



NEWS



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- Despite record rain, CAL FIRE focuses on fire season for Wildfire Preparedness week

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By Rob McMillan, ABC 7
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SAN BERNARDINO, Calif. (KABC) -- The first day of May brought a bit of rain for many parts of Southern California, but it's a relatively rare occurrence at Riverside Fire Station No. 3, which has recorded measurable rain just 11 times on this date since 1901.

That's about once every decade - and this comes as fire season approaches, which was the topic of discussion as CAL FIRE's Wildfire Preparedness Week is officially underway in San Bernardino County.

With so many areas seeing record amounts of rain and snow this winter, fire officials say those conditions will soon likely be a distant memory.

"This time of year, Southern California is beautiful," said **San Bernardino County Fire** Department Chief Dan Munsey. "We have green hills, rolling hills, and with this cloudiness, we can almost pretend we're in Ireland, but let's not forget we're not. These hills will turn brown and will burn."

Last week, the Nob Fire spread to more than 200 acres in the Cajon Pass.

"In 2022, we flew our first nighttime aerial firefighting missions and logged over 45 hours of flying at night during fires like the Fairview fire in Riverside County," said CAL FIRE Chief Joe Tyler.

Plus, the state is preemptively spending more money fighting fires across the state, such as investing in conducting more prescribed burns ahead of time. Officials believe it's helped reduce the number of devastating fires.

"In 2022, in comparison to 2020 and 2021, we saw an 85% reduction in the number of acres burned, and a 75% reduction in the number of structures destroyed," said Tyler.

In San Bernardino County, deputies will be doing something new this year.

"Law enforcement will be using, and we learned this from large fires in northern California, a high low siren," explained Sheriff Shannon Dicus. "If you hear a high low siren coming through your neighborhood from law

enforcement, that means that the fire is imminently approaching your neighborhood and it is time to leave if you haven't already left."

CAL FIRE also discussed the importance of fuel reduction and home hardening. The agency posted a live stream of the event on its Twitter account.

<https://abc7.com/cal-fire-wildfire-preparedness-week-san-bernardino-inland-empire/13202431/>