



NEWS



News Headlines 02/21/2020

- Palisades Blaze Contained Surrounding Cabins Spared
- San Bernardino Crews Quickly Contain Apartment Fire
- Arrowhead Communities Fire Safe Council Meeting
- Woman airlifted from rollover crash on Highway 138 Thursday

Palisades Blaze Contained Surrounding Cabins Spared

Allyson Stapleton, The Mountain News

Posted: February 20, 2020, 9:00 am



Photo by Jeff Newman

A house fire broke out at 284 Heliotrope Drive in the Palisades neighborhood of Lake Arrowhead on the night of Monday, Feb. 17. Next-door neighbor and owner of Newman Fence Co, Jeff Newman, watched as flames engulfed the front of the home. Newman recalled the incident:

“As soon as I walked out my back door I could see the [fire]...,” Newman said. “You could hear the crackling, popping, the windows breaking,”

According to neighbors, the two-story home at 284 Heliotrope Drive was recently remodeled. The house was coated in new exterior paint and new windows had recently been installed.

“I got up around 10 or 10:15 p.m. I couldn’t breathe. The smoke was so bad inside my house, even with the windows shut. The whole neighborhood was smoky, especially on this end,” Newman said as he pointed in direction to the south of Heliotrope Drive. “I smelled smoke and I thought it was the corner house. I knew there was a fire somewhere and I got dressed.”

Newman then pointed to the fence dividing his property and 284 Heliotrope.

“We have a common fence in between us here,” he said. “[I’ve] got my renter, [who lives] over [my] garage. I came out and got him up. I had him start soaking the fence and I started hosing the bushes.”

Newman said he saw the house fire burst through the front door.

“Once those windows blew,” Newman said. “The whole corner of the house went up [in flames].”

“You’re thinking in your mind, ‘Well what would happen if my house burned down?’” Newman continued.

Newman said the temperature in the surrounding areas rose to an intense level as that the fire rapidly consumed the structure.

“The heat was so intense. I am surprised the trees didn’t burn,” Newman said.

Newman then called 9-11 and reported the house fire on Heliotrope Drive.

Newman explained he didn’t know his neighbor’s exact address so he gave his own, assuming the fire department would see the fire as they arrive at his residence. Newman said he felt his voice get raspy from the smoke while on the phone with the operator.

When he got off of the phone with 911, he saw the flames were burning high into the trees. That’s when he heard the sirens of nearing fire engines.

“When you come out here and see that, you [realize] ‘I gotta do something quick, this thing is gonna go up.’ Thank God there was no wind,” Newman said.

As fire engines arrived and crews worked to put out the flames, Newman captured several photos of the scene.

Lake Arrowhead Fire Department 91 crews were able to extinguish the fire before it spread beyond the house.

The owners of the residence arrived the next day to assess the damage. One of the owners expressed feelings of gratitude that no one was hurt and no other homes were damaged.

According to the **San Bernardino County Fire** Department, the cause of the fire is still undetermined.

http://www.mountain-news.com/news/article_4d3fd08c-5408-11ea-aa1b-5bfd796783eb.html

San Bernardino Crews Quickly Contain Apartment Fire

Michael McClintock, Public Information Officer for SBCoFD, San Bernardino City News

Posted: February 20, 2020, 1:41pm



Fire crews arrive at the scene of the blazing apartment building and hastily get to work to contain and extinguish the fire.

At 11:32 AM **San Bernardino County Fire** crews were dispatched to a reported commercial structure fire in the 1300 Block of North Arrowhead Ave in the City of San Bernardino. Numerous 911 callers stated they saw smoke and fire from a second story apartment unit.

#SBCoFD crews arrived in 4 minutes to find heavy smoke and fire showing from a second floor, end unit of a large multi-family unit apartment building. Crews immediately initiated an offensive fire attack, prioritizing evacuations & searches of effected apartments. Truck Companies deployed to the roof, performing vertical ventilation to increase survivability in the apartments and to aid in containing the fire. The fire was knocked down in approximately 15 minutes and all searches of the apartments were clear. The entire first alarm of resources arrived on scene within 9 minutes of dispatch helping crews evacuate, search for victims and quickly suppress the fire.

In total San Bernardino County Fire responded with 5 Engines, 2 Trucks, 1 Medic Squad, 1 Battalion Chief and a Fire Investigator. The fire is under investigation by #SBCoFD Office of the Fire Marshall (OFM) Investigators. At the time of the release no damages estimates were available, however multiple units received fire, smoke or water damage. Red Cross was requested to aid in temporary housing arrangements with five adults and two children.

Incident: Commercial Structure Fire

Date / Time: 2/16/2020 11:32AM

Location: 1300 Block of North Arrowhead Ave, City of San Bernardino

Contact: Mike McClintock, Battalion Chief / PIO, MMcClintock@sbcfire.org

It is important to have a plan when there are children in your home. Children sometimes need help getting out of the house. They may not know how to escape or what to do unless an adult shows them.

- * Have a plan for young children who cannot get outside by themselves. You will need to wake babies and very young children and help them get out. In your plan, talk about who will help each child get out safely.
- * It is important to learn two ways out of every room in your home, in case one exit is blocked or dangerous to use.
- * Remember, if there is smoke, you need to get low and go to your exits. So practice getting low and moving to your exits.
- * Choose a safe meeting place a safe distance from your home. Children should know what to do when they hear a smoke alarm and there is no adult around. Help them practice going to the outside meeting place. Teach them to never go back inside a building that is on fire.
- * Have a home fire drill at least twice a year. So everyone can practice what to do if the smoke alarm sounds.

<http://sanbernardino.citynewsgroup.com/articles/san-bernardino-crews-quickly-contain-apartment-fire>

Arrowhead Communities Fire Safe Council Meeting

Allyson Stapleton, The Mountain News

Posted: February 20, 2020, 9:00 am



Photo by Allyson Stapleton

On Feb. 13, at 6:30 p.m., the Arrowhead Communities Fire Safe Council (ACFSC) met at **San Bernardino County Fire Station 91** to discuss budget increases, ACFSC grant period, roadside chipping and other upcoming plans for fire safety procedures.

Those in attendance included ACFSC President Gerald Newcombe and members Jim Asher, Helen Hausmaren and Lisa Joyce. Additionally, Cal Fire San Bernardino Forester David Haas and members of the San Bernardino County Fire Department.

The ACFSC plays a significant role in representing the concerns and needs of the local population by serving Lake Arrowhead neighborhoods. The organization focuses its resources on addressing all community fire-safety needs to minimize potential fire risks.

During the meeting, San Bernardino County Battalion Fire Chief David Meddles presented new additions to the fire stations in the mountain communities.

“Station 26 — their new fire engine has arrived. It’s getting outfitted and everything. The station up in Twin Peaks will be getting a new fire engine real soon,” Meddles said.

The new engine will be purchased from the American company KME Group — a manufacturer of high-quality fire engines used widely across the United States.

ACFSC President Gerald Newcombe mentioned that he had recently read about the purchase of an electric-powered fire engine by the Los Angeles Fire Department.

“Yes, that will be interesting and we will see how that works,” Meddles said. “We are not [getting] any of that yet. I venture someday. It will be hybrid or something.”

Meddles continued with his list of discussion topics on his agenda.

“Our annual wildland update will be coming out next month. So our guys will be training to make sure they are all ready to go for the fire season,” Meddles said. “We are going to be working on our narratives that we have preloaded for any fires in certain areas that way — when it comes to when we are asking for F-Mag (fire management) assistance or even for community risk reduction — we can use it. Those are already preloaded instead of us trying to figure out when we are on a tailgate of a truck trying to do that. We’ve used it in the past and it has been successful.”

“We are going to do some snowcat training that got postponed. Hopefully, we will get some snow. We need a March miracle actually[...],” Meddles said.

The fire safety council voiced their concern about the lack of precipitation in the San Bernardino Mountains this season.

“It seemed to me when I was a kid growing up here the north wind blew from November [to] December. And then you didn’t have any north winds the rest of the year,” Newcombe said. “It seems like it’s year-round. Now, those 70 mile-an-hour gusts are standard.”

The discussion changed when Newcombe asked Meddles about how many helicopters San Bernardino County Fire commands.

Meddles explained how the fire department works with the local sheriff department in operating helicopters for rescues. Meddles said although the Sheriff’s Department owns the helicopters, rescue crews are equipped with a firefighter captain and paramedic to perform rescues.

Furthermore, Meddles said the firefighter helicopter rescue teams are assigned five days out of the week with Sherriff volunteers operating on the weekends. Meddles continued by telling the members of the meeting that they are looking into increasing the rescue units with either fire or Sherrif pilots dedicated to San Bernardino County Fire.

In continuing with the topic, Newcombe asked Cal Fire Forester David Haas how many helicopters were in his fleet.

“In our unit, we’ve got three to five out of Chino. The statewide fleet is looking to go with Blackhawks. We were supposed to get the first one sometime this year. I can’t recall if we actually got it or not. I think there were some technical issues with transporting it from somewhere on the East Coast to over here. But that’s in the budget as well to upgrade the entire fleet,” Haas said. “The governor and the legislature has been very supportive of the department, so that’s helpful.”

Haas then addressed the status of trees that are currently being looked at for signs of new kinds of bark beetle infestation.

“Occasionally we get reports from [the University of California Cooperative Extension’s Gold Spotted Oak Borer public resource] ‘GSOB.org’ for suspect gold-spotted oak borer trees,” (GSOB) Haas said. “So far, [we have documented] no positive hits in the area. We got a report from Edison’s contractor Mowbray which found a couple of suspect trees, but they just kind of gave us the length of a circuit so we are working with them to try to identify specifically which ones.”

Newcombe asked if the trees were located around the Lake Arrowhead area.

“The circuit runs from Running Springs to Crestline. That’s the concern. We [know we] have confirmed infestations in Big Bear, and they also found it in Wrightwood. It’s well established in Oak Glen,” Haas said. “Really the key at this point is just vigilance and awareness on behalf of the public keeping their eyes open so if we do identify something we can address it quickly.”

“That’s exactly what happened in San Diego County,” Newcombe said. “It wiped out all of the white oak trees.”

According to the University of California Riverside Center for Invasive Species Research, they have found that since 2002, the gold spotted oak borer (GSOB) has contributed to the destruction of over 80,000 trees over approximately 4,900 km. sq. The Center claims these infested areas continue to increase as the GSOB population grows and spreads.

“I notice there are a lot of Oak trees in Crestline, were any involved [with GSOB]?” Newcombe asked.

“It’s a complicated situation because wood gets removed and then not treated properly and then you’ll find a new infestation pop up wherever that wood gets piled. We are working with Edison and their contractors to try to address those issues,” Haas said. “Additionally, we have an insect control program through Pilot Rock Camp. So if you, as a homeowner, find an actively infested bark beetle tree on your property, they can come in and remove it. Depending on the technicality. Once [the tree] is dead it no longer qualifies for our program but usually, we refer people to Edison first if it’s going to impact an Edison line. They are being very aggressive in tree removals.”

“We are well aware of the issue and we are trying to do our best to address it,” Haas added. “It’s also a sensitive situation when you are dealing with the utility company and there is a lot of pressure on them to provide for the safety of the public and also ensure power. It’s challenging.”

Newcombe then asked Haas if the trees were covered with plastic as a method of treatment.

“That’s the goal or chip them, they treat them immediately,” Haas replied. “Once we treat it there’s not a lot else we can do. We can’t be out there patrolling it all the time, so we put signage on it and let [the public] know. Even just UV degradation, heavy winds, and snow loads can be problematic for proper treatment.”

http://www.mountain-news.com/news/article_156f7b4c-540a-11ea-8ddc-7b32da701197.html

Woman airlifted from rollover crash on Highway 138 Thursday

Staff Writer, Victor Valley News

Posted: February 20, 2020

PHELAN, Calif. (VVNG.com) — A woman involved in a rollover crash on Highway 138 Thursday evening was airlifted to a trauma center.

The crash was reported on February 20, 2020, at 5:19 pm on State Highway 138 and Mountain Road.

According to the California Highway Patrol incident logs, a vehicle rolled over and landed on its roof in the dirt. Per the logs, several people stopped to help get a woman out of the vehicle.

San Bernardino County Firefighters requested a helicopter to airlift the person to Loma Linda University Medical Center.

The landing zone was established in a field near the Stater Brothers shopping center at Sheep Creek and Phelan Roads.

The cause of the crash is under investigation by the California Highway Patrol.

<https://www.vvng.com/woman-airlifted-from-rollover-crash-on-highway-138-crash-thursday/>