



NEWS



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SHED FIRE IN YUCCA VALLEY EARLY TUESDAY MORNING

Staff Writer, Z107.7 FM NEWS

Posted: September 2, 2020

An outbuilding is a total loss in a fire in Yucca Valley early this morning. **County Fire** Battalion Chief Ken Halseth said firefighters from Yucca Valley, Yucca Mesa, and Joshua Tree were called to the 7800 block of Victor Vista Avenue at 5:15 a.m. The shed was fully involved with flames when firefighters arrived. There were no injuries. The cause is under investigation.

<http://z1077fm.com/shed-fire-in-yucca-valley-early-tuesday-morning/>

SIGN UP FOR EMERGENCY ALERTS FROM SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY

Staff Writer, Z107.7 FM NEWS

Posted: September 1, 2020

Is your cellphone set up to receive alerts in the event of a countywide emergency? You can receive these alerts through San Bernardino County's Telephone Emergency Notification System, but your number must first be registered with the county. Reporter Andrew Dieleman tells us how to sign up...

The Telephone Emergency Notification System, or TENS, sends a mass alert to phone numbers in San Bernardino County's 911 database, allowing public safety personnel to alert residents before, and during, potentially life-threatening emergencies; including wildfires, flash floods, and earthquakes. With the increased use of cell phones over landlines, cellphone numbers must be registered with the county to receive these alerts. To register your number, visit www.sbcounty.gov and click the "Sign Up for Emergency Alerts" icon. Residents who do not have internet access may register by dialing 211 to sign up. For more information, contact County Public Information Officer Tracey Martinez at 909-387-5950 or 909-936-5511.

<http://z1077fm.com/sign-up-for-emergency-alerts-from-san-bernardino-county/>

Bill to Provide Employment Opportunities to Inmate Firefighters

Daniel Peeden, City News Group, Inc.

Posted: September 1, 2020, 11:33pm



Photo Courtesy of: Google Commons

Under, AB 2147 a person who participates as part of a state or **county fire** camp would be eligible to apply for expungement upon release from custody.

AB 2147, legislation by Assemblymember Eloise Reyes (D-San Bernardino) which provides an expedited expungement process for formerly incarcerated individuals who have successfully participated with fire suppression activities has been sent to Governor Newsom for his signature.

Under existing law, once released from custody a formerly incarcerated individual must finish the terms of their parole before applying for expungement of their criminal record. Even once those records are expunged, the person must disclose their criminal history on applications for state licenses. With nearly 200 occupations that require licensing from one of 42 California government departments and agencies these formerly incarcerated individuals are almost entirely denied access to these jobs. An estimated 2.5 million California workers (Nearly 20% of the state's workforce) need a professional license to work. Under, AB 2147 a person who participates as part of a state or county fire camp would be eligible to apply for expungement upon release from custody, and if the expungement is approved could seek various career pathways including those that require a state license.

“AB 2147 will add much needed balance to our criminal justice system and allow those individuals, that we are comfortable enough to call on to save our communities from fires, to have an opportunity to seek an expungement of their criminal record.” Assemblymember Reyes continued, “Rehabilitation without strategies to ensure the formerly incarcerated have a career is a pathway to recidivism. We must get serious about providing real pathways to employment for those that show the determination and commitment to turn their lives around.”

“Once a person fully completes their sentence, they should be afforded with all the rights and privileges of any other citizen,” said Jay Jordan, executive director of Californians for Safety and Justice. “People who serve as firefighters while in prison put their lives on the line to keep California safe, and are owed a debt of gratitude for their service. Expunging their sentences so that they can contribute to their families and our communities through the dignity of work is the right thing to do for our economy and our collective safety and well-being.”

Anne Irwin, founder and executive director of Smart Justice California stated, “For too long, we've asked people held in prison to fight our fires and protect our safety while refusing to give them opportunities upon release. This policy was neither right nor smart, and we are seeing the futility of it now as wildfires ravage the state. AB 2147 eliminates these barriers and recognizes that the least we can do is ensure that those who have

protected us and risked their lives while incarcerated can find gainful employment once released. I applaud the legislature for passing it.”

“It is long overdue that California recognize the incredible public service being provided by these crews who’ve obtained firefighting training and frontline experience. They’ve stepped up to help protect our communities— it’s time we match that commitment with access to a real career,” stated Alicia Lewis, Policy Director, the Center for Employment Opportunities.

“AB 2147 clearing the CA Legislature affirms the just idea that people who fought fires while incarcerated are worthy of opportunities to serve their communities while free,” said Esteban Nuñez, Director of Advocacy at the Anti-Recidivism Coalition (ARC). “We thank Assemblymember Reyes for her relentless devotion to finding a solution to the longstanding barriers that otherwise prevent formerly incarcerated people from becoming EMT certified. Many ARC members, including those training at Ventura Training Center (VTC), have risked their lives to combat fires and we look forward to the Governor signing AB 2147 into law.”

Several studies have concluded that occupational licensing restrictions have a direct correlation on recidivism rates. For example, The Center for the Study of Economic Liberty at Arizona State University found that states with the most occupational licensing restrictions saw an increase in the three year recidivism rate of over 9%, while states without the same restrictions saw an average decline in recidivism of 2.5%, and concluded, “a low occupational licensing burden had a significant impact on a state’s ability to lower its new crime recidivism rate. In terms of impact, the occupational licensing burden was second only to the overall labor market conditions in significantly influencing movements in the recidivism rate.”[1]

In an average year, the Conservation Camp Program provides approximately three million person-hours responding to fires and other emergencies and seven million person-hours in community service projects, saving California taxpayers approximately \$100 million annually.

Several counties across the state, including Los Angeles and San Bernardino operate incarcerated individual fire training academies for those incarcerated in a county jail utilizing several hundred jail incarcerated individuals.

Despite their low-level risk status, dedication and willingness to put themselves in harm’s way, many who participate in these programs struggle to find permanent and stable employment once released. This is in part due to significant barriers in place for individuals with a prior conviction to seek employment or even the education necessary to start a career.

<https://www.citynewsgroup.com/articles/bill-to-provide-employment-opportunities-to-inmate-firefighters>

OPINIONS / EDITORIALS/ LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Where the county's emergency plan?

David J. McKean OF Yucca Valley, Hi-Desert Star

Posted: September 01, 2020, 5:01 PM

My question is simple. What is the plan in San Bernardino county for evacuation?

As of today, in case of emergency fire evacuation, the county plan is for you to call the Red Cross for information on where to go.

We called that number to find out what plans they had in place and were alarmed to find out that the folks on the help line had little or no knowledge of the roads and routes in this area or how we might get from point A to point B quickly and safely.

As we were told by the county, if an emergency hits, we'll "stand up" a plan after the fact.

My point is this. I spent many hundreds of hours in my working life, planning and preparing for emergency and disaster response, and the common denominator in all those plans were that they are done and in place BEFORE the emergency hits.

Anything less is not a plan but merely a hope and that gets people killed. Do your job, San Bernardino, and put plans in place before a fire puts us all in panic mode.

<https://hidesertstar.com/news/177520/where-the-countys-emergency-plan/>