

# Calistoga evacuated, fire death toll at 23



The fires in the Wine Country continue to destroy homes and businesses. Photo/CalFire

**By Ryan Lillis, Molly Sullivan And Marjie Lundstrom, Sacramento Bee**

Wildfires continued to lay siege to huge swaths of Northern California on Wednesday, forcing the evacuations of thousands from iconic Wine Country towns like Calistoga and destroying thousands of homes and businesses in what Gov. Jerry Brown said was one of the worst fire events in state history.

Nearly two dozen huge fires had burned 170,000 acres since Sunday, and firefighters were bracing for heavy wind gusts through Thursday afternoon that they feared could wreak havoc after years of drought.

“We are literally looking at explosive vegetation,” CalFire Director Ken Pimlott said Wednesday, as 8,000 firefighters worked for the third straight day trying to corral fires that have killed at least 23 people and left hundreds missing. “These fires are burning actively during the day and at night,

when you would expect the fire to subside.

**Read the whole story**

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# **Study: Climate change could bring earlier Sierra runoff**

**By Rebecca Ash, UCLA**

California has taken a wild weather ride over the past two years: A historic drought finally came to an end, and the winter of 2016–17 was the wettest winter in decades. Meanwhile, recent studies have projected that climate change will turn up the heat by up to 10 degrees in the Sierra Nevada mountains by the end of the century.

In a study published Oct. 10 in the *Journal of Hydrometeorology*, UCLA climate scientist Alex Hall and colleagues predicted that by the end of the 21st century, the runoff midpoint for snow and rainwater – the time of year by which half of a year’s precipitation leaves the mountains as runoff – could be an average of 50 days earlier than it is now, and 90 days earlier in some locations. The finding could have serious implications for the state’s water infrastructure, which was not designed to handle such a major shift, according to Hall.

Understanding runoff timing would allow California water managers to better plan for the future.

**Read the whole story**

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# Experts: 'Dice was really loaded' for wildfires



Entire neighborhoods in Santa Rosa have been reduced to ash. Photo/CHP

**Publisher's note:** *The smoke blowing into the Lake Tahoe Basin and Truckee on Oct. 11 is from the Wine Country fires.*

**By Stuart Leavenworth, Sacramento Bee**

A cascade of extreme weather events fed Northern California's wildfires that exploded Sunday: Unusually high winds blew flames through unusually dense and dry vegetation, which sprang up following last winter's heavy rains and then were toasted by months of record hot temperatures.

"The dice was really loaded because of the big wet winter," said Park Williams, a California native and a research

scientist at the Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory at Columbia University. "That set up the West with a lot of fuel to burn, and this summer has been exceptional in terms of dryness."

Scientists such as Williams say California is especially prone to wildfires, in part because of the state's dense population, which makes it easy for sparks to be ignited and turn into raging fire storms. But this week's blazes also show the fingerprints of climate change, he said, a harbinger of what the West should expect in the years to come.

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## **2 fires burning in Eldorado National Forest**

A fire started Tuesday afternoon two miles west of Ice House and White Meadows roads in the Eldorado National Forest.

The Ice Fire is separate from the Table Fire that has been burning for more than a month.

The newer fire has burned 25 acres. While voluntary evacuations were initially called for, they have since been lifted.

The cause is under investigation.

Forward progress has been stopped on the 40-acre Table Fire. Lightning ignited this remote fire that is three miles northeast of Ice House Reservoir. The U.S. Forest Service had let it burn as a controlled fire, but then winds this week whipped it up. Smoke from it has been visible in the Lake Tahoe Basin.

# Emergency alert system failed many in Sonoma, Napa



Charred debris near Highway 128 and Bennet Lane in Calistoga. Photo/Calfire

**By Paige St. John, Dakota Smith, Hailey Branson-Potts and Joy Resmovits, Los Angeles Times**

The distress calls crackled over the Napa County sheriff's dispatch radio in a rapid staccato late Sunday as flames sped toward residents on Atlas Peak Road.

"Parents trapped in garage," an officer called in to the central dispatcher. Then: "The fire is moving quickly through here."

Two minutes later, the dispatcher sent someone to another house on the same road: "Two people trapped."

The dispatch calls, which began pouring out after 10:30pm, less than an hour after the fire was first reported, provide a

harrowing narrative of the frantic, confusing efforts to rescue people from the Atlas Peak fire, which by Tuesday had burned 25,000 acres and destroyed more than 100 structures.

**Read the whole story**

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## **First meeting of Douglas sewer board set**

Douglas County Lake Tahoe Sewer Authority will meet for the first time on Oct. 11.

One of the board's first tasks will be to appoint a fifth member, who is supposed to represent the Stateline business community.

The four sitting members are county Commissioner Nancy McDermid, Round Hill General Improvement District trustee Wesley Rice, Kingsbury GID trustee Darya Vogt and Tahoe-Douglas Sewer District trustee Grant Thompson.

This board was created by the Nevada Legislature after the Douglas County Sewer District No. 1 was forced to disband because the former board violated the Nevada election and open meeting laws.

*– Lake Tahoe News staff report*

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# Vegas shooting could create push for Nev. gun legislation

By Sean Whaley and Ben Botkin, Las Vegas Review-Journal

Just as the Sandy Hook school shooting prompted efforts to regulate gun policies in Nevada in 2013, the mass shooting in Las Vegas on Oct. 1 will likely result in a new push when the Legislature convenes in 2019.

As one lawmaker described it, the gun lobby will be on steroids in the 2019 session.

But even in the wake of the worst mass shooting in modern U.S. history, it remains to be seen whether the Oct. 1 attack that killed 58 people and wounded 489 more prompts changes in Nevada law.

**Read the whole story**

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## Free bus rides this year for LTCC students

Free transit is being provided to Lake Tahoe Community College students this year in a pilot program with Tahoe Transportation District.

The college is providing \$36,000 to “mitigate administrative, operational, and capital costs associated with this pilot program.”

LTCC has heard from students that one of the barriers to

attending is being able to get to the South Lake Tahoe campus. The cost and timing of buses have been issues.

For the 2017-18 academic year LTCC students can show their college ID card and ride for free.

The deal should be cemented this week at the TTD board meeting on Oct. 13.

The trial period will end June 30.

If students want to ride to commuter routes outside the Tahoe basin, they will be subject to the normal fare.

*– Lake Tahoe News staff report*

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## Accident snarls traffic near Cave Rock



Emergency crews assess the damage Oct. 10 of a vehicle accident near Cave Rock. Photo/Natalie Yanish



Traffic was backed up near Cave Rock on Tuesday because of a vehicle collision.

A truck and Tahoe Transportation District bus were in an accident on Highway 50 the morning of Oct. 10.

According to the Nevada Highway Patrol, two people received non-life threatening injuries.

TTD did not respond to an inquiry. It's not known how much damage either vehicle sustained or how the collision occurred.

*– Lake Tahoe News staff report*

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## **Incline woman dies in vehicle accident**

An Incline Village woman died from injuries she sustained in an Oct. 7 car accident in Reno.

Karin Schulze Brown, 76, was going south in the left lane of South Virginia Street when a vehicle pulled in front of her. Brown braked, but couldn't avoid hitting the Jeep Liberty, according to the Nevada Highway Patrol.

She was taken to the hospital where she latter died.

The name of the other driver has not been released. Impairment is not suspected to be a contributing factor in this crash.

Anyone with information regarding this collision, is asked to contact Trooper Karen Garretson 775.687.9618.

*– Lake Tahoe News staff report*