

Smokey's Extra



Angelus Oaks Edition

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A View From The Top

By Lenore Will

Code Enforcement

The County Code Enforcement group is once again making rounds in the mountain areas. One of the units is checking on the hazard abatement and fire clearances around structures. These are most necessary checks and will help all of us in the long run when we are trying to do our utmost to reduce the burnable fuels in our area.

Another branch of Code Enforcement deals with common neighborhood blight and reduction of debris and trash, as well as hazardous materials that are stored in excess.

Most people don't consider car batteries or paint to be hazardous but in the eyes of many jurisdictional agencies, these things can be most very dangerous, especially if stored improperly.

If you have items that are questionable or have neighbors who are storing things improperly, you may call San Bernardino County Code Enforcement at 909-387-5031 or 800-722-3181. The cleaner your property, the safer it will be in case of wildfire, for you, for your neighbors and for any agencies coming in to assist with the firefighting efforts.



The (Lucky) Lizard Fire!

So we had this vehicle fire see. It was a large, dual-wheeled pick-up pulling a very nice fifth wheel. When I got there, folks were emptying their fire extinguishers on it. I put my fifty gallons of water on it and then County Fire Engine 15 arrived and finished it off. While cleaning up the mess, Captain Mike Russ noticed a strange looking creature running out from under the burnt truck. It was an alligator lizard and he had an empty acorn stuck on his head! We managed to collect him up and an hour or so later, managed to get the acorn off. He seemed a bit groggy but recovered and we released him to a safer area. All our fires are named, so of course, we named this one the Lizard Fire.



Dumped Animals

Foreclosures and rising living costs have created a sad animal abandonment problem in Southern California. Some of the stories of late have been heart-breaking. Several dogs have been seen roaming the forest from the lower boundary to Onyx Summit. One dog was hit and killed below Angelus Oaks on Highway 38. Besides being very cruel, it is against the law to abandon an animal. If you witness such a thing, please try and get a description or license plate and report it to the Humane Society, Animal Control, or County sheriff.

The Earth Moves AGAIN

Just when you start to forget all about being prepared for an earthquake; you've used those precious extra batteries on grandkids toys; or you have otherwise robbed the emergency supply barrel or box of some of the stored goodies.....the shaking starts!

Most people in the valley areas got a pretty good shaking a few weeks ago but many of the mountain folks didn't feel a thing.

Having said that, I really must take time to nag everyone into checking their emergency supplies once again. We get complacent and forget that we really need to have a storage area containing certain items at all times.

The Greyback Disaster Preparedness Group was developed shortly after the earthquake of 1992 (Big Bear/Landers) and supports the area of Angelus Oaks, Seven Oaks, and Barton Flats. Rural living sometimes has its drawbacks when the road is closed by landslide or flooding. The 5000 and 6000 foot levels are prone to falling rocks most any day, not to mention during temblors or storms.

The Greyback group has a wonderful master plan, full storage bins, a Block Captain check system, and fund raising events through the year. They try and inform and educate everyone in the area who may be affected by a major event. Anyone in town may be isolated and anyone down the hill may be denied entry possibly for 72 hours or more. Therefore, each and every resident must have a plan of some kind.

Check your supply containers, meet with your family and practice your plan, set up an "out of the area" phone contact for everyone since local calling maybe be impossible. Don't forget the medicines, the elders in the family and of course your pets. Get with your neighbors and see if you can assist each other in any way. It really isn't "if" we have another disaster, it is "when".....be ready!

P.S. The Greyback Disaster Preparedness Group will be sponsoring their 15th annual luncheon on August 30th at the Angelus Oaks Fire Station beginning at 11:30 a.m. Good food! Good friends! Great information! Hope to see you there!

Mountain Lion Caution!

Whether looking for water, fresh kill or simply more territory, the mountain lions of our area have been more apparent lately. There have been many sightings around the Angelus Oaks and Barton Flats areas recently. Be aware and walk with someone, especially in the early morning and evenings.

About Chipping

Several wonderful and FREE services have been provided to many of the mountain areas in the last couple of years. These services include: free dumpsters, curb-side chipping of cut trees and brush, volunteer hazard reduction of dangerous fuels and other programs from several agencies.

With the fires in Northern California, many of the chipper crews were not able to get to our local area and much of the brush sat curbside for a few weeks. Please remember that YOUR property is YOUR responsibility and any FREE services that are disrupted or delayed due to emergencies are just routine 'bumps in the road'. I have heard grumbling about the piles of brush lying around and we have even had complaints about some of the leaves falling from the brush and making a mess. Oh, PLEASE! If you are not taken care of in a timely manner, please feel free to transport your leaves, needles, and trimmings to the local landfill. Some things just can't be helped especially during fire season which is right over our shoulder. Hopefully we can get all the brush, chips and trash cleaned up before our first local fire.

Speaking of chips, please consider keeping your chips on your property for dust abatement, erosion control, etc. A depth of 2 or 3 inches will hold some of the moisture in and not be considered a fire hazard. And, don't forget to thank your local Fire Safe Council and others who have stepped forward to make things happen!

Firewood

Firewood is still available in the Barton Flats area with a permit from Mill Creek Ranger Station or the Discovery Center in Big Bear. The permits are only \$10.00 per cord (maximum of two cords) and are available Thursday through Monday (Mill Creek's hours).

Smokey Says...

Mustard weed, which has become an invasive visitor to our higher elevations, doesn't dry out until late in the fall and can be a prime carrier of fire.



For further information, contact...

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