



NEWS RELEASE

15-110

Date: Thursday, July 2, 2015**District:** 8 - San Bernardino**Contact:** Terri Kasinga**Phone:** (951) 232-4268 (cell)**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

AGENCIES UNITE TO INFORM MOTORISTS OF TRAFFIC PLAN AND FIRE SAFETY FOR JULY 4TH WEEKEND

SAN BERNARDINO – The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) is supporting a multi-agency effort to inform and educate San Bernardino visitors and residents about traffic and fire safety for the 4th of July holiday. The California Highway Patrol (CHP), San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department, United States Forest Service (USFS), San Bernardino County Fire, Cal-Fire, Running Springs Fire Department, City of Big Bear Lake, Arrowhead Lake Association (ALA), Crestline Chamber of Commerce, and other fire agencies across the mountain top are working together to provide a safe and enjoyable weekend for the public and residents in the San Bernardino Mountains.

Traffic volumes are expected to rise beginning today through Sunday evening, July 5th on State Routes 18, 330, and 38 to mountain resort destinations. Although fireworks are prohibited in all mountain areas, the City of Big Bear Lake, Arrowhead Lake Association, and Crestline Chamber of Commerce are providing firework entertainment at their lake locations on Friday and Saturday evenings.

The City of Big Bear Lake is hosting its 6th Annual Fireworks Spectacular-Over-The-Lake on Saturday, July 4th. This show draws thousands of visitors every year and even greater crowds are expected this year with extreme heat in lower elevations. In conjunction with the Sheriff's Department, Fire Department, CHP and Caltrans, the City has devised a plan (see attachment) to better accommodate increased traffic during the peak 9:00 p.m. to 12:00 a.m. (midnight) period on the 4th of July. The developed plan will greatly relieve traffic congestion not only throughout the City, but throughout the Big Bear Valley and enhance the experience of the celebration.

In this new plan, motorists will be directed to generally make all right turns within the city limits of Big Bear Lake with aide from Sheriff Deputies and CHP Officers who will control all major intersections. Visitors to Big Bear are urged to use State Routes 18, 330, or 38 via Interstates 10 and 210, and State Route 18 through Lucerne Valley to Victorville. In addition, motorists will be able to get to every location throughout the Big Bear Valley for accommodations.

CHP Lieutenant John Tyler states, "The safety of the motoring public and people attending the event is our first priority. Working together with the City of Big Bear Lake and the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department with the new traffic control plan for the community firework show will provide a better approach to traffic and public safety issues."

As a recent reminder, the *Lake Fire* wild land fire shows the devastation that just one spark can bring to mountain wilderness, campgrounds, and communities that lie nearby. San Bernardino County Fire Marshal Mike Horton stated, "We all need to understand fireworks are dangerous and should not be misused or underestimate the destruction they can cause." He continued, "Fireworks that are not in direct control of the operator or that explode, shoot into the air or move along the ground and are not approved by the California State Fire Marshal are deemed dangerous and are illegal anywhere in the state of California."

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Mountain resorts are a great destination to spend holidays. But just following a few simple tips can make your weekend more enjoyable and provide a safe atmosphere for all. These agencies have banded together to alert the public to plan ahead, expect some traffic delays throughout the weekend, have patience, and follow all regulations and laws while visiting the San Bernardino Mountains.

Please also remember to dispose of your litter in a trash receptacle and be considerate of private property.

For traffic conditions go to the Caltrans Quick Map at <http://quickmap.dot.ca.gov/>. Fire restriction information can be found at http://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/sbnf/home/?cid=fsbdev7_007776.

Don't drink and drive – it may cost you more than you think – perhaps a life!

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