



NEWS



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THE DOS AND DON'TS OF FIRE SEASON

Staff Writer, Z107.7 FM News

Posted: May 18, 2020



Propane “weed burners” are not permitted in San Bernardino County.

With fire season fast approaching in the Morongo Basin, there are many County requirements regarding burn permits and burning conditions that residents need to know. The **San Bernardino County fire** department has issued a list of dos and don'ts for residents to follow this fire season. Reporter Andrew Dieleman has the list...

According to San Bernardino County Fire Battalion Chief Mike McClintock, there are many fire dos and don'ts for residents to be mindful of during fire season. County residents may purchase burn permits from County Fire, call your local fire station for questions on the process. Residents can inquire about the County's daily burn status and inform them that a burn will be completed at 909-356-3805. Burn hours are commonly from 8-12 a.m. and residents may only burn on designated burn days. The full County fire dos and don'ts list is available below.

County Dos and Don'ts for fire season:

Can I use a purchased propane torch to burn grass or burn piles?

These are not allowed in County FD jurisdictions for any use. While still sold online (see photo), they aren't allowed and have caused multiple vegetation fires locally in the past year.

Do I need a burn permit for a campfire?

Recent changes to the fire code now allow a small recreational fire. Fire must be 25 feet from a structure, stay smaller than 2'x3', not be done with more than a 10MPH wind or during “Red Flag” conditions. Fires also are not permitted in Wildfire threat areas and must use propane fires.

I have a valid burn permit & want to burn, is it a burn day?

Please call the dispatch center at 909-356-3805 to inquire burn status and notify them that you will be completing a burn. By notifying them, this keeps a fire engine from being dispatched to your address when completing a legal/permitted burn.

What time of day may I use my burn permit? Burn hours are commonly 8 a.m. to midnight.

How do I get a permit in the State Responsibility Area (SRA)?

Cal-Fire utilizes an online permit process. Please visit its Burn Permit site at <https://burnpermit.fire.ca.gov/>

Not sure if you are in the SRA? Use the following link: <https://bof.fire.ca.gov/projects-and-programs/state-responsibility-area-viewer/>

Questions on your local fire code or with the burn permit process? You can contact the Office of the Fire Marshall at 909-386-8401.

<http://z1077fm.com/the-dos-and-donts-of-fire-season/>

TWO MORE SUSPICIOUS FIRES IN WONDER VALLEY

Staff Writer, Z107.7 FM News

Posted: May 18, 2020

Authorities are investigating two more suspicious fires in Wonder Valley that happened in the early morning hours Sunday. **County Fire** Battalion Chief Scott Tuttle said firefighters were called to the first fire at the corner of Raymond Drive and Midway Road at 1:14 a.m. The abandoned cabin had burned to the ground by the time firefighters arrived.

The second call came in just 30 minutes later at 1:44 a.m. A single-wide trailer was fully involved in flames when firefighters arrived at the scene at 29 Palms Highway and Cactus Jack Avenue in Wonder Valley.

This is the fifth suspicious fire in a month in Wonder Valley and Twentynine Palms, all in the early morning hours. On April 22, a fire destroyed a motorhome in the area of Valle Vista and El Portal Avenue at 2:30 a.m. On April 19, firefighters responded to two fires: one at 12:51 a.m. in the area of Valle Vista and Barbara Lane which burned two motor homes, and the second at 2:22 a.m. which burned an abandoned single-family home in the 1500 block of Bermuda Avenue.

<http://z1077fm.com/two-more-suspicious-fires-in-wonder-valley/>

FEDERAL LAWSUIT AGAINST THE FP-5 FIRE TAX LOOKING FOR PLAINTIFFS

Staff Writer, Z107.7 FM News

Posted: May 18, 2020

County Supervisors voted April 7 to put repeal of the Fire Protection Service Zone Five, or FP5, special tax on the ballot this November. Now there may be more bad news for the county's cash-strapped fire administration. On Z107.7's Up Close Show Friday, the featured guest was Tom Murphy from the Red Brennan Group; the non-profit organization is still looking for plaintiffs for a lawsuit in federal court. Managing editor Tami Roleff explains why...

“We’re not against **County Fire**. Our message is that government needs to live within its means.”

Tom Murphy with the Red Brennan Group said the organization was successful in gathering enough signatures throughout the county to force a vote to repeal the FP-5 fire fee on the November ballot, but it also wants make local governments realize a protest ballot, like the county used for the FP-5 fee, isn't the way to get it.

“If government needs additional funding, they need to come to the voters with a straightforward two-thirds special tax vote.”

To reach that goal, the Red Brennan Group plans to file a lawsuit and needs plaintiffs to be a part of the lawsuit.

“The plaintiffs we’re looking for are county residents, property owners in 2018, they received notification of the protest vote but could not locate a form.”

If you own property in the 19,000-square-mile FP5 district and were unable to participate in the protest process in September 2018 because you never received a notice, weren't able to obtain a protest form, or

because you lack internet, or the necessary hardware or software, the Red Brennan Group wants to talk to you. Contact Tom Murphy at 760-810-5830 or tmurphy@redbrennan.org.

<http://z1077fm.com/federal-lawsuit-against-the-fp-5-fire-tax-looking-for-plaintiffs/>

Fire agencies prepare to battle wildfires during a pandemic

SEAN EMERY, Orange County Register / SCNG

Posted: May 18, 2020, 8:00 a.m.

As Southern California approaches the start of what is traditionally peak fire season, crews now are tasked with an additional challenge: preparing for how to battle large-scale wildfires in the midst of the ongoing coronavirus pandemic.

Safely bringing raging wildfires under control will remain the primary focus, fire officials say. But social distancing is expected to play a key role in keeping firefighters healthy, as well as in providing services to residents forced out of their homes by flames.

“Our priority is protecting lives and property,” said Tracey Martinez, a **San Bernardino County Fire** spokeswoman. “If a wildfire occurs, we don’t have a choice. We have to take care of business.”

Massive fires aren’t necessarily bound by season, as the devastating Woolsey fire that burned in Los Angeles and Ventura counties during November of last year showed.

Recent rains have also meant less of the dry vegetation that fuels wind-driven wildfires. And smaller blazes that have broken out in Southern California in recent weeks and months were quickly extinguished.

But the summer and early fall months – with their often high temperatures, gusty winds and low humidity – pose a particularly high risk of wildfires.

“The reality is, a wildfire is always a potential for us,” said Capt. Thanh Nguyen of the Orange County Fire Authority. “We don’t put our guard down at all.”

Base camp changes

The backbone to battling large-scale wildfires is the state’s mutual-aid system, in which a variety of fire agencies come together to battle a blaze. Larger conflagrations typically draw assistance from fire agencies – and countless firefighters – from all across California, or even multiple states.

In the era of social distancing, much of the planning for dealing with the impact of the coronavirus focuses on how to run a base camp, the temporary command centers where fire department higher-ups plan strategy, the various agencies interact and where crews on the front lines return for rest and meals.

Instead of having a single camp, larger fires could have multiple, satellite base camps, said Sean Ferguson of the Los Angeles County Fire Department.

Command centers during a pandemic would see less congregating among firefighters and planners, as well as more rotations for the crews to grab a bite and rest so that fewer people are in the area at the same time.

“Whenever possible and wherever possible we will maintain our distance,” Nguyen said.

Regular briefings at the command centers would be more spread out, officials said, with attendees wearing masks. Or they could be handled remotely, with crews listening in on a single channel.

“We’ll communicate a lot more through radios,” Martinez said.

Firefighters working the front lines will likely be given more time for handwashing and cleanliness, and reminded to not share equipment. Rather than sleeping trailers that have previously been provided for firefighters between shifts, the crews may need to sleep in the grass near their rigs, or be provided lodging in hotels where they can adhere to social distancing, Ferguson said.

The base camps are generally large enough to accommodate distancing, said Shane Carringer, a spokesman for the Anaheim Fire Department. But for those on the front lines of the fire, social distancing won’t necessarily be an option.

“Guys working together in a fire truck, those guys are never going to be able to social distance,” Carringer said. “They will have to work in close proximity.”

More people at home

In putting together their plans, fire agencies have relied on general directives and awareness for dealing with coronavirus restrictions rather than written operation plans, officials said.

“We have a general thought process at how we are going to approach this,” Nguyen said. “But no one has seen this yet and no one has experienced it yet, so we are going to have to wait and see.”

“When you are out on the fire lines sometimes that fire is not going to agree with you, pandemic or not,” he added.

Having more people at home could make the frantic evacuation process even more difficult during a large fire, when crews racing toward the flames are passing residents trying to escape.

“That will only complicate the process, having more people at home,” Ferguson said. “That is something the incident commanders will have to take into consideration.”

Dorm-style shelters

During wildfires, displaced people are often housed in shelters set up by the American Red Cross, which is also implementing their coronavirus-cognizant game plan.

“We will be hopefully working with more dormitory-style rooms or even hotel rooms,” said Debbie Leahy, regional disaster officer for American Red Cross in Southern California.

She added that Red Cross officials are working with local communities to ensure more of these individual spaces are available to keep families safe.

Traditional shelters, like those set up in community centers, will likely also function differently.

“We have processes and procedures in place to maintain social distancing,” Leahy said. “What that means for us are less people in one shelter and opening up possibly more shelters.”

Red Cross staffers and fire crews alike are actively training how to carry out their roles while keeping others safe during the pandemic.

“We are preparing for it,” Nguyen said. “The public’s safety is paramount for us. Rest assured we will be there for them.”

<https://www.ocregister.com/2020/05/18/fire-agencies-prepare-to-battle-wildfires-during-a-pandemic/>

Fire Department extinguishes car fire in Fontana on May 16

MIKE MYERS, Fontana Herald News

Posted: May 17, 2020



The San Bernardino County Fire Department extinguished a car fire in the 6900 block of Ironridge Court in Fontana on May 16. (Contributed photo by Mike Myers)

The **San Bernardino County Fire** Department responded to a car fire in the 6900 block of Ironridge Court in the northern part of Fontana on May 16.

At about 10:07 p.m., the firefighters quickly extinguished a fully involved car fire that was in the garage of a two-story, single family home.

Authorities said they were able to keep the fire contained to the garage area.

No injuries were reported.

Details about loss or damage were not immediately available.

The Fire Department is investigating the incident.

https://www.fontanaheraldnews.com/news/fire-department-extinguishes-car-fire-in-fontana-on-may-16/article_fe14a222-9858-11ea-aa65-fb8a422e3c76.html

JOSHUA TREE FIRE CALLED SUSPICIOUS

Staff Writer, Z107.7 FM News

Posted: May 16, 2020



A firefighter peers inside a cargo storage trailer in Joshua Tree Friday afternoon. The cause of the fire is thought to be suspicious. Tami Roleff photo

Joshua Tree firefighters have called in an arson investigator after a cargo trailer caught fire Friday. Firefighters were called to the blaze at 12:18 p.m. in the 6100 block of Park Boulevard where a small storage trailer had caught fire. **County Fire** Captain Jay Dimoff said they had the fire out in about three minutes. The fire started outside the trailer and the cause is suspicious because there are no electrical lines to the trailer. In addition, firefighters learned that a resident said she was going to burn the trailer because her girlfriend was gone too long shopping. He added that the resident was lucky that the winds were calm as it could have easily spread to nearby vegetation or the house.

<http://z1077fm.com/joshua-tree-fire-called-suspicious/>

Joshua Tree Fire Burns 150 Acres

Mike McClintock, Battalion Chief / PIO San Bernardino County Fire, City News Group

Posted: May 15, 2020



Photo Courtesy of: Mike McClintock

At 11:27am on May 11, 2020, **San Bernardino County Fire** crews were dispatched to a reported vegetation fire in the area of 29 Palms Highway & La Contenta Road in Joshua Tree. Units arrived in the area within six minutes to find smoke showing from a large plot of land Southeast of the intersection.

Crews made access to find 2-3 acres of medium fuels with a moderate to rapid rate of spread. Strong and erratic winds quickly pushed the fire into dry, receptive fuels. Arriving crews anchored the fire and started putting in hose lays to limit spread. Additional crews were quickly requested due to the size and rate of spread. The fire continued to burn at a rapid rate of spread Northeast towards 29 Palms Highway and Joshua Tree Memorial Park. Initial priorities were keeping fire South of the highway and West of the Memorial Park. The highway was closed due to fire equipment, heavy smoke and proximity of the fire. Despite strong winds & an active fire, crews successfully held the fire at the highway. Engines also kept the fire from damaging nearby buildings on the Memorial Park property. A San Bernardino County Fire bulldozer and inmate hand crews worked on containment lines to keep the fire from jumping into nearby receptive fuels. Crews continued to work into the late afternoon and evening on mop-up operations and line construction. By 7:45 the fire was 100% contained and held at approximately 150 acres. Crews will continue to monitor the fire and patrol the perimeter for hot spots.

Early on in the fire 911 callers stated they saw an adult male leaving the area where the fire started. San Bernardino County Sheriff Deputies and Fire Investigators responded and searched the area, finding the person responsible for starting the fire. A 43 year old adult from Joshua was arrested for unlawfully causing

the fire. He is being held on \$25,000 bail. Anyone with information related to this investigation is asked to contact the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department, Morongo Basin Station at (760)366-4175 or San Bernardino County Office of the Fire Marshal at 909-386-4800. Anyone wishing to remain anonymous may contact We-Tip at 1-888-78-CRIME.

The 150 acre fire burned on Mojave Desert Land Trust (MDLT) land in unincorporated Joshua Tree. The 623 acre property features thousands of Joshua trees and other native plants, as well as desert tortoises, burrowing owls, desert kit foxes, and badgers. San Bernardino County personnel worked closely with MDLT staff to establish a plan for conserving land while providing containment lines to ensure no further spread. With high winds forecasted for the coming days, containment lines were a high priority. Line construction by bulldozer was kept to a minimum to minimize impact.

San Bernardino County Fire responded with (9) Engines, (2) Hand Crews, (2) Water Tenders, (2) Fire Investigators and (3) Chief Officers. CalFire assisted with one Engine. Joshua Tree National Park responded with an Engine and Chief Officer. Combat Center FD assisted with station coverage. Strong interagency cooperation made a positive impact on keeping the fire South of 29 Palms Highway and out of structures. CHP & Cal-Trans provided a road closure & traffic control while crews worked on the fire. Thanks to all our public safety partners for your help.

<https://www.citynewsgroup.com/articles/joshua-tree-fire-burns-150-acres>

County Fire Offers Wood Chipping for Mountain Residents

Michael P. Neufeld, Rim of the World News

Posted: May 15, 2020

Mountain Communities – The **San Bernardino County Fire** Protection District (SBCoFD), in cooperation with San Bernardino County Public Works, CAL FIRE and Mountain Rim Fire Safe Council, are offering wood chipping throughout the mountain communities prior to the summer and fall, when the threat of wildfire is elevated. In an effort to bolster safety in these areas, these agencies will assist residents in maintaining wildfire safety in their communities.

Residents may drop their tree limbs off at the following locations and times.

- Lytle Creek | 5/16/20 | 9am-3pm
Fire Station 20
497 Lytle Creek Rd., Lytle Creek, CA 92358
- Crestline | 5/17/20 | 9am-3pm
North parking lot at Lake Gregory
Lake Dr./Lake Gregory Dr.
- Twin Peaks | 5/23/20 | 9am-3pm
Fire Station 26
737 Grandview Rd., Twin Peaks, CA 92391
- Lake Arrowhead | 5/24/20 | 9am-3pm
Fire Station 91
301 CA-173, Lake Arrowhead, CA 92352
- Angelus Oaks | 5/25/20
Curbside Pickup
- Green Valley Lake | 5/30/20 | 9am-3pm

Fire Station 95
33596 Green Valley Lake Rd.
Green Valley Lake, CA 92341

- Fawnskin | 5/31/20 | 9am-3pm
Fire Station 96
39188 Rim of the World Dr., Fawnskin, CA 92333
- Forest Falls | 6/1/20 – 6/5/20
Curbside Pickup

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, residents are asked to remain in their vehicles. Crews will unload materials from the resident's vehicle. In the event that a resident must exit their vehicle, they will be required to wear a face covering for the protection of other residents and crews.

Wood chips are available free of charge for resident's flower beds, front yards and backyards at Fire Station 20 in Lytle Creek. Residents may take what they need. In addition, residents may pick up wood chips at any of the wood chipping locations only on the dates and times listed above.

SBCoFD encourages residents to get prepared for wildfire weather. For safety tips, including creating your Ready! Set! Go! Personal Wildfire Action Plan, visit <https://www.sbcfire.org/Programs/ReadySetGoFire.aspx>.

<https://rotwnews.com/2020/05/15/county-fire-offers-wood-chipping-for-mountain-residents-2/>