



NEWS RELEASE

*FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE Daniel R. Munsey
Fire Chief / Fire Warden*



DATE: 02/04/2024

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Three Rescued After Attempting to Cross Flooded Road

Date/Time: 02/04/2024, 11:58 PM

Location: Area of Keenbrook Road / Cajon Blvd, Devore

Incident: Swift Water Rescue (BDC: 24-30320)

Summary:

Just before midnight, San Bernardino County Fire crews were dispatched to a reported Swiftwater Rescue near Cajon Blvd & Keenbrook Road in the Cajon Pass area. The 911 caller stated he had attempted to drive across a flooded road when his vehicle was swept away.

Firefighters including pre-positioned Swift Water Rescue teams arrived in the area to find two full-size SUVs, one with an attached trailer, lodged against a tree in the Cajon Wash downstream from the initially reported location. Three victims were spotted. One was standing atop a vehicle, and two more were located in a tree above the same SUV. All parties were surrounded by rapid flood waters.

Working from both banks of the Cajon Wash, firefighters initiated numerous plans but were hampered by the volume and turbulence of water flow, limited access and low visibility. Ultimately all three victims were placed in flotation devices & successfully moved to safety. Once on shore, firefighter/paramedics assessed the victims for exposure and transported the parties to an awaiting ambulance. The victims were transported to an area hospital for evaluation of minor injuries and hypothermia. The incident in total took more than two hours to effect.

The second SUV was found to be unoccupied.

San Bernardino County Fire responded with four Engines, two Swift Water Rescue Units & two Chief Officers. Rialto Fire assisted with an Engine Company.

People underestimate the force and power of water. Many deaths occur in cars swept downstream. Many of these drownings are preventable. Never drive around the barriers blocking a flooded road. The road may have collapsed under that water. A mere six inches of fast-moving flood water can knock over an adult. It takes just 12 inches of rushing water to carry away most cars while two feet of rushing water can carry away SUVs and trucks.

It is NEVER safe to drive or walk into moving flood waters.