

Wildfire north of LA rapidly spreads as hot, gusty winds continue

June 17 2024, by Joseph Serna, Los Angeles Times



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Firefighters are battling a series of wildfires that broke out across California over the weekend amid early summer heat and dry, gusty winds.

The National Weather Service warned that winds that carry "the potential for rapid fire spread" were forecast across large swaths of the state Monday morning, including the Antelope Valley and foothills, Santa Barbara County and Northern California's wine country and Sacramento Valley.

The largest fire in the state on Monday morning was the Post fire in Los Angeles County, which has burned 14,625 acres and was 8% contained, Cal Fire said. More than 1,100 firefighters and a half dozen helicopters are battling the flames.

The fire, along the 5 Freeway near Gorman, triggered evacuations for 1,200 people in the Hungry Valley Park and Pyramid Lake areas.

The fire burned an auto repair shop, damaged another building and threatened other structures to the south and west of the I-5, authorities said. Los Angeles County Fire Department crews rapidly responded, making aerial assaults with air tankers and water-dropping helicopters.

The Ventura County Fire Department and U.S. Forest Service were aiding in the effort. At one point Sunday, about 400 firefighters and 70 engines were at the scene, according to Cal Fire.

At least 13 fires have started since Saturday in California and burned more than 20,000 acres, according to the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection website.

At the same time, areas from Redding down to Modesto are under a Red Flag warning until Tuesday morning due to a combination of summer heat, gusty winds, low humidity and unusually warm overnight temperatures.

In the North Bay hills, areas hit by some of the state's worst wildfires in

recent memory, including Mt. St. Helena and Lake Berryessa, are under red flag warnings until Monday night.

In Sonoma County, the Point Fire has burned more than 1,000 acres and several structures south of Lake Sonoma. It was 15% contained on Monday morning, according to the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection. The fire started Sunday afternoon.

A smaller fire in Lancaster, meanwhile, burned 300 acres and several outbuildings after starting before 4 p.m. Sunday.

In Hesperia, more than 1,100 acres burned, prompting area road closures and an evacuation warning for the nearby Arrowhead Equestrian Estates. The fire began Saturday before 7 p.m.

On Monday morning, a vegetation [fire](#) broke out in the Hollywood Hills just south of Runyon Canyon, the Los Angeles Fire Department said. Not far from homes and hidden in a difficult-to-access area, it took firefighters and a water-dropping helicopter more than an hour to put out the flames, despite it burning an area only about 400 square feet, the department said in an alert.

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