



NEWS



News Headlines 08/05/2020

- A SMALL FIRE AT THE LANDERS LANDFILL TUESDAY
- Pioneertown warned: Be ready to evacuate
- All Mandatory Apple Fire Evacuation Orders Lifted in Riverside County
- Apple Fire Destroys 12 Structures, Burns 26,850 Acres, 15% Contained

A SMALL FIRE AT THE LANDERS LANDFILL TUESDAY

Staff Writer, Z107.7 FM NEWS

Posted: August 5, 2020



Yucca Mesa fire crews responded to a fire at the Landers landfill shortly before 4 p.m. Tuesday. When firefighters arrived, they found about a half-acre of trash burning at the landfill. Due to the proximity of the fire to BLM land, firefighters with the Bureau of Land Management also responded. Crews worked on knocking down the fire and keeping it from spreading into the nearby vegetation. After about an hour, the fire scene was turned over to Burrtec employees, who used a water truck and heavy equipment to suppress the fire. The cause of the fire is unknown at this time.

<http://z1077fm.com/a-small-fire-at-the-landers-landfill-tuesday/>

Pioneertown warned: Be ready to evacuate

Kurt Schauppner, The Desert Trail

Posted: August 04, 2020, 9:07 pm

PIONEERTOWN — Twenty-one engines, including some from Orange County and Cal Fire, have gathered in Pioneertown to be ready if the Apple Fire spreads there from Banning Canyon, where it has already burned 26,850 acres and was just 15 percent contained as of Tuesday morning.

Cal Fire Capt. Brian Wagner said a helicopter is flying over the fire keeping watch and keeping him informed of the fire's location. Wagner is supervisor of the East Contingency Group, the team assigned to this area.

If the flames get past the wilderness area in a direct path to Pioneertown, Wagner will be informed and ground units will take action to defend the community.

The San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department issued warnings to Pioneertown and Rimrock Sunday afternoon, telling them their neighborhoods could be asked to evacuate.

If voluntary or mandatory evacuations were called, residents should see law enforcement in their neighborhoods, said Sgt. Mauricio Hurtado, a spokesman for the county Sheriff's Department.

"Deputies would move in and start advising them that an evacuation order has been put into place and they are asked to leave the area," Hurtado said.

'We are not taking it lightly'

County Battalion Chief Mike McClintock has been working with the East Contingency Group. He took some time Tuesday morning to talk about how the group is getting ready in case the fire travels the roughly 10 miles north and east and gets to them.

“We are not taking it lightly,” he said.

Firefighters in the group are establishing a presence in the community, examining the lay of the land, including access points, and contacting residents who may have to evacuate.

Three strike teams of five engines each, one from Orange County and two from Cal Fire, have gathered in Pioneertown.

While McClintock spoke, a worker from the Yucca Valley Starbucks stopped by to say he was bringing coffee to share with firefighters.

“When there is smoke in the air, people are really awesome,” he said.

Firefighters are working to keep residents informed as the situation evolves, working with social media and getting ready to put up two information boards, one at Pappy and Harriet’s in Pioneertown and one at Frontier Cafe in Yucca Valley.

The message he has for Pioneertown residents is to be ready and have a plan in case evacuations become necessary. Residents are urged to sign up for the “reverse 911 system,” which sends out robocalls when an emergency arises.

Residents should look for one of three possible notices: an evacuation advisory, meaning they should prepare to leave, an evacuation order, meaning they should leave, or a shelter-in-place order.

Right now, he said, the nearest evacuation center is in Beaumont but officials are working to establish one that is closer to home.

“Evacuating to Beaumont is not realistic,” he said.

He acknowledged that working the fire in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic has been a challenge. With 2,500 firefighters battling the blaze, officials are still trying to maintain social distancing to keep everyone safe so the work force is not degraded by illness.

“Our department is still fully staffed,” he said, noting that county fire has contributed 50 firefighters to the cause.

How to stay informed

Residents should not wait for or rely exclusively on any notification system. If you are concerned about your safety and welfare, please evacuate.

- Register for the Telephone Emergency Notification System, which may send out phone alerts about evacuation orders. Visit <http://www.sbcounty.gov/sbcfire/Tens/TensContact.aspx> or call (888) 435-7565.

- Download the ReadySBCounty app at <http://readydl.com/landing/eoc06071/index.html>.

<https://hidesertstar.com/news/170072/pioneertown-warned-be-ready-to-evacuate/>

All Mandatory Apple Fire Evacuation Orders Lifted in Riverside County

Staff Writer, mynewsLA.com

Posted: August 4, 2020

All mandatory evacuations associated with the Apple Fire were lifted Tuesday in Riverside County as the fire continued to rage in the mountains within the San Bernardino National Forest.

The fire has charred 26,850 acres, destroyed 12 structures, injured one firefighter and was still only 15% contained as of late Tuesday afternoon.

Evacuation orders were lifted in the unincorporated areas east of Oak Glen Road, west of Potrero Road, and north of Wilson Street, although non-mandatory warnings were still in effect east of Potrero Road, north of Morongo Road and west of Whitewater Canyon, the U.S. Forest Service reported.

In San Bernardino County, mandatory evacuation orders were unaffected east of Oak Glen Road. Non-mandatory evacuation warnings in San Bernardino County also remained in effect in Forest Falls, Rimrock and Pioneertown.

According to Cal Fire investigators, the massive blaze that started in Cherry Valley was sparked by a malfunctioning diesel vehicle that was leaking burning matter from its exhaust pipe, triggering three separate blazes that eventually merged into one about 5 p.m. Friday in the area of Apple Tree Lane and Oak Glen Road.

Fire officials are estimating the blaze could be fully contained as soon as Aug. 17, according to Kate Kramer, a USFS spokeswoman.

The head of the Apple Fire is on a mountainside in San Bernardino County, according to the USFS. Two Cal Fire air tankers and 12 water-dropping helicopters were working to establish containment boundaries, as more than 2,500 personnel on the ground gradually attempted to encircle the brusher.

The fire is continuing to spread north, deeper into San Bernardino County, and east into the San Gorgonio wilderness, according to fire officials. Overnight, firefighters continued building containment line along the south, southeast and southwestern areas of the fire's perimeter, leading to the increased containment percentage reported Tuesday morning.

"Fire activity is being driven primarily by record low moisture content of the vegetation combined with high temperatures and low relative humidity," the forest service said.

One USFS firefighter suffered minor injuries overnight, Kramer said.

Gov. Gavin Newsom announced the state will receive a Fire Management Assistance Grant from the Federal Emergency Management Agency to help ensure resources will be available to fight the brush fire. The grant will also allow local, state and tribal agencies responding to the fire to apply for 75% reimbursement of their eligible costs, the governor said.

Officials estimated that 2,600 residences and 7,800 people have been evacuated since the blaze began.

The American Red Cross reported Monday night that its volunteers had found lodging at nearby hotels for 114 people, and that its volunteers would remain in the area Tuesday serving food to evacuees.

On Sunday morning, management of the incident transitioned to California Interagency Incident Management Team (IMT) 2. A public information line was established at 909-383-5688.

The smoke column from the fire was visible throughout much of Southern California.

Along with **county fire crews**, personnel from the Calimesa, Morongo, Murrieta, Palm Springs, Cathedral City, Huntington Beach, Hemet, Pechanga, **San Bernardino**, Soboba, Los Angeles and Los Angeles County fire departments were sent to assist under a mutual aid request.

At the request of fire commanders, Southern California Edison turned off electricity along Oak Glen Road and surrounding side streets to prevent additional fires from breaking out as burned power poles collapsed and dropped transmission lines. The practice is known as a “public safety power shutoff.”

Initially, two fires were reported at 5 p.m. Friday in the area of Apple Tree Lane and Oak Glen Road on the north end of the unincorporated community bordering Beaumont, and merged into one by 5:45 p.m. Firefighters sent to the location encountered three blazes coalescing in a drainage with heavy vegetation.

Reports initially indicated witnesses saw a man walking along the roadway igniting fires amid dry and brittle conditions and triple-digit heat, but Cal Fire debunked those rumors and said black soot belching from a diesel exhaust pipe sparked the fire.

“The determination is reinforced by multiple independent witnesses, as well as supporting physical evidence,” according to a Riverside County Fire Department statement.

Anyone with further information about the start of the fires was urged to call the Cal Fire hotline at 800-633-2836. Callers may remain anonymous.

<https://mynews1a.com/orange-county/2020/08/04/all-mandatory-apple-fire-evacuation-orders-lifted-in-riverside-county/>

Apple Fire Destroys 12 Structures, Burns 26,850 Acres, 15% Contained

Staff Writer, mynewsLA.com

Posted: August 4, 2020

A fire that started in Cherry Valley and is raging in the mountains within the San Bernardino National Forest has injured one firefighter, destroyed 12 structures, burned 26,850 acres and was 15% contained Tuesday morning.

According to Cal Fire investigators, the blaze was sparked by a malfunctioning diesel vehicle that was leaking burning matter from its exhaust pipe, triggering three separate blazes that eventually merged into one about 5 p.m. Friday in the area of Apple Tree Lane and Oak Glen Road.

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Evacuations were in place in both Riverside and San Bernardino counties. An emergency closure order was put in place Sunday prohibiting all entry into the San Gorgonio Wilderness Area, including the Pacific Crest Hiking Trail between the Forest Boundary and Forest Road 1N01.

Residents north of Wilson Street, east of Sunset Avenue and west of Hathaway Street in Banning were ordered to evacuate at 2:15 p.m. Saturday as flames crept toward the neighborhood, according to the Riverside County Emergency Management Department.

Under evacuation orders since Friday were residents in the Banning Bench area, and those north of Cherry Valley Boulevard between Beaumont and Highland Springs avenues, according to the Riverside County Fire Department.

Officials estimated that 2,600 residences and 7,800 people have been evacuated and said they do not have a time frame for lifting the evacuations.

A temporary evacuation center was established at Beaumont High School, 39139 Cherry Valley Blvd. The American Red Cross was additionally assisting evacuees by putting them in hotels.

Riverside County residents were encouraged to visit www.rivcoready.org/ActiveEvents for an interactive map, where they can enter their address and see if they are in an evacuation area. They can also follow <https://twitter.com/RivCoReady> for updates.

On Sunday morning, management of the incident transitioned to California Interagency Incident Management Team (IMT) 2. A public information line was established at 909-383-5688.

A single-family home and two outbuildings were destroyed near Avenida Miravilla, adding to the destruction of a few cars, a structure and a boat reported Friday night.

The smoke column from the fire was visible throughout much of Southern California.

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<https://mynewsla.com/education/2020/08/04/apple-fire-destroys-12-structures-burns-26850-acres-15-contained/>