



NEWS



News Headlines 01/26/2022

- Recent winds caused damage in Inland Empire
- San Bernardino County to hire 200 new employees, build Yucca Valley fire station.

Recent winds caused damage in Inland Empire

By Staff Writer, FONTANA HERALD NEWS

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This tree was blown over by the strong winds in the Inland Empire last week. (Contributed photo by **San Bernardino County Fire** Department)

Last week's powerful winds caused lots of damage at various locations throughout the Inland Empire, but the destruction was not as extensive in Fontana as in some other cities. About a dozen big trees were knocked down by the winds in Fontana, according to Public Works Manager Dan West.

However, he added that even though one tree limb fell on a roof of a house in Fontana, no major property damage was reported in the city. But in other areas, strong sustained winds with gusts of up to 86 mph caused significant damage to trees, utility poles and personal property, according to the **San Bernardino County Fire** Department. Upland was particularly impacted, according to Public Information Officer Mike McClintock.

During the Jan. 20-21 wind event, **San Bernardino County Fire** and other local agencies stayed extremely busy, running more than 100 calls locally, including a brush fire, dozens of tree down calls, energized power lines down and other routine emergencies, McClintock said. As the wind subsided, local partners, including the Fire Department, worked to free roadways, remove dangerous trees and aid in the cleanup throughout Upland and community of San Antonio Heights.

The Fire Department deployed Crew 6 and 7, professional all-risk hand crews, to the area to assist. The 14-member crew worked for two days, working on cleanup and removing hazard trees.

https://www.fontanaheraldnews.com/news/recent-winds-caused-damage-in-inland-empire/article_943fd8c0-7e4e-11ec-bfb6-0f89628b2dbf.html

San Bernardino County to hire 200 new employees, build Yucca Valley fire station

By Beau Yarbrough, THE PRESS-ENTERPRISE

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The San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors meet Tuesday, Jan. 25, 2022. (Courtesy of San Bernardino County)

New sheriff's department spending, a new fire station, millions of dollars in COVID-19-related expenses and other items add up to more than \$200 million additional expenses for San Bernardino County, midway through its budget year.

The San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors heard and approved a mid-year budget report Tuesday, Jan. 25. Budget years run from July 1 to June 30, but public agencies routinely update projections during the year, as expenses and revenues change. This year, the county received an additional \$158.98 million in revenue along with an additional \$230.34 million in expenses, forcing it to dip into financial reserves and contingency funds to the tune of \$71.36 million. The county still has more than 20% of its revenues in reserves.

The San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department is purchasing a new helicopter. The department is also hiring 27 more staff members, 20 of whom will be paid for by the cities that hire the department to provide police protection. Among the new hires are three new deputy coroners and two deputy public administrators.

"These are areas that have a lot of new caseload in the last few years," County Chief Financial Officer Matthew Erickson told the board Tuesday. "The coroner issue has been a huge problem," First District Supervisor Paul Cook said. "They've obviously been backed up, so I'm glad you're addressing that."

The probation department will be hiring 10 more employees, half of whom are juvenile justice staffers paid for by state funds.

The fire protection district's most notable expense is a new \$12 million fire station in Yucca Valley, paid for out of state dollars. The department is also buying five new generators, new software and making equipment and vehicle purchases, according to a report to the board. The department is hiring 82 more staff members, including 60 more firefighter trainees and 20 extra wildland hand crew workers to help with fire suppression.

The trainees are considered a cost-neutral hire, Erickson said, "because eventually they'd be moving into vacant positions" already in the budget. Citing the sheriff's academy's history of training new deputies that get poached by other police agencies, board Chairperson Curt Hagman asked the county look into ways to prevent the same thing from happening with newly trained firefighters.

"I'd love to have a think tank work on how to keep those people in our system, since we're spending money to train them," he said. "Maybe we have a discussion with both unions going forward and both administrations and see what ideas they have."

Arrowhead Regional Medical Center is spending \$5.6 million on capital projects and other medical equipment, including \$4.6 million for a new MRI machine. The hospital is also hiring 180 more staff members, many of whom work in specialty care, imaging or support functions.

The public health department is spending \$6 million on coronavirus-related supplies and hiring an additional 15 employees, including environmental health specialists and health education specialists.

The board voted 5-0 to accept the changes to the budget. Work on next year's budget is scheduled to begin in March. A public budget workshop is set for May 10 and a hearing and adoption of next year's budget is scheduled for June 14.

<https://www.sbsun.com/2022/01/25/san-bernardino-county-to-hire-200-new-employees-build-yucca-valley-fire-station/>