



# NEWS



## News Headlines 01/23-01/25/2021

- Crews search for possible victims after fire
- As rain moves into Southern California, wildfire burn areas on alert
- Snow and ice create traffic jams along San Bernardino County mountain roads

## Crews search for possible victims after fire

Staff Writer, Hi-Desert Star

Posted: January 22, 2021 at 9:39AM



Firefighters and Investigators comb through the burned hulk of a house Thursday

**YUCCA VALLEY** — After a house burned early Thursday morning in the Western Hills area, fire crews and investigators spent the rest of the day sifting through the remains to make sure no one was inside during the fire.

“Bystanders did hear a cry for help from the home prior to our arrival,” Battalion Chief Mike McClintock with the **San Bernardino County** fire department said via email.

“No occupants were at the home at the time of our arrival to give further information. With that in mind, we continue to slowly dismantle the pile while completing overhaul and investigation.”

The fire was reported at 4:33 a.m., when crews were dispatched to the 57400 block of Buena Suerte. They found a three-story house with fire burning throughout the structure, McClintock said.

“Crews also encountered downed power lines, a burning power pole, an RV and multiple cars on fire as well,” he said.

They mounted a defensive fire attack, concentrating their efforts on protecting nearby homes and vegetation. The fire was ultimately knocked down in about an hour, according to McClintock.

Investigators with the county fire and sheriff’s department are collaborating to determine where and how the fire started.

“Due to the heavy timber and debris, a San Bernardino County fire department heavy equipment team responded to assist with overhaul and investigation,” McClintock said.

Crews remained on the scene Thursday afternoon, working with investigators on dismantling the debris pile.

<https://hidesertstar.com/news/178672/crews-search-for-possible-victims-after-fire/>

## As rain moves into Southern California, wildfire burn areas on alert

Brian Rokos, The Press Enterprise

Posted: January 22, 2021 at 4:39PM



Public safety officials are closely watching a chilly, three-pronged storm that moved into Southern California Friday, Jan. 22, whose heaviest precipitation was expected to last through Monday.

It's uncertain whether there will be enough heavy rain, or accumulation of rain, to dislodge mud and other debris from wildfire burn areas where the vegetation that holds together mountainsides has been incinerated.

"The thing that concerns us is the amount of rainfall that is coming down at a particular time. When we get those heavy rains, when we have inches and inches over a short period of time, that's when we start having those mud and debris flows," said Orange County Fire Authority Capt. Greg Barta.

The National Weather Service had not issued any flood advisories as of Friday afternoon, and the Riverside County Emergency Management Department tweeted that the rain is unlikely to produce dangerous flows.

But, cautioned Eric Sherwin, a spokesman for the **San Bernardino County Fire** Department, "The chance is very real. We've lost the natural ability for a hillside to absorb and hold moisture" and storms have become less predictable.

Officials urged residents to prepare their homes and motorists to expect rain and snow.

Along with the rain, cooler temperatures are moving in. High temperatures were not expected to top 60 degrees in Southern California valleys in the next several days. High temperatures in the mountains were forecast to range from the upper 20s to upper 30s.

The first round of precipitation was to arrive Friday and forecast to continue into Saturday night, a storm that could bring up to an inch of rain in the mountains and lesser amounts elsewhere, along with several inches of snow above 4,500 feet.

More precipitation is expected Sunday night and forecast to hang around into Monday when the snow level could drop to 2,000 feet and accumulate a foot deep or so.

The weather service is warning of reduced visibility, slippery roads and possible downed trees and power lines in the mountains through Sunday night.

The third round, in a still-developing forecast, expected to bring lighter rain late Wednesday.

Caltrans wrapped up roadside storm preparations Thursday night, de-icing highways, cleaning out drainages and culverts and working on hillsides to limit the possibility of falling rocks, said Terri Kasinga, a spokeswoman for District 8, which covers the Inland Empire. She reminded anyone heading to the mountains to enjoy snow play to bring tire chains and not to block the roads or leave their trash behind.

Barta urged people who plan to stock up on supplies to do so before the storms hit in earnest because traffic collisions typically increase when it rains and snows. Drivers should slow down and watch for pockets of water that could cause a car to hydroplane, he said.

The burn scars from the Silverado, Bond and Blue Ridge fires in Orange County; the Apple and El Dorado fires in the Inland Empire; and the Bobcat fire in Los Angeles County could be prone to flooding.

“If you live in homes in jeopardy, make sure drains are cleared and sandbags or other barriers are in place,” Barta said.

Many cities and counties have sandbags and/or sand available.

The OCFA website lists fire stations where supplies are available, as does the Los Angeles County Fire Department website. Cal Fire/Riverside County Fire Department stations have a limited supply of sandbags. All San Bernardino County Fire Department stations have sandbags, and some have sand.

Redlands fire stations have sandbags, and residents can fill them at the City Yard, 1270 W. Park Ave., where sand and shovels are available.

<https://www.pe.com/2021/01/22/as-rain-moves-into-southern-california-wildfire-burn-areas-on-alert/>

## Snow and ice create traffic jams along San Bernardino County mountain roads

Eric Licas, Orange County Register

Posted: January 24, 2021 at 3:43PM



A car travels along Hwy. 38 in the San Bernardino Mountains during the first winter storm on Monday, Dec. 28, 2020, in this screengrab from a Snow Valley Mountain Resorts webcam. (Courtesy of Snow Valley)

Dozens of motorists reported their vehicles stuck on nearly impassable roads packed with frost high up in the mountains of San Bernardino County Sunday, Jan. 24, while emergency maintenance resulted in the closure of parts of Highway 2 in the Angeles National Forest.

No major road closures were in effect in San Bernardino County as of 2 p.m., but traffic crawled to a snaillike pace along portions of the Highway 18 and Highway 38 as drivers relied on snow plows to clear ice and snow from the roads, dispatchers for the California Highway Patrol said.

CHP officials received numerous calls throughout the day from people who said they were stuck in the middle of traffic jams involving multiple vehicles.

It was unclear exactly how many wound up temporarily trapped on the road, one caller estimated that as many as 50 cars and trucks were stuck waiting or incapacitated at one point on Highway 38, CHP dispatchers said. Meanwhile, In Los Angeles County, several sections of Highway 2 between Big Pines to the east and Mt. Wilson to the west were shut down due to emergency work.



Snow chains were required to cross most of Highway 2 and Highway 18. Chains will also be needed on Highway 38 near Hatchery Drive, from the Heart Bar Campground through Onyx Summit, and multiple points at high elevation in the Big Bear area.

The storm responsible for clogging traffic at higher elevations parted on Sunday after leaving more than a foot of fresh snow on ski resorts in Big Bear in the San Bernardino National Forest and Mountain High in the Angeles National Forest. But meteorologists forecast even more snow and hail to fall in mountain regions when another wet weather system arrives in Southern California between Sunday evening and Monday morning.

Treacherous road conditions will persist into the start of the week. Caltrans officials advised motorists to slow down, drive with their headlights and wipers on and plan for extra travel time.

<https://www.sbsun.com/2021/01/24/snow-and-ice-create-traffic-jams-along-san-bernardino-county-mountain-roads/>