



NEWS



News Headlines 02/28/2023

- San Bernardino County declares emergency over winter storm
- Man found dead inside overturned car underneath the I-15 freeway in Cajon Pass
- San Bernardino County Fire Department rescues several people who were trapped in snow

San Bernardino County declares emergency over winter storm

By Travis Schlepp, KTLA

February 27, 2023



Southern California’s latest batch of wintry weather has led to San Bernardino County officials declaring a state of emergency.

The emergency proclamation was made Monday evening, after many residents in the county’s mountain communities spent the weekend stranded or trapped at their homes due to several feet of snow.

The proclamation also comes as another storm system prepare to land in California, bringing with it even more snowfall in the upper altitudes.

Board of Supervisors Chair Dawn Rowe, whose district includes many of the impacted communities, called the emergency declaration an “important step” in securing state and federal assistance to clear out the snow from mountain highways, residential streets and other critical repairs and infrastructure work.

“Our team of state and local partners will continue working round-the-clock on a coordinated and comprehensive strategy to bring relief and resources to our residents, while also prioritizing the safety of all,” Rowe said.

On Monday, heavy snow stranded hundreds of motorists on highways that travel through San Bernardino County’s higher elevations. Dozens of elementary school children were also stranded at a science camp in Crestline for nearly a week. The California Highway Patrol was eventually able to escort a fleet of buses to evacuate the stranded students.

County officials said crews were working around the clock to clear some of the affected roadways and, although progress was being made in residential areas, there was no estimate for when the highways would be cleared.

Heavy equipment is currently being deployed to help remove the snow, but there are limitations into how much can be moved.

Several local law enforcement agencies have had to divert resources to conduct search and rescue for people getting stranded while making non-essential trips.

“Caltrans didn’t have enough people, as well as equipment, to keep up with the storm, so they got backed up,” said Officer Ryan Mohatt of the CHP.

The **San Bernardino County Fire** Department is currently using “specialized snow vehicles” to reach patients in critical need of medical attention.

Local authorities are urging residents to avoid traveling on these dangerous roads to allow for critical work to be completed. Once the major arterial roadways are cleared, the focus will then turn to the secondary streets.

However, the amount of snow and ice on the roads could be a moot point for some drivers, as gas stations are reportedly running out of many types of fuel. Grocery stores are also running out of food, as shown in footage of bare shelves at Goodwin & Sons Market in Crestline.

In the meantime, residents from the mountain communities who find themselves stuck away from their homes can take advantage of an American Red Cross center at East Valley High School in Redlands at 31000 E. Colton Ave. The shelter will be staffed from 8 a.m. to 7 p.m.

A call center will also be in operation Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. That number is 909-387-3911.

The county also has a Frequently Asked Questions section regarding the storm and cleanup efforts on its website.

<https://ktla.com/news/california/san-bernardino-county-declares-emergency-following-winter-storm/>

Man found dead inside overturned car underneath the I-15 freeway in Cajon Pass

By Staff Writer, Victor Valley News Group

February 27, 2023



(Hugo Valdez, VVNG.com)

CAJON PASS, Calif. (VVNG.com) — A man was found dead inside an overturned vehicle found in a creek underneath the I-15 freeway along the Cajon Pass.

On February 26, 2023, at about 11:30 am, the California Highway Patrol received reports of a white vehicle on its roof in a wash under the NB I-15.

Firefighters from **San Bernardino County Fire** responded and accessed the crash site along old Cajon Blvd also known as Route 66, just north of Swarthout Canyon. Firefighters walked up a dirt access road before hiking down to the vehicle and pronouncing the driver deceased at the scene.

CHP Officers conducted an investigation for several hours and at at about 4:30 pm, they assisted with closing the no. 3 and 4 lanes while a tow truck recovered the vehicle from the top of the freeway.

The site of the crash happened on a portion of the freeway that is actually a bridge suspended by large concrete pillars, and a wash down below containing large boulders.

According to the usda.gov, black ice forms readily on bridges, overpasses, and the road beneath overpasses. This is because the cold air is able to cool both the top and under the bridge or overpass, bringing about faster freezing.

The San Bernardino County Coroner's Office identified the deceased as Richard L. Ruiz, 29, a resident of Hesperia.

Richard's family who knew him better as "Richie" created an online fundraising account to help pay for his memorial expenses.

According to the account, Richie was a loved father, son, brother, nephew, cousin, friend, and coworker who will be truly missed. He leaves behind two young children Noah (6) and Presley (4).

Online donations to help Richie can be made via the following link: [InLovingMemoryOfRichieRuiz](https://www.gofundme.com/c/in-loving-memory-of-richie-ruiz).

Heavy snowfall and freezing temperatures from a series of powerful winter storms caused black ice across many roadways Saturday night into Sunday morning.

The California Highway Patrol – San Bernardino station is investigating the collision and have not released any additional info.

<https://www.vvng.com/man-found-dead-inside-overturned-car-underneath-the-i-15-freeway-in-cajon-pass/>

San Bernardino County Fire Department rescues several people who were trapped in snow

By Staff Writer, Fontana Herald News
February 27, 2023



San Bernardino County firefighters used a Snow Cat, a vehicle designed to move on snow, to help rescue trapped people in the mountains this past week.

Residents of the mountainous areas of San Bernardino County have been trying to recover from the severe snowstorm that caused extreme problems over the past week.

With help from a vehicle specifically designed to move on snow, **San Bernardino County Fire Department** rescued several people who had been trapped in their vehicles on treacherous or impassible roads in below-freezing temperatures.

At Gobblers Knob, a high mountain peak north of Lytle Creek and southeast of Wrightwood, fire crews were requested to help locate and evacuate two adults who became stuck on a remote road.

“The snow was so thick crews had to plow multiple miles to make access to the stranded victims. Thankfully, both parties were non-injured and were safely rescued,” said Battalion Chief Mike McClintock.

In Wrightwood, firefighters from Station 14 used a Snow Cat to make two rescues.

“The new Snow Cat was vital for our crews to safely access incidents and allowed for safe evacuation in both incidents,” McClintock said.

San Bernardino County personnel also were requested by Los Angeles County to assist with a search and rescue operation near Jackson Lake.

The Snow Cat responded to help locate and evacuate three adults and a dog after their vehicle became stuck in a ditch. Firefighters traveled multiple miles to the victims and had to cut multiple trees with chainsaws along the route to make it to their destination, McClintock said.

“Once arriving, firefighter-paramedics warmed and assessed the victims, and thankfully all parties were cold but uninjured,” McClintock said.

He said the Snow Cat has played an important role this winter. The 2021 PistenBully is fitted with a plow and diesel engine and seats 8-10 people.

----- SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY has now declared a local emergency after residents of the mountain communities found themselves trapped at home or unable to reach home due to the recent massive snowstorms.

The Sheriff's Department is urging area residents to not go to the mountain regions due to safety and other concerns.

The mountains received several feet of snow over the past several days, impacting the day-to-day operations throughout the mountain communities, the Sheriff's Department said in a news release.

"Caltrans and the San Bernardino County Roads Department have been working day and night to create single-lane pathways along the major roadways, enabling first responders to have access to those in need. However, due to the volume of snow remaining on the roadways additional work is needed before they will be safe for regular traffic," the Sheriff's Department said.

Some areas have experienced power outages and Southern California Edison is working to restore power for these customers. Weather reports indicate the possibility of several more feet of additional snow over the next few days.

"At this time, we are asking non-residents and residents not currently on the mountain to avoid the area and allow road crews, first responders, and resupply efforts priority access to the limited number of roads that have been cleared," the news release said. "Gas stations and grocery stores have reached critically low levels and cannot support any additional consumers at this time.

"Additionally, the Sheriff's Department and other first responders have had to divert resources from our current efforts to assist with several search and rescue calls for individuals engaged in non-essential travel activities across our mountain region. We ask that people respect the travel restrictions and road closures as we work with our partners to open access."

For information about San Bernardino Mountain area road conditions/closures, refer to Caltrans District 8, www.caltrans8.info / @Caltrans8

https://www.fontanaheraldnews.com/news/san-bernardino-county-fire-department-rescues-several-people-who-were-trapped-in-snow/article_5592d798-b6de-11ed-b9f6-8fc73f159fc2.html