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Fire investigators suspect man murdered his wife

Patrick Edgell, KESQ News Posted: January 17, 2017, 4:02 PM

LUCERNE VALLEY, Calif. - More information is being released regarding a death investigation that's been ongoing for nearly a year out of Lucerne Valley. A 68-year-old man has been arrested on suspicion of murdering his wife during a house fire, which fire investigators have been looking into since April of 2016.

Donald Wayne Jenman was arrested on Friday, January 13, at the conclusion of the death investigation.

His wife Lynda Cestone, 56-years-old at the time, died during the house fire on April 19, 2016, authorities said in a release. The **San Bernardino County Fire Department** was called to the house fire in the 9800 block of Mesa Road in Lucerne Valley just before 5 a.m.

Firefighters found Cestone's body in the home while working to contain the blaze. During the arson investigation, a gas supply line was found to be disconnected. Due to the suspicious nature of the fire, homicide investigators were brought in to assist.

During the investigation, authorities learned that Lynda has suffered a stroke in 2010, rending her paralyzed and bedridden. She and her husband Donald lived by themselves.

Donald suffered minor burns in the fire.

The death investigation wrapped up on January 13, 2017, and Jenman was arrested and booked at the West Valley Detention Center for murder. He's being held on \$1M bail.

KESQ and CBS Local 2 will keep you updated as the case makes it to court.

http://www.kesq.com/news/crime/fire-investigators-suspect-man-murdered-his-wife/274904316

Lucerne Valley Man Arrested For Murder of Wife Found in Burned Home

24/7 Headline News Posted: January 17, 2017

LUCERNE VALLEY – A Lucerne Valley Man was arrested on Friday for the murder of his bedridden wife authorities said.

The **San Bernardino County Fire Department** responded to a residential structure fire in the 9800 block of Mesa Road in Lucerne Valley on April 19, 2016. As the firefighters were battling the blaze they located the body of a woman, later identified as 56-year-old Lynda Cestone. Her husband, Donald Wayne Jenman, 68, was also located at the home suffering from minor burns and was airlifted to Arrowhead Regional Medical Center for treatment.

Due to the discovery of the body, the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department Bomb and Arson Detail were called to the location to conduct an investigation. Through investigation, they located a disconnected gas line causing them to request the assistance from the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department Homicide Detail. Homicide Detail responded to the scene to assume the investigation.

Through investigation, detectives learned that the couple lived along at the home. Lynda suffered a stroke in 2010, which left her paralyzed and bedridden. Further investigation led to the Friday, January 13, 2017, arrest of Donald Wayne Jenman. Jenman was booked into the West Valley Detention Center for murder and is being held in lieu of \$1 million bail. He is scheduled to appear at the Victorville Superior Court on Wednesday, January 18, 2017.

Anyone with information is urged to contact Detective Mike Cleary or Sergeant Greg Myler of the Specialized Investigations Division, Homicide Detail (909) 387-3589. Callers wishing to remain anonymous are urged to call the We-Tip Hotline at 1-800-78-CRIME (27463) or the We-Tip website at www.wetip.com

https://247headline.com/lucerne-valley-man-arrested-for-murder-of-wife-found-in-burned-home/

California to be hit by trifecta of fierce storms

David Downey, The Press-Enterprise Posted: January 17, 2017, 9:36 PM



Motorists put on snow chains last week at a checkpoint near Lake Gregory Drive in the San Bernardino National Forest. More wet weather is on the way to Southern California. RACHEL LUNA — STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

A potentially epic "three-punch" series of storms that could pound the region with rain not seen in a halfdozen years is barreling toward Southern California, promising to bury the local mountains in snow and threatening to unleash mudslides and floods.

"Guaranteed, Northern and Central California are going to get hosed. And we're going to get more than a glancing blow" in Southern California, said Bill Patzert, climate scientist at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena. "We could get the big show, too."

Three to 4 inches of rain is expected in the valleys and coastal areas of Los Angeles County, with 6 to 9 inches in the foothills, between late Wednesday and Monday, said David Sweet, a meteorologist with the National Weather Service in Oxnard.

In Riverside and San Bernardino counties, 3 to 5 inches could fall on the valleys and 5 to 10 inches in the foothills, said Jimmy Taeger, a weather service meteorologist in San Diego.

And Taeger said 3 feet of snow is anticipated in the mountains.

"We haven't seen precipitation amounts forecast like this since 2010," he said.

Each of the three storms headed our way will be soakers, forecasters said.

"This is a three-punch event," Patzert said. "If things really line up, it could be epic."

Of course, it's already been raining this winter — and raining a lot. That is good news from the perspective of drought relief, but bad news in that it could cause significant damage.

"This is potentially some serious flooding and mudslides, especially considering how saturated things are right now," Patzert said.

Officials say they are particularly concerned about possible damage near areas that recently burned, including the San Gabriel Mountain foothills charred by the twin Fish and Reservoir fires in June above Duarte and Monrovia, and the San Bernardino Mountains and Cajon Pass where the Pilot and Blue Cut fires raged during August.

"We're going to keep an eye on all of that," said Robert Villegas, a Southern California Edison spokesman. "Those burn areas are always areas of concern because of the debris flow that can happen."

Forecasters also are warning of danger at the coast.

On Saturday, in the middle of the storm series, waves 13 to 16 feet high are expected to crash into west-facing Los Angeles County beaches, Sweet said.

"There will be rip currents as well as sneaker waves that will break over jetties and catch people by surprise," he said.

Sweet said the Weather Service is urging people not only to stay out of the water, but also to keep off jetties.

"If you're standing on a jetty in conditions like this, you could be in a lot of trouble," he said.

Because the monster storm system will be packing heavy winds, officials said, there is concern that branches — and even entire trees — could topple, causing damage, injury and power outages.

Villegas said Edison's biggest concern is that heavy limbs and other debris will fall on electric lines.

"In the Inland Empire, one of the things we see a lot is flying palm fronds," he said.

To brace for the possibility of having to scramble to get the power back on, Villegas said more line workers than usual will be working during the long, stormy weekend. And he said others will be on call, in case more crews are needed to deploy to problem areas.

"Then if something truly goes wrong, and it is much more severe than anticipated ... we're able to call in additional crews," he said.

And if something happens in your own backyard such as a tree branch falling on a line, he said, leave it for your local electric provider to handle.

There are some things you can do — like place sand bags around your home or yard to protect your property from mud and high water. They are widely available at fire stations, which also are preparing to respond to storm emergencies, officials said.

For example, sand bags are stockpiled at Riverside County Fire Department stations, said Jody Hagemann, a department spokeswoman. And the **San Bernardino County Fire Department** will have sand bags available at that county. Some fire stations just offer the empty bags, and residents have to get their own sand; other stations provide sand as well.

The first of the three storms is expected to slam into the region late Wednesday and early Thursday, including during the morning commute, Sweet said.

The second storm will bring rain all day Friday, he said.

After a break Saturday, round three is expected to run midday Sunday into Monday.

"Three groups of people will be real happy: skiers, surfers and the water managers," Patzert said. "The three groups who will be unhappy are the emergency managers, the Highway Patrol and the commuters.

"But after the severe dry spell that we have seen over the last five years, you just have to accept a little punishment with the plenty," he said.

http://www.dailynews.com/general-news/20170117/california-to-be-hit-by-trifecta-of-fierce-storms

San Bernardino County firefighters are ready to battle upcoming storms

Doug Saunders, San Bernardino Sun Posted: January 18, 2017, 11:52 AM



Matt Annick and his uncle Kenny O'Keefe, both of Crestline, fill up sandbags Wednesday afternoon at Wildwood Park in San Bernardino Wednesday. The Southland is expected to get hit with a series of three rain storms, starting Wednesday evening and continuing until Monday. JOHN VALENZUELA — STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER



Darrell Scott of San Bernardino, loads sand bags into the back of his truck, Wednesday afternoon at Wildwood Park in San Bernardino Wedneday. The Southland is expected to get hit with a series of three rain storms, starting Wednesday evening and continuing until Monday.JOHN VALENZUELA — STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

After a season of fire ripped through the Southland last summer, **San Bernardino County fire** officials are preparing for the worst as three storms move into the area.

"We're in constant contact with the weather service," county fire spokeswoman Tracey Martinez said. "We will be continuously monitoring the storm's activity."

This series of storms is expected to drop copious amounts of water to areas affected by drought and fire scars as well as a bark beetle infested forest.

"The third storm, which is forecast to move in on Sunday, has the highest potential for flooding," Martinez said. "The ground will already be saturated from the first two storms and may not be able to soak up the rain water."

Martinez said areas scarred from the Pilot and Blue Cut fires may have the potential to experience severe flooding and mudslides as a result of the deluge.

"As the storm cell moves, we may reposition crews to be in the immediate area," Martinez added.

Sandbags can be found at all San Bernardino County Fire Stations and some select stations will have a compliment of sand to fill the bags.

"People can get up to 20 bags per station," Martinez said. "Sandbags are the best way of diverting flood waters from one's home."

Three to 4 inches of rain is expected in the valleys and coastal areas of Los Angeles County, with 6 to 9 inches in the foothills, between late Wednesday and Monday, according to David Sweet, a meteorologist with the National Weather Service in Oxnard.

In Riverside and San Bernardino counties, 3 to 5 inches could fall on the valleys and 5 to 10 inches in the foothills, said Jimmy Taeger, a weather service meteorologist in San Diego.

Fire officials said more than three feet of snow is expected to fall in the San Bernardino and Angeles national forests beginning at the 3,000-foot level all the way up to mountain peaks above the 7,000-foot level.

The monster storm system is also expected to be packing heavy winds, causing a concern that branches — and even entire trees — could topple, causing damage, injury and possible power outages.

The first of the three storms is expected to slam into the region late Wednesday and early Thursday, including during the morning commute, Sweet said. The second storm will bring rain all day Friday, he said.

After a break Saturday, round three is expected to run midday Sunday into Monday.

Martinez said firefighters are ready to handle the storm as it passes through the county.

"Our dozers, hand crews and swift water rescue teams along with all personnel are ready to handle any emergency they face in the wake of this storm."

http://www.dailybulletin.com/general-news/20170118/san-bernardino-county-firefighters-are-ready-to-battle-upcoming-storms

Red Cross to honor local heroes Thursday

Daily Press Posted: January 18, 2017, 12:01 AM

The American Red Cross will honor local heroes - including **San Bernardino County Fire** paramedic/engineer Eric Sherwin - at its Inland Empire Heroes Luncheon Thursday at the Riverside Convention Center.

This year's event aims to recognize local individuals and organizations that embody the mission and spirit of the Red Cross by saving lives and creating safer, stronger and more resilient communities.

"Every day, we are surrounded by heroes - ordinary people with extraordinary courage. We live amongst those who have saved lives, helped neighbors in need, and who have made a lasting difference in their communities," said Linda Voss, Regional CEO of the American Red Cross Desert to the Sea region.

The Riverside Convention Center is at 3637 Fifth St., Riverside.

http://www.vvdailypress.com/news/20170118/red-cross-to-honor-local-heroes-thursday

Fire decision delayed: Victorville may give residents a say on matter by authorizing June vote

Monica Solano, Daily Press Posted: January 18, 2017, 2:58 PM



The Victorville City Council opted not to move forward with a plan to annex certain fire services and costs to the San Bernardino County Fire Protection District, instead choosing to seek input from residents before making a move that would impose a parcel tax on more than 38,000 people. David Pardo, Daily Press

VICTORVILLE - After balking at a proposal to annex the city's fire services Tuesday night, the City Council approved a motion that could eventually put a special tax before the voters in June.

"The Council approved a motion directing staff to research the possibility of putting an initiative on the ballot in June and whether or not they approve a special tax that the city would use to help pay for fire services," city spokeswoman Sue Jones said Wednesday. "It's not a given at the moment, but should everything go right that looks like the direction the city and staff is pursuing." The annexation plan, which was first broached during a workshop last week, called for the **San Bernardino County Fire Protection District** to assume financial responsibility from Victorville for specific costs of fire protection, suppression and emergency medical services by July 1 in exchange for a \$153 parcel tax on nearly 38,000 parcels in the Victor Valley.

The tax would have been on 94 percent of the 40,407 taxable parcels within city limits as part of a regional program launched by County Fire in 2008. The Service Zone FP-5 tax, which counts San Bernardino, Needles and Rancho Cucamonga among its participants, would also have been subject to an annual 3-percent-cost-of-living increase each year.

"We know we have to do something, but I'm not comfortable with appointing a new city tax on our citizens without giving them the option to vote on it," Mayor Pro Tem Jim Cox said.

The proposed ballot measure was approved by a 3-1 vote, with Councilwoman Blanca Gomez casting the lone dissenting vote and Councilman Eric Negrete abstaining. If it goes forward, Victorville voters would be asked to approve a special tax that the city would use to pay for fire services, according to Jones.

The amount of the special tax is not yet known, but Jones said it would be a city tax, not a county tax, and would allow Victorville to continue to contract with County Fire for its fire services.

"What I'm not comfortable with is imposing a tax by our decision on our citizens without giving them the option of Prop 218 to vote on that. That is a dodge in my opinion," City Councilman Jim Kennedy said. "We're playing a shell game on the voters by going in and annexing a pre-existing fire protection district when we know exactly what we're doing."

With an estimated \$15.4 million contract with County Fire for the upcoming fiscal year, Victorville Fire Chief Dan Munsey advocated for annexation, saying it was the only way for the city to cover all of the unfunded requirements the Fire Department has right now, including fire apparatus, engines, stations and more.

Munsey's argument was not enough, however, to sway Cox and the majority of the Council.

"I would find it almost impossible for me to tell the voters and property owners of this city we're going to add \$150 to every house, and by the way you can't call it a tax because it's a fee," said Cox, who added that he refused to place the responsibility, and blame, on LAFCO and County Fire. "That's skirting the issue. We have to be absolutely honest and go to the voters and say here's what's at stake."

http://www.vvdailypress.com/news/20170118/fire-decision-delayed-victorville-may-give-residents-say-onmatter-by-authorizing-june-vote

With buckets of rain, strong winds, will trees be a danger?

David Downey, The Press-Enterprise Posted: January 18, 2017, 11:40 PM



Jake Novak, 33, of Redlands fills sandbags at the city yard in Redlands on Wednesday.RICK SFORZA - STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER



A northbound freight train makes its way up the Cajon Pass through the area burned by the Blue Cut fire in August while an unburned home sits on the hillside Wednesday.will lester — staff photographer

With a trio of powerful storms roaring into Southern California, experts plan to keep a watchful eye on the region's large urban trees as saturated soil and heavy wind threaten to uproot and knock them down.

Several days of storms are expected to bring anywhere from 2 to 12 inches of rain from the coast to the lower mountain slopes, up to 3 feet of snow atop the mountains and dangerously high surf at the coast. Flooding in urban areas and mudslides near recent burn areas are possible as well.

A winter storm warning is in effect for the mountains of Riverside and San Bernardino counties at least through Saturday morning, while the San Gorgonio Pass and High Desert are under a wind advisory. The weather could make travel dangerous in those areas, forecasters warn.

As for toppled trees, authorities say that is potentially a major concern because their heavy branches can trigger power outages, crush houses and cars, and fall on people and hurt them — or worse.

One need only go back to last month to see what can happen. In December, a massive eucalyptus tree in Whittier's Penn Park fell onto a wedding party, killing a 61-year-old grandmother and injuring seven others.

Earlier this month, an iconic giant sequoia in Northern California — the carved-out "Pioneer Cabin Tree" that cars once drove through — was brought down by a storm.

"The time when we see the worst (tree) failures is when you have all this rain, and then the Santa Ana winds come on top of it," Susan Sims, a Riverside arborist, said. "Any wind can set off a failure with the lubricated soil."

Santa Ana winds aren't in the immediate forecast. But the package of storms expected to punch Southern California repeatedly between now and Tuesday will bring strong winds, weather forecasters said.

WHAT THE STORM WILL BRING

Over the course of the three storms, forecasters are predicting 2 to 5 inches of rain to fall in coastal areas, 3 to 6 inches of rain to fall in the valleys, 6 to 12 inches of rain in the foothills, several inches of snow between elevations of 4,500 and 5,000 feet, 10 to 20 inches of snow between 5,000 and 7,000 feet, and 2 to 3 feet of snow above 7,000 feet.

Scott Sukup, a meteorologist with the National Weather Service in Oxnard, said the first storm was expected to arrive late Wednesday, hammer the region overnight and rain heavily this morning, before giving way to showers in the afternoon.

"It certainly has the potential to have some impacts on the morning rush-hour commute," Sukup said.

His advice? Get an early start.

Rainfall should be relatively moderate, but a thunderstorm is possible this morning. In the mountains, the snow level will start at 5,500 feet, then dip to 5,000 feet by afternoon. Areas covered by the wind advisory could receive gusts to 50 mph.

Sukup said the second storm is expected to arrive late today or early Friday, bringing more precipitation — and stronger winds — than the first round.

"It looks like the heaviest stuff will come during the day on Friday," he said. "It could affect both the morning and evening commutes on Friday."

Friday's precipitation is expected to be heavier than today's, and the wind will be stronger as well. The snow level should start at about 4,500 feet on Friday morning, then rise to 5,500 feet before falling to 4,000 feet Saturday morning.

A brief pause in the storms should follow Saturday evening.

"It looks like we're going to have a little bit of a break," said Jimmy Taeger, a weather service forecaster based in San Diego.

Then yet another rainy, windy storm is supposed to hit.

"It looks like (this) storm will be the biggest one of the three," Sukup said.

It's expected to arrive Sunday morning, and showers could linger through Tuesday morning.

This is when the flood threat will be highest, with soils saturated from the first two storms. "Rivers and burn areas will have to be watched closely for flooding and debris flows," forecasters wrote in an analysis.

The storm will start out warmer, meaning rain will fall at higher elevations and melt some of the snow, contributing to the flooding fears. But colder air will move back in, and the snow line could fall to 3,500 feet by Monday morning.

In **San Bernardino County, fire** officials are preparing for the worst, and plan to "be continuously monitoring the storm's activity," county fire spokeswoman Tracey Martinez said.

"Our dozers, hand crews and swift water rescue teams along with all personnel are ready to handle any emergency they face in the wake of this storm," she said.

Martinez said areas scarred by the Pilot and Blue Cut fires have the potential to experience severe flooding and mudslides. "As the storm cell moves, we may reposition crews to be in the immediate area," she added.

Homeowners worried about flooding can obtain sandbags at fire stations around the region, such as those operated by the Riverside County and San Bernardino fire departments. The city of San Bernardino announced it will provide sandbags at Blair, Lytle Creek, Nuñez and Wildwood parks, though people should bring a shovel.

TOPPLING TREES

The storms could also spell trouble for the region's trees.

Of greatest concern, said Sims, is the evergreen trees because they carry their foliage all year.

"The rain does lubricate the soil so that, with any wind that comes up, an unbalanced tree will be more likely to fall over," Sims said.

She said evergreens are most vulnerable because their needles serve to act as "sails" for the wind.

Deciduous trees — ones that shed leaves seasonally — are less vulnerable because they aren't heavy and "there is no wind sail," she said.

Palms tend to hold up fairly well, she said.

"Palm trees are really good because they have fibrous root systems," Sims said. "It's like pulling up a weed that has roots all over the place. They are very difficult to dislodge."

Sims urged homeowners to watch to see whether their trees are leaning and move things out of the way, such as a car.

"And if it's leaning right over your bedroom, you might want to sleep on the couch," she said.

WHAT TO DO?

To lessen the chance your tree will fall over, pull out the pruning tools, advised Brian Flood, general manager at Moon Valley Nurseries Orange County in Irvine.

"That would be the best thing you can do at this point," Flood said.

Thinning out the "head" will make it easier for wind to blow through the tree safely, he said. A thick top, he said, "basically acts like a big umbrella."

Not everyone agrees.

"Basically, all the things we learned about trees is wrong," said Frank McDonough, a botanist with the Los Angeles County Arboretum & Botanic Garden.

It's better to leave the tree alone, McDonough said, because its own weight helps it withstand a windstorm. Trimming lightens the tree, and can make it more vulnerable to wind later, he said, because pruning tends to stimulate leaf growth at the expense of crucial root growth.

If you're worried about a tree, he advised, put up caution tape around it and call an arborist to evaluate it.

In any event, trees are stressed out because of five years of drought, Sims said. Salt has built up in the soil because there has been little winter rain to flush it out and roots are weak.

"And then you make the environment perfectly happy for disease by pouring on water," Sims said.

Like humans, said Roger Boddaert, a Fallbrook tree expert, trees are more vulnerable when stressed. "They're living organisms like you and me," he said.

http://www.dailybulletin.com/general-news/20170118/with-buckets-of-rain-strong-winds-will-trees-be-adanger

Burned Areas at Higher Flood Risk

Heidi Fron, Mountain News Posted: January 19, 2017, 6:00 AM



When roads are flooded, the portion of the road that is not visible poses a risk for vehicles. Remember the slogan: "Turn Around, Don't Drown."

Last weekend's heavy rainfall and snow, plus the prospect of more precipitation coming this weekend, serve as strong reminders to prepare for potential flooding. Residents in and around burn scar areas should be especially diligent.

Flooding is a natural disaster that is possible anywhere in San Bernardino County, but the mountain communities are particularly susceptible to landslides, rock slides and mud flows. In fact, the California Highway Patrol's officer on duty last week reported that rock slides were numerous and took more time and attention than the few minor traffic collisions during and after the storm.

Ordinarily, vegetation absorbs rain. But after vegetation has burned due to a wildfire, scorched ground cannot readily absorb the rain. The risk of flooding and mud flows is high even several years after a fire. At greatest risk are properties directly affected by the fires as well as those areas downstream from the burn areas.

According to San Bernardino County, heavy rainfall may cause dry washes and riverbeds to become raging torrents very quickly, and only 12 inches of moving water can move a vehicle. If a road is covered by water and the road itself is not visible, never cross it. Remember the county's slogan: "Turn Around, Don't Drown."

When checking the news, social media and websites for updated weather conditions, keep in mind the phrases used to describe conditions. A flood watch means flooding is possible. Flood warning means flooding is already occurring or is imminent. Flash flood is sudden violent flooding that comes up quickly during heavy rain.

Hikers need to be especially careful when hiking in dry riverbeds and washes that are susceptible to flash floods.

If a landslide occurs, it may be accompanied by rapid, forceful debris flows, which are highly destructive and occur with little or no warning. The sudden, heavy weight loads can endanger human and animal life, destroy objects in their paths, strip vegetation, block drainage ways and damage structures.

According to the **County Fire**, the county is prepared and residents have been provided with instructions on how to prepare. Anyone who has not already done so, should get ready now for possible flooding.

County Fire's web page entitled "Ready! Set! Go!" shows flood preparation tasks to protect home, property and family. There is also specific information for areas that have been burned recently by wildfire.

At <u>www.sbcfire.org/ReadySetGoFlood.aspx</u>, gather information on how to prepare for possible flooding; sign up for emergency alerts; find out where to obtain sand and sandbags; and create an emergency kit with necessary items.

Sandbags do not guarantee a water-tight seal, but they can help. They help protect doorways more effectively if a waterproof layer of heavy plastic or waterproof canvas is placed behind them and possibly taped to the door frame. Stack sandbags as a pyramid and wrap the plastic up and over the top. If positioned properly, sandbags help redirect water, mud and debris away from the home.

County officials strongly encourage residents to get flood insurance, instructing people to "Insure, Prepare, Evacuate." Note the order of priority. Flood insurance is available on almost any enclosed building. The contents of insurable buildings, including rental units, may also be insured. Purchase flood insurance through the National Flood Insurance Program at <u>www.floodsmart.gov</u>. It must be purchased at least 30 days before a flooding event, so don't wait until any longer. Even if this weekend's storm does not cause flooding, any following storms have the potential to be destructive.

http://www.mountain-news.com/mountain_living/features/article_30b03bd8-dde0-11e6-8ff6-ff7376a32a6a.html