



SANTA BARBARA COUNTY FIRE DEPARTMENT

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NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

- Elevated Fire Danger / Increased Staffing -

SANTA BARBARA, Ca. December 13, 2013 – According to the National Weather Service, a high pressure weather system will build over the Great Basin today. This weather system will set the stage for another round of dry Santa Ana winds tonight through Sunday. Wind speeds will not be as strong as the last event on December 9th and 10th; however, temperatures will be 15-20 degrees warmer and fuels slightly drier than earlier in the week. A moderate to high confidence on an elevated fire threat exists with low relative humidities, increased winds, and above normal temperatures for this weekend. Low humidity and warm temperatures will continue Sunday through Tuesday.

Increased Staffing Duration: From 5pm December 13 to 8am December 16

In response to the predicted elevated fire danger, the Santa Barbara County Fire Department will increase its staffing level. The increased staffing level will include the following additional resources: three engines, one dozer, one battalion chief and one dispatch captain. These additional resources will be available to respond throughout the Santa Barbara County Operational Area. This increased staffing pattern will be reevaluated daily.

During this time of elevated fire danger, citizens should take appropriate precautions. These precautions include, but are not limited to the following:

- Report any sign of smoke immediately to your local fire department by calling 911 (if your call 911 from your cell phone, you must know your location).
- Use extreme caution when operating spark or flame producing machinery in hazardous grass or brush areas.
- Have an evacuation plan in place and identify two exit routes from your neighborhood. If you are asked to evacuate by fire or law enforcement officials, do so immediately.
- Report any suspicious persons or vehicles to law enforcement.

Shorter, cooler days provide less of a burning period should a fire start. Live fuel moisture levels remain at critical levels however are slowly starting to rise. Even as live fuel moistures begin to rise, wind can overcome elevated fuel moistures and create rapid rates of fire spread.

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