



# NEWS



## News Headlines 10/19 – 10/21/2020

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## San Bernardino County voters could end \$41.5 million fire tax

Ryan Hagen, The Sun

Posted: October 20, 2020



Trevor Hoover and Roland Hoover use a rake and a garden hose to try and put out the El Dorado Fire as triple-digit heat, high wind gusts and low visibility limited air attack in Yucaipa on Sunday, September 6, 2020. (Photo by Terry Pierson, The Press-Enterprise/SCNG)

Voters in San Bernardino, Upland, Needles, Twentynine Palms and unincorporated parts of San Bernardino County could vote in the Nov. 3 election to repeal a fire tax that costs parcel owners \$157.26 per year. If they do, by voting yes on Measure U, the \$41.5 million raised by the fire protection tax will go away — and so could 19 fire stations, firefighters warn.

Slightly over 1,000 Helendale voters approved the tax in 2008 as part of forming a fire protection district, and elected officials in San Bernardino, Upland and other areas later extended the fire protection district to include their jurisdictions. Parcel owners had the opportunity to protest the move, which would have triggered an election if enough returned the form, but there was no direct vote outside of Helendale.

“We’re not against firefighters,” said Natalie Zuk, spokeswoman for the Red Brennan Group, which helped fund the measure. “What we are against is the imposition of an illegal tax on San Bernardino County residents without a proper vote.”

If the fire protection district loses the money, the Board of Supervisors could replace it using funds from other parts of its budget, Zuk said, also suggesting that some fire stations could be run more efficiently.

That’s not something firefighters want to bet lives on, said James Grigoli, president of the San Bernardino County Firefighters union.

“We can’t control what the Board of Supervisors might do,” Grigoli said. “They (firefighting administrators) have broken it down, and that’s 19 fire stations we’d have to close, especially in mountain areas.”

Those mountain areas are susceptible to devastating wildfires like the El Dorado and Bobcat fires this year, which he noted came before the typical worst part of the fire season — when the Santa Ana winds begin.

Measure U runs the risk of “endangering everyone,” Grigoli said, “and people won’t even save money.”

That’s because cutting fire services will likely result in higher insurance rates for homeowners and apartment complex owners, who will pass that on to renters, he predicted.

Some might find it impossible to get any fire insurance, he added. The parcel tax can be increased by a maximum of 3% per year.

<https://www.sbsun.com/2020/10/20/san-bernardino-county-voters-could-end-41-5-million-fire-tax/>

## **News Update: Needles, CA: More information regarding an early morning fire last Saturday that damaged an apartment building and burned vegetation**

Staff Writer, zachnews.com

Posted: October 20, 2020

Needles, California: The San Bernardino County Fire Department has released in a press release more information regarding an early morning fire that occurred on Saturday, October 17th, 2020 that damaged an apartment building and burned vegetation.

According to the San Bernardino County Fire Department, at 2:23am San Bernardino County Fire crews were dispatched to a reported structure fire in the 1500 block of Washington Street in the City of Needles. Multiple 911 callers stated vegetation and a home were well involved.

ME32 arrived to three-unit apartment building with 1-2 units well involved and 1/4 acre of vegetation also on fire. ME32 initiated a fire attack, prioritizing evacuation of the apartment complex and completing a search of the apartments.

Crews made entry, making notification and assisting with evacuation of three residents. The first arriving crew juggled a well involved building on fire, a 1/4 acre vegetation fire and multiple exposures.

Mohave Valley (AZ) E811 arrived and assisted ME32 with their efforts. The fire was ultimately knocked down in 45 minutes.

Two of the three units received fire or smoke damage. Crews remained on-scene working on overhaul for five additional hours. Construction features and dense vegetation made overhaul slow going.

San Bernardino County Fire responded with an Engine, Brush Patrol, Fire Investigator and Battalion Chief. Mohave Valley assisted with an Engine.

The cause is under investigation but it appears the fire started in vegetation and extended to the nearby occupancy. Red Cross was requested for temporary housing assistance.

<https://zachnews.net/2020/10/20/news-update-needles-ca-more-information-regarding-an-early-morning-fire-last-saturday-that-damaged-an-apartment-building-and-burned-vegetation/>

## **Fatal Crash East of Twentynine Palms Discovered this Morning**

Staff Writer, [z1077fm.com](http://z1077fm.com)

Posted: October 20, 2020

A man was killed sometime during the night in a single-vehicle rollover crash east of Twentynine Palms. **County Fire** Captain Danny Stamps said the vehicle appeared to be traveling eastbound on Valle Vista near Bagdad Highway when the crash occurred. The vehicle was not spotted and called in until 6:44 a.m. this morning. Z107.7 News will have more information when it becomes available.

### **UPDATED 10/21/2020**

We have a little more information about a fatal crash in Twentynine Palms. According to the Sheriff's Department, a Twentynine Palms man was driving a Toyota pick-up truck on Valle Vista Road when he lost control for unknown reasons near Monte Vista Street. The truck left the road and rolled over; the driver was ejected from the truck and was pronounced deceased at the scene. County Fire Captain Danny Stamps said the crash happened sometime Sunday night/Monday morning; paramedics were called to the scene at 6:44 a.m. Monday morning when the crash was discovered. The victim's identification has not been released yet pending notification of next of kin.

<http://z1077fm.com/2020/10/20/>

## **Twentynine Palms Mobile Home Damaged in Fire Tuesday**

**Staff Writer, z1077fm.com**

Posted: October 21, 2020

A mobile home was damaged in a fire in Twentynine Palms Tuesday afternoon. **County Fire** Battalion Chief Mike O'Bier said firefighters from Twentynine Palms, Joshua Tree, Yucca Valley, and the Combat Center were called to a single-wide mobile home on fire in the 4500 block of Adobe Road just after 1 p.m. The single male resident was outside when firefighters arrived. The fire appeared to have started outside near the water heater closet. The American Red Cross was called to help the resident. The cause is under investigation.

<http://z1077fm.com/2020/10/21/>