



NEWS



News Headlines 05/12-15/2023

- House Fire Spreads to Nearby House in Twentynine Palms, No Injuries
- Pasadena Fire Department begins annual push to clear fire-fueling brush
- Eastern Pacific Hurricane Season Begins Monday – Here's How It Impacts The US

House Fire Spreads to Nearby House in Twentynine Palms, No Injuries

By Staff Writer, z107.7 News

May 15, 2023



A fire in a Twentynine Palms home spread to a nearby home on Saturday night (May 13,) and both homes suffered from major damage.

At approximately 9 p.m., San Bernardino County fire responded to a report of a structure fire in the 5900 block of Morongo Rd in Twentynine Palms. Upon arrival, crews discovered that the well involved fire at a single family house had spread to an adjacent home.

County fire crews, with assistance from Combat Center Fire, attacked both fires simultaneously. The fire from the first house was too intense to attack from the inside, so crews knocked most of it down from the outside. Crews were able to enter the second home, but the damage was major and most of the furnishings were destroyed by the time they arrived. The fires were under control by 10 p.m.

Both houses were lived in occupancies, but searches by fire crews found no one inside, and there was no loss-of life or injuries to either residents or fire personnel.

The cause of the fire is currently under investigation by **San Bernardino County Fire**.

<https://z1077fm.com/house-fire-spreads-to-nearby-house-in-twentynine-palms-no-injuries/>

Pasadena Fire Department begins annual push to clear fire-fueling brush

By Staff Writer, Pasadena Star-News

May 12, 2023



Pasadena Fire Chief Chad Augustin, right, gave an overview of the best defense against disastrous fires and the homeowners did a walk through home inspection with Deputy Chief, Anthony Jones, to illustrate their concerns this fire season on Friday, May 12, 2023 at the home of Bruce and Sue Porter in the hills surrounding Eaton Canyon Natural Area and Nature Center.

The Pasadena Fire Department is kicking off its annual effort to get residents to clear hazardous brush around properties, with hopes of discouraging major property damage during a major wildfire.

Residents in designated hazardous vegetation zones have received a letter and brochure from the Pasadena fire marshal outlining mandated requirements to comply.

And as the department gets the word out, Fire Chief Chad Augustin urged such clearance on Friday, May 12, while walking through a home inspection in the Eaton Canyon area.

Over the next few months, the department will inspect about 4,000 residences within the city's hazardous brush zones, Augustin said.

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[Hazardous brush areas](#) are [identified](#) by Cal Fire through a Fire Hazard Severity Map. These zones are developed based on fuels, topography, dwelling density, weather, building materials and brush history.

The city's ordinance is designed to minimize fire danger by controlling the density and location of flammable vegetation.

"Our goal is all about prevention and education," Augustin said, noting that fees would be waved within 30 days if the violation is resolved.

Among [rules in the ordinance are requirements to:](#)

- Remove all dead trees and keep grasses and weeds mowed within 100 feet of any building (including those on adjacent property), and within 10 feet of any roadway used for vehicular travel. This does not apply to ornamental shrubbery, trees or cultivated ground cover. In extremely hazardous areas, clearance up to 200 feet from a structure and 50 feet from a fence or roadway may be required by the Fire Department.
- Grasses and other vegetation located more than 30 feet from any building and less than 18 inches in height may be maintained where necessary to stabilize soil and prevent erosion. Large trees and shrubs in that area should be 18 feet apart.
- Remove leafy foliage, dead wood, combustible groundcover, twigs or branches within three (3) feet of the ground from mature trees located within 100 feet of any building or within 10 feet of any roadway used for vehicular travel.

Augustin said the rules are vital in a region where fire can spread quickly by direct flame, radiant heat and flying embers, which can fly up to a mile when pushed by strong winds.

The record-setting snow and rain have left Southern California's vegetation zones flush with moisture, prompting the state's fire chief to predict that wildfires will not break out with regularity this year until the middle of June, about 45 days later than normal.

"What we see right now are nice green hills. In a few months of now, those hills are going to be brown with a lot of light, flashy fuels," Augustin said, adding that he expects a slightly later fire season this year.

The fuels will make for a difficult fire season.

But Cal Fire Director [Joe Tyler said this month during his statewide media tour](#) that now is the time for residents to prepare for the inevitable.

During a recent stop, Tyler was joined by representatives of the **San Bernardino County fire** and sheriff's departments, state Office of Emergency Services and U.S. Forest Service, among other agencies.

Tyler gave California residents a grade of B for their preparedness. He said their efforts will help determine the severity of the 2023 year-round fire "season."

"That is all depending on the proactive steps homeowners take to be able to reduce those light flashy fuels. Some of the grass in some areas of the state is taller than me right now," said Tyler, who lists himself as 5-foot-10 when he's not in his firefighter boots. "Once the grass (dies), that light flashing fuel is going to be an easy target for embers."

- Officials provided these tips for protecting people and property against wildfires:
- Fill a "go bag" that can be placed near your door that contains a flashlight, radio, batteries, medicine, spare shoes, warm clothing, pet food and face masks, among other items that you might need for a couple of days.
- Create a defensible space around your property of at least 100 feet. This includes removing anything that could help flames jump from brush to your home.
- Install landscaping that is resistant to fire.
- Don't park in grass that is sure to be overgrown in many areas following the winter rains.

- Be careful not to cause a spark by mowing fields that have rocks or dragging a tow chain on the pavement behind your car.
- Create and practice an evacuation plan.
- Sign up with your local public safety agencies.
- When you see smoke, monitor social media or your local news media for official information.
- Evacuate when told to do so.

<https://www.pasadenastarnews.com/2023/05/12/pasadena-fire-department-begins-annual-push-to-clear-fire-fueling-brush/>

Eastern Pacific Hurricane Season Begins Monday – Here's How It Impacts The US

By Chris Dolce, Weather
May 12, 2023



In this photo released by the San Bernardino County Fire Department, a fallen tree and other debris blocks a road in Forest Falls after a mudslide in San Bernardino County, California, on Monday, Sept. 12, 2022.

The Eastern Pacific hurricane season officially begins May 15, and while it's often overshadowed by the Atlantic Basin, it can sometimes bring significant impacts to parts of the United States as we saw last year.

Why the Eastern Pacific season starts earlier than the Atlantic:

The Eastern Pacific season's start date is just over two weeks earlier than the official beginning of the Atlantic season. This is due to warmer waters and the fact that wind shear is typically weaker earlier in the season compared to the Atlantic.

But as we've seen in recent years, the Atlantic can also see storms before its official start date of June 1. [An unnamed subtropical storm](#) even formed in January of this year.

This year's Eastern Pacific names list starts with Adrian

This year's list is the same one used in 2017. Lists are repeated every six years unless a storm name is retired because of the severity of its impacts.

An average of 15 named storms form in the Eastern Pacific each season, [based on the 1991-2020 average](#). That number of storms this year would get the basin to the name Otis.

How The US Is Impacted

Many Eastern Pacific tropical storms and hurricanes move away from land and are only a concern to shipping interests. But sometimes, the weather pattern can allow these systems to affect the southwestern U.S. and Hawaii.

Last year's former Hurricane Kay was a fresh reminder of Southwest U.S. impacts

[Kay tracked northward near Mexico's Baja California Peninsula](#) while weakening from a hurricane to a tropical storm and then a remnant low in September 2022.

Even though Kay didn't reach the U.S. as an intact tropical cyclone, its moisture still triggered flooding in parts of Southern California and neighboring Arizona. Here are a few examples of impacts the region experienced, [according to the National Hurricane Center report](#):

-Debris flows caused by heavy rain falling on wildfire burn scars damaged or destroyed 30 homes and contributed to one death in San Bernardino County, California.

-More than 50 people had to be rescued because of a mudslide near Lake Hughes, California.

-Roads were damaged or washed out in Death Valley National Park, leaving about 40 vehicles stranded.

-Flash flooding in Getz, Arizona, required multiple water rescues and inundated several homes.

Arizona is the Southwest state with the most tropical storm encounters

According to the National Weather Service in Tucson, [eight tropical storms or depressions](#) have remained intact and impacted Arizona directly since 1965. Five of these were tropical storms with sustained winds of 39 mph or higher.

Moisture from the remnants of storms is more often a concern

The remnants of numerous other storms have affected Arizona and other parts of the Southwest over the years. That's because even though storms often fall apart well to the south, the leftover moisture and energy can still reach the region.

Flooding rainfall is typically the biggest concern from these surges of moisture, as we saw with Kay last year.

Eastern Pacific storms can sometimes flirt with a Hawaii encounter. Hurricane Iniki in 1992 might be the most serious example of the impacts Eastern Pacific tropical cyclones can generate in Hawaii. Iniki is the costliest hurricane in Hawaii's history; It originated in the Eastern Pacific on Sept. 5 and moved into the Central Pacific, where it became a powerful hurricane.

The island of Kauai was hit especially hard by damaging winds when Iniki made landfall there as a Category 4. Many structures were wiped out by storm surge flooding and large, battering waves along the southern coast.

Hurricane Douglas was the last close call for the Hawaiian Islands in July 2020.

Unlike a number of other hurricanes that originated in the Eastern Pacific, Douglas didn't lose its intensity that quickly as it tracked into the Central Pacific toward Hawaii.

Luckily, the southern eyewall of Douglas passed just north of Maui, Oahu and Kauai, sparing those islands from seeing the worst of the hurricane's strong winds and heavy rainfall.

Hurricane Lane's Hawaii approach in 2018 was another close shave for the nation's 50th state. Lane developed over the Eastern Pacific in August 2018 and crossed into the Central Pacific Ocean.

After intensifying to a Category 5 hurricane southeast of Hawaii, Lane weakened significantly as it passed more than 100 miles south of the island chain. Parts of the islands were swamped by flooding.

California has seen rare landfalls. Southern California is the only portion of the Pacific coastline in the Lower 48 that could see a tropical storm or hurricane landfall from the Eastern Pacific. Although such an event is extremely rare, history shows it can happen.

On Oct. 2, 1858, the only known hurricane to hit Southern California slammed into San Diego. Sustained hurricane-force winds resulted in extensive property damage.

Only one tropical storm has made landfall in Southern California since then. In September 1939, a tropical storm with 50-mph winds hit Long Beach. Flooding caused moderate crop and structural damage, according to the NWS in Oxnard. High winds surprised the shipping industry in the area, killing 45 people.

Cool ocean temperatures in the path of the tropical systems trying to reach the Pacific coast are the primary reason landfalls are so rare in Southern California. Coastal waters get dramatically cooler as you move northward along the coast from Mexico.

As in 1858, any hurricane would have to be moving fast enough, over waters just warm enough, to maintain its intensity on the way northward to have a California landfall.

<https://weather.com/safety/hurricane/news/2023-05-11-eastern-pacific-hurricane-season-united-states-impacts>