30, 2019



San Bernardino County Fire Department photo

One person was injured, an addition was destroyed, and a couple of outbuildings were damaged in a fire in Yucca Valley Tuesday morning. Firefighters from Yucca Valley, Yucca Mesa, and Joshua Tree were called to the 7600 block of Cibola Trail at 9:25 a.m. where they found an addition on the back of the house fully involved with flames. The fire was knocked down in about 10 minutes. **County Fire** Battalion Chief Donnie Vilorio said it was due to aggressive and competent firefighting that crews were able to save the house from being destroyed and the residents will be able to move back in. However, a couple of outbuildings behind the house were completely destroyed by the blaze.

Vilorio said the home's occupants were outside waiting for firefighters when they arrived, and a man, identified only as being in his 20s, suffered second degree burns to his upper extremities. Vilorio said that the fact that he was taken to Hi-Desert Medical Center indicates the burns were not life-threatening.

The cause of the fire is unknown and investigators from the Sheriff and Fire Department's Bomb and Arson units were called to the scene.

Vilorio added that complicating the efforts of firefighters to put out the fire at the home on Cibola Trail was a call of a vegetation fire at 10:33 at Cherokee Trail and Sunland Drive in Yucca Valley, that required a crew to leave the house fire to fight the vegetation fire. He added that the area of the fire was small—only 20 feet by 20 feet, and that it was completely unrelated to the house fire on Cibola Trail.

<http://z1077fm.com/firefighters-save-yucca-valley-house/>

15 Freeway reopens after strong winds topple 5 semis in Fontana

Steve Scauzillo, San Gabriel Valley Tribune/Daily Bulletin

Posted: October 31, 2019, 11:24 am



Strong Santa Ana winds toppled an empty big rig on the northbound 15 Freeway near Sierra Avenue in Fontana on Wednesday, Oct. 30, 2019. (Photo by Watchara Phomicinda, The Press-Enterprise/SCNG)

Strong winds caused problems on the 15 Freeway Wednesday morning, Oct. 30, blowing over five tractor-trailers in a row near the Sierra Avenue exit in Fontana, leading to an hours-long closure of some southbound lanes.

In succession, three 18-wheeler semi trucks toppled over about 9:33 a.m. onto the lanes of the 15 Freeway in both directions, said Jimmy Schiller, information officer for **San Bernardino County Fire Department**.

About 11 a.m., two additional tractor-trailers toppled over in the same area, according to California Highway Patrol information Officer Devon Boatman.

“It is too windy for us to remove them,” he said Wednesday morning. Removal of the rigs blocking the southbound lanes was slow due to the danger caused by the winds. All lanes of the 15 Freeway were reopened by 4:50 p.m, the CHP reported.

The crashes closed three southbound lanes of the 15 Freeway, causing a traffic backup to nearly the Kenwood Avenue exit, Boatman said. Vehicles were getting by using only the right lane, he said.

Drivers are cautioned to avoid the shoulder, where at least one big-rig landed.

“They were literally 100 yards apart from each other,” Schiller said of the first three to fall over. Two of the three were blocking the southbound lanes, one north and one south of Sierra Avenue.

One of the drivers sustained minor injuries, he said. An ambulance was at the scene but he was not sure if the driver was taken to the hospital.

Caltrans was cleaning up the fuel spill. But the high winds — some gusting at 65 mph — were causing havoc with driving and with the clearing of the freeway even after 11:45 a.m, Boatman said.

High winds were pummeling the region Wednesday, as an extreme wind event was slated to blow through and remain through Thursday. Forecasters predicted gusts of up to 80 mph in some areas.

Southern California Edison warned thousands that they could have their power shut off, while more than 30,000 were without power in LA, Orange, Riverside, and San Bernardino counties Wednesday morning.

The high winds even forced Cal State San Bernardino to shut down campus Wednesday in anticipation of a power shut down.

<https://www.dailybulletin.com/2019/10/30/strong-winds-topple-3-semis-on-15-freeway-in-fontana/>

Winds cause trucks to overturn in Fontana on Oct. 30

Mike Myers, Fontana Herald News

Posted: October 31, 2019



This truck was overturned by winds on the interstate 15 Freeway in northwestern Fontana on Oct. 30. (Contributed photos by Mike Myers)

Powerful winds caused traffic collisions on the Interstate 15 and 210 Freeways in northern Fontana on the morning of Wednesday, Oct. 30, authorities said.

Overturned semi trucks were on both sides of the I-15 Freeway, and one minor injury was reported, according to the **San Bernardino County Fire** Department.

One big rig overturned due to the winds and hit the center divider wall on the southbound I-15 at Sierra Avenue, blocking freeway lanes, according to the California Highway Patrol. Southbound I-15 was backed up for several hours, Caltrans said, but has since reopened.

Another truck was toppled on the northbound I-15 at Duncan Canyon Road.

Other collisions were reported on the 210 Freeway earlier in the morning, the CHP said.

https://www.fontanaheraldnews.com/news/winds-cause-trucks-to-overturn-in-fontana-on-oct/article_9b13af66-fb3b-11e9-a72f-0f947369dc94.html

High Winds Overturn Multiple Big Rigs On 15 Freeway In Fontana

Staff Writer, CBS/KCAL News

Posted: October 30, 2019

FONTANA (CBSLA) — Strong winds hit Southern California Wednesday overturning at least three big rigs on the 15 Freeway near Fontana.

Big rigs could be seen tipped onto their side from gusting winds across the northbound and southbound lanes of the freeway.

Traffic on both the north and southbound sides of the freeway was backed up and **San Bernardino County Fire** warned motorists to expect significant delays and use caution in the area.

Caltrans said in a tweet, “Drivers of high-profile vehicles should be aware of risk from powerful winds today and Thursday especially near mountain passes and canyons.”

An extreme red flag warning is in effect for most of the Southland through 6 p.m. Thursday as forecasters predicted potential gusts of up to 80 miles per hour and single-digit relative humidity.

One minor injury was reported in the collision.

<https://losangeles.cbslocal.com/2019/10/30/high-winds-big-rigs-15-freeway-fontana/>

Hillside fire burns 200 acres, 500 San Bernardino homes under evacuation orders

Eric Licas, Richard K. De Atley, Alma Fausto, Daily Bulletin

Posted: October 31, 2019, 2:53 am



A DC-10 air tanker makes a retardant drop on the Hillside fire as a firefighter works to extinguish hot spots at one of two destroyed homes on Viento Way in San Bernardino Thursday morning Oct. 31, 2019. At least 5 homes have been destroyed by the wind driven fire which has consumed approximately 200 acres with zero containment. (Photo by Will Lester, Inland Valley Daily Bulletin/SCNG)

The Hillside fire in San Bernardino charred 200 acres by 8 a.m. Thursday morning, Oct. 31, as fire crews continued to battle the blaze that ignited in the early morning hours near Highway 18 and Lower Waterman Canyon in San Bernardino.

An early assessment showed that that there were six homes and two outbuildings consumed or damaged by fire, officials said at morning news conference.

Evacuations have been ordered for 500 homes, affecting 1,300 residents. So far authorities have not been able to say when residents may be allowed back into their homes.

Although it may appear that winds are calmer in the morning, **San Bernardino County fire** Deputy Chief Kathleen Opliger said, there are still strong gusts up in the hills.

“We have a lot of work to do up there, a lot of hotspots,” she said. “This fire is not by any sense of the word contained yet.”

“Repopulation is one of our highest priorities,” Opliger said. “But we don’t want to do so by putting them at risk.”

The cause of the fire remains under investigation.

Back in the North Park neighborhood of San Bernardino firefighters Thursday morning continue dousing flames at a home at the end of Lupin Lane.

Don Silver’s home on Saturn Court was spared from the fire although two houses at the end of the neighborhood were burned.

One of them was the home of his neighbor across the nearby intersection with Lupin Lane. As his neighbor’s home burned, the man ran to alert Silver and his wife Barbara who were asleep.

“His house was burning and he came running over here, because he knows my wife and I are both elderly,” Silver said Thursday morning.

“Sometimes you just have nice neighbors, and you don’t know it. He came running over to tell us and he’s lost everything,” Silver said standing outside his two-story home.

At 2:10 a.m., arriving San Bernardino County fire crews found two to three acres of medium fuel on fire with a rapid rate of spread. An hour later the Hillside fire had reached about 200 acres.

Winds were blowing at 20 mph to 30 mph and there were gusts up to 60 mph, said Tracey Martinez, spokeswoman for the fire department.

“We are protecting structures. We know the fire has consumed some structures. We are trying to save as many as we can,” Martinez said.

Early Thursday morning, Cindy Bachman, spokeswoman for the San Bernardino County Sheriff’s Department said 18 homes had been damaged or destroyed, but later in the morning authorities dropped the number to six homes and two out-buildings.

“Deputies made contact at many homes advising of the evacuation and they encountered a handful of people who refused to evacuate. We can’t stress enough that the evacuation order is for their safety,” Bachman said in an email.

Highway 18 was closed from 40th Street to Highway 138.

Four strike teams that had been prepositioned because of high winds were dispatched to the fire. By about 4:40 a.m., about 350 fire personnel were on scene for structure defense, according to the San Bernardino National Forest.

Winds were pushing flames south and both east and west, San Bernardino National Forest spokesman Zach Behrens said. It was not threatening mountain communities to the north as of about 4 a.m., but that could change as conditions develop.

Flames had entered neighborhoods north of San Bernardino, county fire officials said. Mandatory evacuations were in effect including west of Highway 18, which was closed as smoke, ash and embers filled the skies above. The evacuations affected about 1,300 people, officials said. Small animals can be taken to the San Bernardino City Animal Shelter, 333 Chandler Place, the Fire Department said.

San Bernardino police officers are patrolling the affected evacuation zones.

Firefighters were focused on keeping the fire west of the freeway and an air attack was launched.

An evacuation center opened at Pacific High School in San Bernardino. Schools in the area remain open, officials said.

This is a breaking story, check back for updates.

<https://www.dailybulletin.com/2019/10/31/new-wildfire-starts-in-area-of-highway-18-and-lower-waterman-canyon-in-san-bernardino/>

Hillside Fire Ignites at Northern End of San Bernardino; 6 Homes Destroyed or Damaged

Brian Day, Anthony Kurzweil and Lauren Lyster, KTLA 5 News

Posted: October 31, 2019, 2:30 am



A home burns in the Hillside Fire on Oct. 31, 2019. (Credit: KTLA)

A brush fire broke out near Highway 18 at the northern end of San Bernardino early Thursday, destroying or damaging at least six homes.

The blaze, dubbed the Hillside Fire, was reported about 1:40 a.m. along Highway 18, at Lower Waterman Canyon, according to the **San Bernardino County Fire** Department. It had consumed more than 200 acres less than an hour later.

Firefighters got in positions for structure defense as they worked to douse the flames but aerial video from Sky5 showed at least four damaged by flames.

Some of the worst damage occurred to homes on Monte Drive and Viento Way in the North Park area. At least one home was also seen burning near Lupin Lane and Saturn Court.

Six homes and two outbuildings had been damaged or destroyed, San Bernardino County Fire Department Chief Donn Trapp said during a 7:30 a.m. news conference.

One man, who was helping family members evacuate was wondering when the wildfires will stop. “The whole state is on fire ... Who’s gonna be next,” he said.

Mandatory evacuations are in place for areas north of 50th Street between Highway 18 and Mayfield Avenue.

Roughly 1,300 people have been displaced from the 500 homes currently in the evacuation area, San Bernardino Police Department spokesperson John Echevarria said.

An evacuation center was set up at Pacific High School, 1020 Pacific Street in San Bernardino.

Small animals can be taken to the San Bernardino City Animal Control located at 333 W. Chandler Place. Those with horses or other livestock can call the Animal Control to inquire about limited space, the San Bernardino Police Department tweeted.

There was no word on when residents would be able to return to their homes.

Officials have also closed Highway 18 heading into the mountains and it was unclear when it would reopen.

Firefighters are contending with 20 to 30 mph winds with gusts up to 60 mph, according to the National Weather Service. A high wind warning for San Bernardino County is in place until about noon, when winds are expected to subside. A red flag warning has also been issued for the area until 6 p.m.

About 500 firefighters are on the scene of the fire, San Bernardino National Forest Department Chief Scott Howes said. A full complement of firefighting aircraft were also deployed to the incident, he said.

All San Bernardino Unified School District schools are still expected to be open, officials posted about 4:45 a.m.

Officials are working to determine a cause of the fire.

Another brush fire burned in the area last week. The Old Water fire scorched more than 100 acres after starting near Old Waterman Canyon Road and Highway 18 on Oct. 24.

Check back for updates on this developing story.

<https://ktla.com/2019/10/31/hillside-fire-ignites-at-northern-end-of-san-bernardino/>

Hillside Fire Destroys Homes In San Bernardino, Mandatory Evacuations In Place

Staff Writer, CBS 2/KCAL 9 News

Posted: October 31, 2019, 7:40 am



The Hillside Fire destroys homes in San Bernardino, Calif. Oct. 31, 2019. (CBS2)

SAN BERNARDINO (CBSLA) — A fast-moving vegetation fire erupted in San Bernardino early Thursday morning, engulfing several homes and forcing hundreds of residents to flee.

The wind-driven Hillside Fire broke out before 1:40 a.m. in the foothills above San Bernardino near Highway 18 and Lower Waterman Canyon.

“When we first got on scene of the fire, we had a wind-driven, rapid-rate of spread fire heading downhill into the city of San Bernardino,” San Bernardino National Forest Deputy Chief Scott Howes said.

As of 7:30 a.m., the fire had burned more than 200 acres with no containment. At least six homes and two outbuildings have been destroyed, according to **San Bernardino County Fire** Chief Don Trapp.

A mandatory evacuation area was issued for the area west of Highway 18, north of 50th Street and east of Mayfield Avenue. The area contains about 490 homes and 1,300 residents.

Highway 18 was shut down in both directions between Lower Waterman Canyon and Crestline Bridge.

Firefighters were contending with up to 60 mile per hour winds as the Southland continues to get battered by Santa Ana conditions. An extreme red flag warning for most of the region remains in place through 6 p.m., with the winds expected to die down by Thursday night.

“The wind has to be posing the largest problem for us right now, it facilitates a very rapid fire spread and carries embers hundreds of yards if not farther, and can spread into vegetation, or even worse, into homes,” said Chris Prater with the San Bernardino County Fire Department.

More than 500 firefighters battling the flames on the ground and in the air with multiple water-dropping helicopters and air tankers.

An evacuation center was opened up at Pacific High School, 1020 Pacific St., in San Bernardino.

California State University, San Bernardino, which was closed Wednesday due to Southern California Edison’s planned power outages, will remain closed again Thursday. The Palm Desert campus will remain open, however.

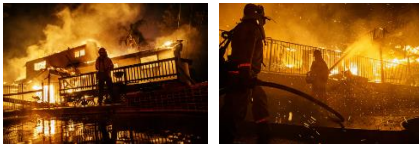
The cause of the fire is under investigation by the SBFD and the U.S. Forest Service.

<https://losangeles.cbslocal.com/2019/10/31/fire-breaks-out-along-highway-18-in-san-bernardino/>

Hillside fire: At least six homes burn in San Bernardino amid strong winds

HANNAH FRY, RUBEN VIVES, *Los Angeles Times*

Posted: October 31, 2019, 8:44 am



Firefighters work to contain the Hillside fire in the North Park neighborhood of San Bernardino. (Marcus Yam / Los Angeles Times)

Fierce winds that whipped up early Thursday sparked new fires across Southern California, including a destructive blaze that tore into neighborhoods in north San Bernardino, destroying homes and forcing residents to evacuate before dawn.

The Hillside fire erupted about 1:40 a.m. in the terrain above San Bernardino near Highway 18 at Lower Waterman Canyon and took off, quickly burning downhill into neighborhoods as authorities rushed to evacuate sleeping residents. The blaze has consumed 200 acres and has burned at least six homes, **San Bernardino County Firefighter** Chris Prater said.

The fast-moving blaze prompted fire officials to issue mandatory evacuations for about 500 homes north of 50th Street, west of Highway 18 and east of Mayfield Street, affecting roughly 1,300 residents. An evacuation center has been established at 1020 Pacific St. in San Bernardino.

As police and firefighters were evacuating neighborhoods early Thursday, some residents refused to leave their homes against officials’ advice.

“Stay vigilant, please. You don’t see the wind blowing really hard right now where we’re at, but you go up on the hills and it’s very erratic,” said Kathleen Opliger, incident commander for the San Bernardino County Fire Department. “The fire has moved so fast ... that if folks don’t evacuate when we ask them to, it’ll be very difficult to get them out when the fire is moving toward homes.”

The Hillside fire was burning along Highway 18 at Lower Waterman Canyon, consuming at least 200 acres. San Bernardino fire officials ordered evacuations north of 50th Street, West of Highway 18 and east of Mayfield Street. An evacuation center has been established at 1020 Pacific Street in San Bernardino.

Footage from the scene showed waves of embers flying onto residential streets, igniting palm trees and setting homes ablaze. Firefighters doused water on two homes on Saturn Court that were burning aggressively in the early morning hours, but they appeared to sustain significant damage.

Screams from his neighbor across the street jolted Tony Marzullo, 59, awake about 2 a.m.

“Fire! Fire!” she yelled.

Outside, the hillsides we’re burning, winds were gusting and yards were catching fire as embers landed on the ground. Marzullo, his son and son-in-law immediately got to work. They helped neighbors out of their homes and drove cars sitting in driveways to a nearby church after people had fled. They grabbed hoses and tried to douse whatever flames they could.

“Those winds were treacherous,” Marzullo said. “The winds here blow in every direction.”

The winds that sweep through San Bernardino are as familiar as the hillsides sitting behind more than a dozen homes along Viento Way, named after the Spanish word for wind.

Before dawn, the gusts were so powerful, they blew water from hoses making them nearly useless in the fight as the flames raged.

Marzullo and his sons were able to douse flames from a few trees before a palm caught fire and two of his neighbors’ houses caught fire. Standing in his driveway, he watched the smoke rising from the charred remains of a neighbor’s home, where only a chimney remained standing. Despite the loss, firefighters were able to save most of houses on the street.

The Times is offering fire coverage for free today. Please consider a subscription to support our journalism.

The winds, the chaos of a wildfire, the loss of property and the relief of those whose homes are still standing were a familiar experience for Marzullo. In the 1980s, he lost his home to the Panorama fire, which destroyed 310 homes and burned 28,000 acres in San Bernardino County.

This time, his house was safe. Any home destroyed is never a good feeling, he said, but the neighborhood is still standing.

“Overall, it turned out OK,” he said.

More than 450 firefighters, helicopters and fixed-wing aircraft have worked throughout the morning, trying to protect homes and get control of the raging blaze. Their efforts have been made more difficult by intense winds blowing between 20 and 40 mph with gusts up to 70 mph, officials said.

“The wind has been the biggest factor in the fire spread,” Prater said.

About an hour before the Hillside fire started, a blaze at Rancho Jurupa Park in Jurupa Valley was already well underway. That fire, dubbed the 46 fire, broke out at 12:39 a.m. and has burned 300 acres over several hours. The fire, which forced mandatory evacuations in the area, has damaged at least two homes, according to the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection.

The two blazes were among more than two dozen fires that were sparked in the past two days by an extreme Santa Ana wind event that will batter Southern California through late Thursday.

The biggest firefight Wednesday was in Ventura County, where 1,000 firefighters trying to control the wind-driven Easy fire that surrounded the Reagan Library were stymied by intense gusts that sent embers flying far beyond the body of the blaze. As the fire burned Wednesday, helicopters repeatedly dropped loads of water around the Reagan complex, which is perched atop a hill blanketed in dense brush, amid 60-mph winds that were strong enough to knock a person off balance.

Other smaller fires erupted in communities including Riverside, Santa Clarita, Brea, Whittier, Lancaster, Calabasas, Fullerton, Long Beach, Nuevo and Jurupa Valley.

This Santa Ana wind event is forecast to be unusually strong and long-lasting creating dangerous fire weather conditions across the region.

Forecasters warned that conditions will remain extreme through most of Thursday. The air will continue to be dry, and although Santa Ana winds have probably peaked, they'll still be strong, expected to gust between 40 mph and 60 mph, said Kristen Stewart, a meteorologist with the National Weather Service.

The fire area in San Bernardino is expecting single-digit humidity levels and sustained winds at 30 to 40 mph, forecasters say.

Times staff writer Alex Wigglesworth contributed to this report.

<https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2019-10-31/homes-burning-in-san-bernardino-as-fire-sweeps-into-neighborhood>

A new, wind-whipped wildfire in San Bernardino area forces evacuation of 500 homes

David K. Li, NBC News

Posted: October 31, 2019



A car burns in a garage as a home goes up in flames during the Hillside fire in the North Park neighborhood of San Bernardino, California on Oct. 31, 2019. Josh Edelson / AFP – Getty Images

A new wildfire east of Los Angeles damaged or destroyed several homes and forced the evacuation of at least 1,300 people early Thursday, officials said.

The Hillside fire, about 70 miles east of downtown Los Angeles, was first reported at about 1:40 a.m. and within hours had charred at least 200 acres, **San Bernardino County Fire** Chief Don Trapp told reporters.

Initial reports had 18 homes had burned, but Trapp said on Thursday morning: "At this point, initial assessments are we have six homes and two outbuildings consumed or damaged by the fire."

Sustained winds between 20 mph and 30 mph and gusts of up to 60 mph hampered the efforts of 350 firefighters in Lower Waterman Canyon to contain the blaze, the fire officials said.

"This fire spread downhill very very rapidly through the night and into the early morning hours," San Bernardino County Assistant Fire Chief Kathleen Opliger said.

Temperatures in the region are expected to hit the high 70s on Thursday, with sustained high winds and low humidity — all conditions that will make challenge firefighters, officials said.

"Weather is going to be a challenge to us today," San Bernardino National Forest Deputy Chief Scott Howes said.

Authorities ordered mandatory evacuations of about 490 homes with about 1,300 residents.

Local resident Susan Mercado said she's grateful firefighters got to her house in the nick of time.

"We took the kitties, ourselves and our cellphone, and that's it," Mercado told NBC Los Angeles. "The fire was coming through our yard. It was life or death."

She added: "I don't know how they saved our house."

This blaze is the latest of several fires that have been torching tinder-dry Southern California.

In the nearby Riverside County community of Jurupa Valley, the so-called 46 fire had consumed at least 300 acres and was 5 percent contained by Thursday morning, officials said.

The blaze, which started on Wednesday, forced evacuation that day of two mobile home parks and a psychiatric nursing care facility, officials said.

Elderly people wearing face masks and wrapped in blankets were taken out in wheelchairs and on gurneys as smoke swirled overhead.

"There was one moment when I could see nothing but dark smoke and I was like, 'We're going to die,' " Qiana McCracken, assistant director of nursing for the Riverside Heights Healthcare Center, told NBC Los Angeles.

The Getty fire in West Los Angeles, which started on Monday, has burned at least 745 acres and was 39 percent contained by Thursday morning, according to the Los Angeles City Fire Department.

Meanwhile the Easy fire in Simi Valley has consumed at least 1,723 acres and was 10 percent contained by Thursday morning, Ventura County fire spokesman Mike DesForges said.

That blaze, which broke out on Wednesday, initially threatened the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library. The library was closed again on Thursday and museum officials thanked firefighters.

"Although the fires are no longer around us, The Reagan Library and Museum is closed again today," according to a statement from The Reagan Foundation and Institute. "We cannot thank the firefighters enough for keeping us safe. We are eternally grateful. You are all heroes."

<https://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/wind-whipped-wildfire-san-bernardino-area-burns-18-homes-n1074526>

PHOTOS: 2 new California fires burn homes, send residents fleeing

Brian Melley and Marcio Jose Sanchez, Associated Press, 2 News WDTN

Posted: October 31, 2019



A firefighter passes a burning home as the Hillside fire burns in San Bernardino, Calif., on Thursday, Oct. 31, 2019. The blaze, which ignited during red flag fire danger warnings, destroyed multiple residences. (AP Photo/Noah Berger)

SIMI VALLEY, Calif. (AP) — Strong winds fanned new fires in Southern California on Thursday, burning homes and forcing residents to flee in a repeat of a frightening scenario already faced by tens of thousands across the state.

The latest blazes erupted in the heavily populated inland region east of Los Angeles as strong, seasonal Santa Ana winds continued to blow with gusts of up to 60 mph (96 kph) predicted to last until the evening before they fade away.

A fast-moving fire spread into the northern neighborhoods of the city of San Bernardino, forcing the evacuation of 490 homes — approximately 1,300 people, the **San Bernardino County Fire Department** said. Aerial video from a news helicopter showed at least four home burning as the fire grew to 200 acres (80 hectares).

In neighboring Riverside County, evacuation orders were issued for homes around a 75-acre (30-hectare) fire in the city of Jurupa Valley. Three residences and two outbuildings were confirmed destroyed, the county's fire department said.

That fire came after another fire Wednesday in Jurupa Valley forced the evacuation of two mobile home parks and a psychiatric nursing care facility, where elderly people wearing face masks and wrapped in blankets were taken out in wheelchairs and gurneys as smoke swirled overhead. The blaze grew to 200 acres (80 hectares) in size before its spread was stopped.

"There was one moment when I could see nothing but dark smoke and I was like, 'We're going to die,'" said Qiana McCracken, assistant director of nursing for the Riverside Heights Healthcare Center.

The Santa Anas winds that help create California's most destructive wildfires prompted a brushfire to quickly explode in size after it broke out before dawn Wednesday near the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library between the cities of Simi Valley and Moorpark northwest of Los Angeles.

Officials ordered about 30,000 people to evacuate, although some were being allowed back home Wednesday night as fire crews began to get a handle on the blaze.

Crews remained at the scene through the night to make sure embers would not rekindle more fires after an army of firefighters helped protect the hilltop Reagan museum, which sat like an island in a soot-black sea. There was no damage, library spokeswoman Melissa Giller said.

Nearby residents had little time to heed evacuation orders as the flames approached.

Elena Mishkanian was able to gather only some basics. Her son, Troy, 13, netted six pet fish from a tank and put them in pots.

“Fish have feelings!” he said when his sister Megan teased him about it.

Frightened horses screamed in a nearby barn as Beth Rivera used a garden hose to water down the edges of her home to keep embers from igniting dry grass and trees. Friends helped evacuate 11 horses.

The cause was not yet determined, but Southern California Edison filed a report with state regulators to say it began near its power lines. Electrical equipment has sparked some of California’s worst wildfires in recent years and prompted utilities to resort to precautionary power outages. SoCal Edison had not cut power in the area at the time this fire started.

As winds buffeted the state this week, utilities deliberately cut power to more than a million people to prevent high winds from damaging power lines and sparking wildfires.

Pacific Gas & Electric, which has staged three sweeping blackouts this week, restored power to hundreds of thousands of people Wednesday and expected to have it back for the others sometime Thursday.

In the Northern California city of Novato, at least 20 seniors with wheelchairs and walkers were essentially trapped , in the dark, in a low-income apartment complex during a two-day power shut-off.

The waves of days-long outages have been angrily condemned by state officials and consumers.

PG&E Corp. CEO Bill Johnson acknowledged hardships but said outages will be necessary in the future as seasonal fire threats increase.

“As long as they remain the best tool that we have to keep people safe, and our communities safe, they’re the tool we will use,” he said.

PG&E equipment that wasn’t de-energized may have ignited a massive blaze in Sonoma County wine country that has destroyed 133 homes.

Firefighters reported making significant progress as high winds in the area eased Wednesday and the fire was 45 percent contained.

Southern California Edison said its safety power cuts still affected about 215,000 people by late Wednesday night and warned that outages were under consideration for about 800,000 people.

The days of windstorms are not unusual for the fall season, which has seen vicious gusts propel a series of deadly and destructive California wildfires in recent years.

But at least in the short term, there was good news from forecasters.

“This is the last event in our near future. We are not expecting any Santa Anas next week,” weather service meteorologist Kristen Stewart said.

But she noted the forecast only extends out seven days.

“Once we get past that, all bets are off,” she said.

<https://www.wdtn.com/news/u-s-world/photos-2-new-california-fires-burn-homes-send-residents-fleeing/>

California Fires Live Updates: Homes Burn in San Bernardino

Staff Writer, The New York Times

Posted: October 31, 2019



Fire crews worked to contain the Hillside fire in San Bernardino on Thursday. Credit...Kyle Grillot for The New York Times

RIGHT NOW A fast-moving fire is spreading in San Bernardino, burning houses in its path.

Evacuations were ordered in the middle of the night in San Bernardino.

Multiple homes were consumed by flames in the San Bernardino area after a brush fire ignited early on Thursday and quickly grew to engulf 200 acres, the latest eruption of wildfire in California.

Firefighters got the call about a brush fire near Highway 18 shortly after 1 a.m. and arrived to find several homes threatened by the fire, which has been named the Hillside fire. So far, six homes have been damaged or destroyed.

“When we first got on scene of the fire, we had a wind-driven, rapid-rate-of-spread fire heading downhill into the City of San Bernardino,” said Scott Howes, deputy fire chief for the San Bernardino National Forest. He said more than 500 firefighters were battling the blaze.

The fire is being driven by Santa Ana winds gusting up to 40 miles an hour, as several other fires in Southern California have been this week. With multiple fires raging up and down the state, local fire departments have often had to wait for the chance to use aircraft and other firefighting tools that are deployed assisting other agencies.

“We’re competing for resources right now with several other fires,” Kathleen Opliger, a deputy chief of the **San Bernardino County Fire Department**, said at a news conference.

Homeowners in the area saw orange flames lighting up the hills around the northern edges of the city in the early morning hours, and then cascading down to threaten neighborhoods to the west of Highway 18. About 1,300 residents in 500 homes have been evacuated.

The highway, which connects the city of San Bernardino with the mountains to the north, was closed because of the fire, according the California Highway Patrol.

"It's very fast-moving," Chris Prater, a spokesman for the San Bernardino County Fire Department, said of the fire. "We do have very strong winds coming out of the north-northeast, facilitating the fire spread."

An earlier blaze, the Old Water fire, swept through the area last week. This week, dry conditions and low humidity were making the Hillside fire difficult to fight, Mr. Prater said. "We've had these winds for the past few weeks, and it's dried out the fields."

<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/10/31/us/california-fire.html>

California fires: San Bernardino homes burn and strong winds threaten to stoke other blazes

Madeline Holcombe, Cheri Mossburg and Jason Hanna, CNN/MSN News

Posted: October 31, 2019



Firefighters battle wind-whipped flames engulfing multiple homes during the Hillside Fire in the North Park neighborhood of San Bernardino on Oct. 31.

Firefighters are trying to contain a wildfire that raced into part of San Bernardino in Southern California and engulfed a few homes overnight, and officials are urging more than 1,000 people to stay away while the battle goes on Thursday morning.

The Hillside Fire -- which started sometime after midnight in the hills above San Bernardino -- quickly consumed about 200 acres, officials said, and is one of at least 10 active wildfires in a state plagued by them in recent weeks.

Strong winds Thursday threaten to stoke the flames further. With gusts stronger than 50 mph expected in some areas, more than 17 million people in Southern California are under red flag warnings -- meaning wind, humidity and other conditions are ripe for fires.

In northern San Bernadino, wind-driven flames moved from the hills and destroyed or damaged six homes and two other buildings by 7:30 a.m. (10:30 a.m. ET), **San Bernardino County Fire** Chief Don Trapp said.

Authorities rushed to alert residents as the flames swept into some neighborhoods overnight, stunning residents who'd been sleeping. No injuries have been reported.

By mid-morning firefighters had stopped the flames in at least one neighborhood where a home burned to the foundation, video from CNN affiliate KTLA showed. But fire was burning elsewhere near the city.

"This fire moves so fast that it's imperative that people evacuate when we ask them to," San Bernardino County Fire Deputy Chief Kathleen Opliger said.

"It's not a safe place to be."

Evacuations have been ordered for about 490 homes in northern San Bernardino, accounting for about 1,300 people, the county fire department said. Hundreds of firefighters were there, trying to contain the flames, San Bernardino County Fire Department spokesman Chris Prater said.

The fire was a few miles away from Cal State San Bernardino, which was closed Thursday because the regional utility intentionally cut power as a precaution, hoping to prevent fires in the red-flag conditions. The campus lost power at 3:20 a.m. Thursday.

Just to the southeast, firefighters also were battling a blaze that erupted Thursday morning in Riverside County's Jurupa Valley, prompting evacuations. With county fire officials reporting three homes there destroyed, workers at a pet adoption center prepared evacuations as flames licked nearby brush, an employee told KTLA.

Fires in the Los Angeles area

Thursday's winds will be of no help to Los Angeles-area firefighters, who are battling several blazes.

The Getty Fire in Los Angeles, which began Monday, is threatening more than 7,000 homes, the Los Angeles Fire Department said. Most evacuations have been lifted, and the blaze is nearly 40% contained.

And about 40 miles northwest of the city, the Easy Fire broke out in Simi Valley Wednesday. Wind gusts of hurricane force -- at least 74 mph -- were reported at a weather station about seven miles north of Simi Valley.

The Easy Fire quickly consumed more than 1,600 acres in Ventura County and threatened 6,500 homes, officials said. The fire forced school closures and mandatory evacuations of about 30,000 people in Simi Valley, officials said. Three firefighters have been hurt.

Those evacuations included the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library, where the former President and his wife, Nancy, are buried. The facility appeared safe by Wednesday evening after firefighters responded.

Gov. Gavin Newsom announced Wednesday the state had secured a grant from the Federal Emergency Management Agency to help fight the Easy Fire. The grant allows affected local and state agencies to apply for a 75% reimbursement of eligible fire suppression costs.

Power companies may be responsible for fires

The Simi Valley wildfire started near a Southern California Edison sub-transmission line, the power company said, adding that it has filed a report with the state Public Utilities Commission.

"SCE is conducting a review into the circumstances surrounding the fire, and will cooperate with all investigations into the origin and cause of the fire," the company said in a statement.

The company said Tuesday that its equipment likely also contributed to the Woolsey Fire last November. The fire became one of the most destructive in the state, according to the California Department of Forestry & Fire Protection, killing three people and destroying more than 1,600 structures.

In Northern California, Pacific Gas & Electric (PG&E) filed three reports with the California Public Utility Commission Wednesday indicating that its equipment may be involved in the start of three fires, according to officials.

Bill Johnson, CEO and President of PG&E Corporation, told media the company has contacted the state about reports of videos possibly showing sparking powerlines at the Bethel Island and Oakley fires.

A third report was then filed linking its equipment to a fire in Milpitas, California.

"Troublemen observed wire down. They observed two houses, two cars, and a shed damaged by the fire. An on-site Milpitas Fire Department Investigator informed the troubleman that he was looking at the downed wire as a potential ignition source and collected a portion of the conductor into evidence," PG&E said in a statement to CNN.

PG&E has been under scrutiny in recent years for the role its equipment played in several devastating fires across the state, including last year's deadly Camp Fire, which killed 85 people. Over the last weeks, the utility has been enacting preventative shutoffs all over northern and central California.

'We're ready to go and say goodbye to our home'

Brigitte Kouba Neves, a Los Angeles native, says her heart stopped when her neighbor knocked on her door early Monday and told her they were in the evacuation zone.

"I can't explain the feeling of packing a bag with the items I want to save from a fire," she said in an Instagram post describing how she and her husband chose daily essentials and their wedding album.

Neves lives in a voluntary evacuation zone. So far, she's been safe, but that could change at any moment.

"Currently, we have our suitcases by the door, the car is packed, and we're ready to go and say goodbye to our home if they say we must," she wrote. But she told CNN what's it's like to live under constant threat and worry.

"I have 3-year-old twins with sensitive lungs, so school has been canceled a lot, they've had to wear masks, and we've discussed the fact that there are fires far away ... and it changes air quality," she said. "We've let them role play with their firefighter outfits and trucks."

California's biggest fire is far from contained

North of the San Francisco Bay, the week-old Kincade Fire -- the state's largest active wildfire -- has destroyed nearly 77,000 acres across Sonoma County and more than 260 structures, including more than 130 single-family homes, officials said.

It was only 45% contained as of Wednesday evening. At the Sonoma County Airport, several airlines have canceled all flights for Thursday.

The Kincade Fire started October 23, but the cause is still under investigation.

The good news: Forecasters say winds will weaken through Thursday, and more residents can go home.

About 2,400 people from the 186,000 under evacuation orders had returned to their homes as of Tuesday night, Sonoma County Sheriff Mark Essick said.

"Many of these people are still returning to homes that are without power because of the PG&E power shutoff," he said. "So we want people to be vigilant, be aware communication may not be great."

<https://www.msn.com/en-us/news/us/california-fires-san-bernardino-homes-burn-and-strong-winds-threaten-to-stoke-other-blazes/ar-AAJCGrH?li=BBnb7Kz#image=AAID4YI|1>

Hillside Fire: San Bernardino blaze prompts evacuations, destroys or damages 6 homes

Staff Writer, KABC 7 News

Posted: October 31, 2019

SAN BERNARDINO, Calif. (KABC) -- A wind-whipped fire erupted in San Bernardino, forcing mandatory evacuations and ravaging several homes in the area, as the blaze quickly grew to 200 acres early Thursday morning.

San Bernardino County Fire responded to the area of Highway 18 at Lower Waterman Canyon at about 1:38 a.m. as strong winds carried the flames amid extreme red flag conditions.

The blaze, called the Hillside Fire, was burning at a rapid rate of spread and quickly expanded to 200 acres by about 2:30 a.m., officials said. Six homes were damaged or destroyed, as were two outbuildings.

Evacuation orders were issued as the fire threatened the North Park neighborhood. Mandatory evacuations were declared in areas for all homes north of 50th Street, west of Highway 18, and east of Mayfield Avenue.

Highway 18 was also shut down from Waterman Canyon and 40th Street to the SR-18/SR-138 split .

An evacuation center was set up at Pacific High School at 1020 Pacific Street. Approximately 490 homes and 1,300 people were under evacuation due to the fire, according to officials.

Small animals can be taken to the San Bernardino City Animal Shelter at 333 Chandler Place.

It was not immediately known how many structures were threatened or destroyed, but multiple homes were seen damaged. Homes in the North Park community were seen surrounded by intense flames.

Cal State San Bernardino was closed as it remained without power, excluding its Palm Desert campus. Officials with the San Bernardino City Unified School District said its schools remain open and are monitoring the fire.

Structure defense was being put in place as strike teams were requested. Approximately 350 personnel were at the scene, according to the San Bernardino National Forest.

Officials said high winds continued moving through the area with gusts reaching up to 60 mph.

It was not immediately known what caused the fire.

Southern California is in the midst of increased fire risk as strong winds continue in the region through at least Thursday evening.

<https://abc7.com/san-bernardino-blaze-prompts-evacuations-damages-homes/5661248/>

Destructive San Bernardino wildfire explodes to 200 acres

Staff Writer, FOX 5 News

Posted: October 31, 2019, 3:47 am

SAN BERNARDINO, Calif. -- A fast-moving brush fire broke out at the northern end of San Bernardino early Thursday, destroying several homes.

The blaze, dubbed the Hillside Fire, was reported around 2 a.m. near Waterman Canyon and state Route 18, according to the **San Bernardino County Fire Department**. It had consumed more than 200 acres within an hour, fueled by 20 to 30 mph winds and gusts of up to 60 mph.

Firefighters got in position to defend buildings as they doused the flames but helicopter video showed buildings engulfed in flames. Six homes and two outbuildings had been damaged or destroyed, San Bernardino County Fire Department Chief Donn Trapp said in a news conference at 7:30 a.m.

About 350 personnel were part of the firefight, San Bernardino National Forest said.

Evacuations were ordered for areas north of 50th Street between SR-118 and Mayfield Avenue, which encompasses about 500 homes. An evacuation center was set up at nearby Pacific High School for the roughly 1,300 people displaced.

Officials closed SR-118 in the area as they fought the flames.

Much of Southern California remained under a Red Flag warning Thursday, and fires burned across the region, including in Chula Vista, Simi Valley and Riverside. Thousands of San Diego County residents were also without power as a fire danger precaution.

<https://fox5sandiego.com/2019/10/31/fast-moving-brush-fire-ignites-in-san-bernardino-multiple-homes-burning/>

A wildfire has engulfed homes in San Bernardino, and strong winds threaten to stoke other California blazes

Staff Writer, CNN Wire/WGNO

Posted: October 31, 2019

A fresh wildfire engulfed a few homes and threatened others early Thursday in Southern California's San Bernardino, officials said, stunning residents who awoke to rushed evacuation orders as the blaze raced from the hillsides into at least one neighborhood.

The Hillside Fire — which started sometime after midnight in vegetation above San Bernardino — quickly consumed about 200 acres, officials said, and is one of at least 10 active wildfires in a state plagued by them in recent weeks.

Strong winds Thursday threaten to stoke the flames further. With winds stronger than 50 mph expected in some areas, more than 17 million people in Southern California are under red flag warnings — meaning wind, humidity and other conditions are ripe for fires.

At least two homes were ablaze in northern San Bernardino well before dawn Thursday. Hundreds of firefighters were there, trying to contain the flames, and firefighting aircraft were expected to join as soon as the sun rose, **San Bernardino County Fire** Department spokesman Chris Prater said.

The fire was a few miles away from Cal State San Bernardino, which was closed Thursday because the regional utility intentionally cut power as a precaution, hoping to prevent fires in the red-flag conditions. The campus lost power at 3:20 a.m. Thursday.

Evacuations have been ordered for about 490 homes in northern San Bernardino, accounting for about 1,300 people, the county fire department said.

Just to the southeast, firefighters also were battling a blaze that erupted Thursday morning in Riverside County's Jurupa Valley, prompting evacuations. With county fire officials reporting three homes there destroyed, workers at a pet adoption center prepared evacuations as flames licked nearby brush, an employee told CNN affiliate KTLA.

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Those evacuations included the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library, where the former President and his wife, Nancy, are buried. The facility appeared safe by Wednesday evening after firefighters responded.

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The Simi Valley wildfire started near a Southern California Edison sub-transmission line, the power company said, adding that it has filed a report with the state Public Utilities Commission.

"SCE is conducting a review into the circumstances surrounding the fire, and will cooperate with all investigations into the origin and cause of the fire," the company said in a statement.

The company said Tuesday that its equipment likely also contributed to the Woolsey Fire last November. The fire became one of the most destructive in the state, according to the California Department of Forestry & Fire Protection, killing three people and destroying more than 1,600 structures.

In Northern California, Pacific Gas & Electric (PG&E) filed three reports with the California Public Utility Commission Wednesday indicating that its equipment may be involved in the start of three fires, according to officials.

Bill Johnson, CEO and President of PG&E Corporation, told media the company has contacted the state about reports of videos possibly showing sparking powerlines at the Bethel Island and Oakley fires.

A third report was then filed linking its equipment to a fire in Milpitas, California.

“Troublemens observed wire down. They observed two houses, two cars, and a shed damaged by the fire. An on-site Milpitas Fire Department Investigator informed the troubleman that he was looking at the downed wire as a potential ignition source and collected a portion of the conductor into evidence,” PG&E said in a statement to CNN.

PG&E has been under scrutiny in recent years for the role its equipment played in several devastating fires across the state, including last year’s deadly Camp Fire, which killed 85 people. Over the last weeks, the utility has been enacting preventative shutoffs all over northern and central California.

‘We’re ready to go and say goodbye to our home’

Brigitte Kouba Neves, a Los Angeles native, says her heart stopped when her neighbor knocked on her door early Monday and told her they were in the evacuation zone.

“I can’t explain the feeling of packing a bag with the items I want to save from a fire,” she said in an Instagram post describing how she and her husband chose daily essentials and their wedding album.

Neves lives in a voluntary evacuation zone. So far, she’s been safe, but that could change at any moment.

“Currently, we have our suitcases by the door, the car is packed, and we’re ready to go and say goodbye to our home if they say we must,” she wrote. But she told CNN what’s it’s like to live under constant threat and worry.

“I have 3-year-old twins with sensitive lungs, so school has been canceled a lot, they’ve had to wear masks, and we’ve discussed the fact that there are fires far away ... and it changes air quality,” she said. “We’ve let them role play with their firefighter outfits and trucks.”

California’s biggest fire is far from contained

North of the San Francisco Bay, the week-old Kincade Fire — the state’s largest active wildfire — has destroyed nearly 77,000 acres across Sonoma County and more than 260 structures, including more than 130 single-family homes, officials said.

It was only 45% contained as of Wednesday evening. At the Sonoma County Airport, several airlines have canceled all flights for Thursday.

The Kincade Fire started October 23, but the cause is still under investigation.

The good news: Forecasters say winds will weaken through Thursday, and more residents can go home.

About 2,400 people from the 186,000 under evacuation orders had returned to their homes as of Tuesday night, Sonoma County Sheriff Mark Essick said.

“Many of these people are still returning to homes that are without power because of the PG&E power shutoff,” he said. “So we want people to be vigilant, be aware communication may not be great.”

<https://wgno.com/2019/10/31/a-wildfire-has-engulfed-homes-in-san-bernardino-and-strong-winds-threaten-to-stoke-other-california-blazes/>

2 new fires burning in southern California east of Los Angeles

Staff Writer, KCRA 3 News

Posted: October 31, 2019, 7:53 am

SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY, Calif. —

Strong winds fanned new fires in Southern California on Thursday, burning homes and forcing residents to flee in a repeat of a frightening scenario already faced by tens of thousands across the state.

The latest blazes erupted in the heavily populated inland region east of Los Angeles as strong, seasonal Santa Ana winds continued to blow with gusts of up to 60 mph predicted to last until the evening before they fade away.

A fast-moving fire spread into the northern neighborhoods of the city of San Bernardino, forcing the evacuation of 490 homes - approximately 1,300 people, the **San Bernardino County Fire Department** said. Aerial video from a news helicopter showed at least four homes burning as the fire grew to 200 acres.

In neighboring Riverside County, evacuation orders were issued for homes around a 75-acre fire in the city of Jurupa Valley. Three residences and two outbuildings were confirmed destroyed, the county's fire department said.

That fire came after another fire Wednesday in Jurupa Valley forced the evacuation of two mobile home parks and a psychiatric nursing care facility, where elderly people wearing face masks and wrapped in blankets were taken out in wheelchairs and gurneys as smoke swirled overhead. The blaze grew to 200 acres in size before its spread was stopped.

"There was one moment when I could see nothing but dark smoke and I was like, 'We're going to die,'" said Qiana McCracken, assistant director of nursing for the Riverside Heights Healthcare Center.

The Santa Anas winds that help create California's most destructive wildfires prompted a brushfire to quickly explode in size after it broke out before dawn Wednesday near the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library between the cities of Simi Valley and Moorpark northwest of Los Angeles.

Officials ordered about 30,000 people to evacuate, although some were being allowed back home Wednesday night as fire crews began to get a handle on the blaze.

Crews remained at the scene through the night to make sure embers would not rekindle more fires after an army of firefighters helped protect the hilltop Reagan museum, which sat like an island in a soot-black sea. There was no damage, library spokeswoman Melissa Giller said.

Nearby residents had little time to heed evacuation orders as the flames approached.

Elena Mishkanian was able to gather only some basics. Her son, Troy, 13, netted six pet fish from a tank and put them in pots.

"Fish have feelings!" he said when his sister Megan teased him about it.

Frightened horses screamed in a nearby barn as Beth Rivera used a garden hose to water down the edges of her home to keep embers from igniting dry grass and trees. Friends helped evacuate 11 horses.

The cause was not yet determined, but Southern California Edison filed a report with state regulators to say it began near its power lines. Electrical equipment has sparked some of California's worst wildfires in recent years and prompted utilities to resort to precautionary power outages. SoCal Edison had not cut power in the area at the time this fire started.

As winds buffeted the state this week, utilities deliberately cut power to more than a million people to prevent high winds from damaging power lines and sparking wildfires.

Pacific Gas & Electric, which has staged three sweeping blackouts this week, restored power to hundreds of thousands of people Wednesday and expected to have it back for the others sometime Thursday.

In the Northern California city of Novato, at least 20 seniors with wheelchairs and walkers were essentially trapped , in the dark, in a low-income apartment complex during a two-day power shut-off.

The waves of days-long outages have been angrily condemned by state officials and consumers.

PG&E Corp. CEO Bill Johnson acknowledged hardships but said outages will be necessary in the future as seasonal fire threats increase.

"As long as they remain the best tool that we have to keep people safe, and our communities safe, they're the tool we will use," he said.

PG&E equipment that wasn't de-energized may have ignited a massive blaze in Sonoma County wine country that has destroyed 133 homes.

Firefighters reported making significant progress as high winds in the area eased Wednesday and the fire was 45 percent contained.

Southern California Edison said its safety power cuts still affected about 215,000 people by late Wednesday night and warned that outages were under consideration for about 800,000 people.

The days of windstorms are not unusual for the fall season, which has seen vicious gusts propel a series of deadly and destructive California wildfires in recent years.

But at least in the short term, there was good news from forecasters.

"This is the last event in our near future. We are not expecting any Santa Anas next week," weather service meteorologist Kristen Stewart said.

But she noted the forecast only extends out seven days.

"Once we get past that, all bets are off," she said.

<https://www.kcra.com/article/2-new-fires-burning-in-southern-california-near-los-angeles/29652696>

The Latest: Wildfire caused by vehicle chased by police

Staff Writer, 13 WREX News

Posted: October 31, 2019

SIMI VALLEY, Calif. (AP) — The Latest on California wildfires (all times local):

9:45 a.m.

Authorities say suspects driving a stolen car during a police chase pulled their damaged vehicle into a field and ignited the new Southern California wildfire that prompted evacuations in the city of Jurupa Valley.

Riverside Police spokesman Officer Ryan Railsback says Thursday that two suspects who were arrested will be charged with arson, and addition other offenses.

The blaze has destroyed three homes and two outbuildings and spans 300 acres (121 hectares).

Railsback says the chase lasted 3 to 4 miles (5 to 6 kilometers) shortly after midnight Thursday before the suspects abandoned the damaged vehicle and tried to run away before being caught.

He says the heat from the vehicle and its tires caused the fire but did not provide more details.

Both suspects had outstanding felony arrest warrants.

8:30 a.m.

Officials say a wildfire burning in Northern California's wine country that forced the evacuation of more than 180,000 people is now 60% contained and has not increased in size since Wednesday.

California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection officials said Thursday that firefighting crews working through the night increased their control of the fire from 45% containment.

The fire started last week near the town of Geyserville in Sonoma County north of San Francisco and has scorched about 120 square miles (311 square kilometers). It has destroyed 141 homes and threatens 90,000 structures.

Most of those evacuated after the fire started last week have been allowed to return home.

8:10 a.m.

Authorities say a wind-driven wildfire fire in San Bernardino, California, has destroyed or damaged six homes and two outbuildings.

San Bernardino County Fire Chief Don Trapp says about 500 homes have been evacuated since the fire started in foothills before dawn Thursday and winds drove it down into the city.

The 200-acre (80-hectare) blaze is one of two new wildfires burning in the inland region east of Los Angeles.

In the nearby city of Jurupa Valley, an early morning blaze has grown to 150 acres (60 hectares). It has destroyed three homes and forced evacuations.

Forecasters expect winds to continue on and off through the day before fading away in the evening.

6:15 a.m.

Firefighters are battling two fires in the inland region east of Los Angeles as strong winds sweep parts of California.

The San Bernardino County Fire Department says an estimated 490 homes and 1,300 people are under evacuation orders Thursday morning on the northern edge of the city of San Bernardino adjacent to wildland areas.

At least four homes have been seen burning as the fire has grown to 200 acres (80 hectares).

In neighboring Riverside County, three homes and two outbuildings have been destroyed by a 75-acre (30-hectare) fire.

Firefighters have ordered evacuations.

4:25 a.m.

A new wildfire has broken out in California, this one in San Bernardino. It has torched at least four homes and forced evacuations.

The San Bernardino County Fire Department says the blaze was reported early Thursday along Highway 18 at Lower Waterman Canyon.

Aerial video from Sky7 showed at least four homes on fire, and more than 200 acres have reportedly burned.

Authorities ordered evacuations for the Northpark neighborhood and all areas in north San Bernardino west of Highway 18, according to media reports.

No other information was immediately available.

10:25 p.m.

Santa Ana winds are expected to linger for a final day after driving more than a dozen wildfires through California, sending thousands fleeing and burning nearly up to the walls of the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library.

Firefighters managed to tamp down or at least partially corral fires that for the past few days surged through tinder-dry brush in both the north and south, destroying dozens of homes.

But much of Los Angeles and Ventura counties remain under a National Weather Service red flag warning of extreme fire danger through Thursday evening because of bone-dry humidity and the chance of winds gusting to 70 mph (112 kph) in the mountains.

Fire crews worked through the night to make sure a fire that burned dangerously near the Reagan library Wednesday and prompted thousands to flee doesn't re-erupt.

<https://wrex.com/category/2019/10/31/the-latest-fire-erupts-in-san-bernardino-torching-homes/>

Their house barely survived a 1980 wildfire. Now firefighters are trying to save it from another one

Gianluca Mezzofiore, WMTW News 8

Posted: October 31, 2019

SAN BERNARDINO, Calif. — Julien Cooper remembers the flames licking his property in 1980 when a devastating wildfire destroyed his neighborhood in San Bernardino, California.

All but a few houses burned in that fire -- including his parents' and the neighbor's.

Now another blaze is wreaking havoc in the area, bringing back traumatic memories.

Cooper, 53, who still lives in the same house with his 80-year-old father Roland, told CNN he was asleep early Thursday when he heard his phone ringing at 2:30 a.m.

"Next thing I know, I wake up and smell smoke in the house," he told CNN. "Ten seconds later, I hear the doorbell and I already know what it is since we had a fire a week ago.

"It was the neighbor saying that there was a fire in the field."

At the time, his neighbor's house wasn't even touched by the flames. So Cooper grabbed his dad and his dog, and crossed the street to help the neighbor's elderly mother evacuate.

Once in a safe area about 15 blocks away, Cooper called his niece Renee, who lives five minutes away.

After meeting at a McDonald's, Renee told Cooper that the street leading to their house was not blocked. So they decided to go back to grab some valuables.

"Only 15 minutes had passed since we left, but the neighbor's house was on fire. It went up in a matter of 15 minutes."

"I grabbed a bunch of stuff -- photos, blankets, papers -- snapped a quick video and left. I saw firefighters saying: 'We can't save that house, but we're gonna try to save this one,' referring to our house," he said. "I had to have Renee help me back out of the driveway because there were so many trucks and smoke, I couldn't see."

Cooper took video of the neighbor's house engulfed in flames.

Cooper spoke to CNN while sitting in his car in a parking lot. He was watching the news on his iPad because he has nowhere to evacuate. He said the fire destroying houses in his neighborhood brought back memories of the devastating Panorama Fire in 1980.

"It was 100 times bigger than this one. The whole mountain was on fire. I was a sophomore in high school, and the schoolyard across the street was on fire," he said. "It burned hundreds of houses, except my parents' house, which is the same as it is now. All houses but my parents' one were rebuilt."

There are about seven houses in his little area touching the mountains, he said.

"Knock on wood, it looks like we may make it again," he said.

Six homes and at least two other buildings have been consumed by the Hillside Fire in San Bernardino County.

The wind-driven fire was immediately threatening homes as the first crews arrived at the scene, **San Bernardino County Fire** Chief Don Trapp said in a news conference.

Wind and low humidity are still major factors in the firefight. Fire crews are expecting 20-30 mph winds and a very low relative humidity, about 2-3%, Deputy Chief Scott Howes, of the San Bernardino Forest Service explained.

<https://www.wmtw.com/article/their-house-barely-survived-a-1980-wildfire-now-firefighters-are-trying-to-save-it-from-another-one-1/29654661>