



# NEWS



## News Headlines 08/31- 09/05/2023

- Yucaipa ratifies its local emergency on Aug. 24
- Federal lawsuit filed against SoCal Edison for allegedly causing Bobcat Fire in 2020
- Car briefly blocks fast lane on SB 15 freeway after crash in Hesperia
- Crash Leaves Beer Cans Across Road

# Yucaipa ratifies its local emergency on Aug. 24

By Michelle Lopez, News Mirror

September 1, 2023



Oak Glen Road has major damage from the storm last week

A special meeting of the Yucaipa City Council was called on Thursday, Aug. 24, at 10 a.m. in the council's chambers to ratify the existence of a local emergency affecting the safety of persons and property due to the Tropical Storm Hilary that hit the previous weekend.

Sunday, Aug. 20, City Manager Chris Mann/Disaster Director for the City of Yucaipa, signed a proclamation declaring a local emergency due to the damage and safety issues caused by Tropical Storm Hilary. The city had seven days to ratify the proclamation declaring the local emergency and extend the state of emergency for 60 days.

The meeting lasted approximately 30 minutes. All councilmembers were present except Councilmember Jon Thorp.

Several benefits for declaring a local emergency go into place. Mann said the most important was, "It opens up the door for us to receive federal and state reimbursement for our disaster response."

Other benefits include the extension of police powers in the city to close unsafe roads and take the steps necessary to protect the public.

Public Safety Manager Trevor Benson gave a presentation of some of the efforts the Yucaipa Police and Fire Departments took before, during and after Tropical Storm Hilary hit the area.

Prior to the storm

Yucaipa Fire Chief Grant Malinowski issued an evacuation warning and the Yucaipa Sheriff's Department sent the order and notified the community Saturday morning at 8 a.m. to help residences within the El Dorado burn scar area (Oak Glen, Forest Falls, Mountain Village, Angelus Oaks and the northern portion of Yucaipa) be prepared in case of a necessary evacuation. Heavy rains, high winds, possible mudslides and flash floods were the threat of the storm.

Timeline of City and Emergency Response Day 1

The Office of Emergency Services (OES) put out a request for resources and personnel which were issued at 5 p.m. on Sat., Aug. 19.

Sunday afternoon the storm brought heavy winds and rain which impacted Yucaipa. Calls for assistance reached 20 calls in two hours, prior to the beginning of the debris flows.

Debris flows were first reported on Oak Glen Road and within five minutes, the debris flow reached Pendleton Road making Oak Glen Road impassable. Shortly after, Malinowski assumed the position of the Incident Commander and ordered a shelter in place for Oak Glen Road at Pendleton to Harris Road. The Unified Command was established with **San Bernardino County Fire** and San Bernardino County Sheriff Departments along with CAL FIRE. An Evacuation shelter was opened at Redlands East Valley High School.

A shelter in place order was issued for Forest Falls after a debris flow was reported on the Valley of the Falls Dr. Benson also reported damage to the community of Seven Oaks where all bridges were washed away and 20 residents were stuck on the side of the Santa Ana River with an additional 10 people (recreationalists) sheltering in place in trees and roofs to avoid water.

#### Timeline of City and Emergency Response Day 2

A third branch to the Fire Department's response was established (Angelus Oaks and Seven Oaks) to assess damage and account for all residents in that area.

By the end of the first shift, the Yucaipa, Oak Glen and Forest Falls residents had egresses cleared and all known sheltered residents accounted for. Angelus Oaks/Seven Oaks emergency crews were advised of a possible missing person and search and rescue was initiated. One person needing medical attention due to a laceration to the leg, was hoisted out by helicopter and 30 stranded residents were rescued by the end of the day.

#### Timeline of Yucaipa Police Department Day 1

"In preparation, we started to get more info and were part of the daily briefs with the National Weather Service and other stakeholders throughout the county, monitoring the incoming storm," said Walker.

Walker said once the department realized the city was going to be impacted by the storm, it began to make the preparations for responses needed for Life, Safety, Preservation and Protection of Yucaipa and county areas. Staffing was increased for the city and county areas.

#### Timeline of Yucaipa Police Department Day 2

The National Weather Services told Walker that "sometime Sunday afternoon is when this thing was going to hit us so we really upstaffed," said Walker. He said the staff increased in numbers to 16 for the day shift and 14 for graveyard Sunday night. A lot of resources were put in place for the community.

The biggest issue was primarily wind with a big influx of calls due to downed trees, utility outages, flooding, stalled vehicles or vehicles in collisions. There were a total of 47 specific storm related calls.

"We had one lady here in town who called because the wind had knocked over her chicken coop and her chickens were trapped and she didn't know who to call or what to do so she called us. Two of our deputies went there and I can happily say, rescued all the chickens. She was very happy and grateful for the response from the City during the storm event," Walker told the council.

Walker said the county areas from Mentone to the mountain communities totaled 27 weather related calls and Yucaipa Police Department handled 157 calls.

#### After the Storm

Walker said there were a total of 24 personnel on day shift and 12 on graveyard. By Tuesday morning, Walker said things were getting back to normal so the number of staffing levels were lowered to normal staffing levels that the city sees on a day-to-day basis.

Resident Christie Rockwood was reported missing and Walker said finding her was top priority for the department.

Yucaipa City Engineer Fermin Preciado said, “Just to give you a brief update on the Public Works and on-call contractors, they have been very busy assessing and cleaning up the Oak Glen Road and other areas.”

[https://www.newsmirror.net/news/lucaipa-ratifies-its-local-emergency-on-aug-24/article\\_78b47b1e-48e7-11ee-bdd4-a7b3561d3032.html](https://www.newsmirror.net/news/lucaipa-ratifies-its-local-emergency-on-aug-24/article_78b47b1e-48e7-11ee-bdd4-a7b3561d3032.html)

# Federal lawsuit filed against SoCal Edison for allegedly causing Bobcat Fire in 2020

By Vivian Chow, KTLA5

September 1, 2023



Jesse Vasquez, of the **San Bernardino County Fire** Department, hoses down hot spots from the Bobcat Fire on Saturday, Sept. 19, 2020, in Valyermo, Calif. (AP Photo/Marcio Jose Sanchez)

A federal lawsuit was filed against Southern California Edison on Friday for allegedly causing the devastating Bobcat Fire in 2020, which burned over 114,000 acres in Los Angeles County.

The lawsuit alleges that SCE and Utility Tree Service failed to “properly maintain trees that came into contact with power lines” which caused the blaze.

“The contact resulted in ignition of vegetation on a branch, which fell to the ground and spread,” the suit states.

According to the complaint, the U.S. Forest Service spent over \$56 million to battle the fire, and incurred property and natural resource damages of over \$65 million.

The Bobcat Fire first ignited on Sept. 6, 2020, and quickly erupted, burning over 114,577 acres over a two-and-a-half month span. The blaze became one of L.A. County’s largest and most devastating fires on record.

The flames ultimately destroyed 171 structures and 178 vehicles, damaged 47 structures, threatened 6,235 structures, and forced widespread evacuations, court documents said.

Nearly 100,000 acres of scorched land were located in the Angeles National Forest. Almost three years later, more than 100 miles of trails and numerous campgrounds still remain closed to the public, officials said.

“The fire effects have been, and will be, detrimental to habitats and wildlife, including the federally endangered wildlife-mountain yellow-legged frog and other federally threatened fish and birds,” court documents said. “The fire also damaged and destroyed irreplaceable cultural and heritage resources.”

Although no specified amount of damages was determined, the U.S. Attorney’s Office said the funds sought would be used to recover costs spent battling the fire along with rehabilitation efforts of scorched forest lands

<https://ktla.com/news/local-news/federal-lawsuit-filed-against-socal-edison-for-allegedly-causing-bobcat-fire-in-2020/>

# Car briefly blocks fast lane on SB 15 freeway after crash in Hesperia

By Staff Writer, Victor Valley News Group

September 4, 2023



HESPERIA, Calif. (VVNG.com) — A two-vehicle crash caused a slowdown Labor Day Monday on the 15 freeway.

The crash involved a white Ford sedan and a black Prius, and happened about a mile north of the Main Street off-ramp of the southbound Interstate 15 at about 1:22 p.m., September 4, 2023.

AMR, **San Bernardino County Fire**, and the California Highway Patrol responded to scene and located the Ford blocking the fast lane, and the Prius on the right shoulder.

No serious injuries were reported, and as of 1:55 p.m, CHP officials were able to push the Ford to the right shoulder.

<https://www.vvng.com/car-briefly-blocks-fast-lane-on-sb-15-freeway-after-crash-in-hesperia/>

# Crash Leaves Beer Cans Across Road

By A.J., On Scene TV

September 4, 2023



INCIDENT DATE/TIME: 9-4-23 12:58 AM

LOCATION: 17781 Valley Blvd.

CITY: Bloomington

DETAILS:

On September 4th, 2023 at about 1:00 AM **San Bernardino County Fire** and AMR responded to a reported traffic collision in front of 17781 Valley Blvd in Bloomington.

Units arrived at the scene and located two parties still inside a pickup truck on its side after colliding with a parked car trailer.

Firefighters cut the windshield and extricated the two victims.

Beer cans can be seen littering the street after the collision.

It's unclear if alcohol was a contributing factor to the crash.

No other information was provided at the scene.

<https://onscene.tv/crash-leaves-beer-cans-across-road/>