

Storm Data and Unusual Weather Phenomena - August 2020

Location	Date/Time	Deaths & Injuries	Property & Crop Dmg	Event Type and Details
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CALIFORNIA, South Central

(CA-Z199) KERN COUNTY DESERT

	08/02/20 20:50 PST	0	High Wind (MAX 55 kt)
	08/02/20 23:40 PST	0	

A strong onshore pressure gradient developed during the afternoon of August 2 and produced strong wind gusts in the Kern County Deserts as well as in the Tehachapi area with several stations reporting gusts exceeding 50 mph from the evening of August 2 until the early morning hours of August 3 when pressure gradients relaxed.

(CA-Z195) LAKE ISABELLA

	08/03/20 14:30 PST	0	Wildfire
	08/17/20 17:00 PST	0	

The Stagecoach fire began 8/3/2020, 9 miles south of Lake Isabella near the town of Havilah. The cause was under investigation. The fire grew rapidly the first 3 days, then growth slowed and it reached 7.760 acres. No growth was seen after 8/9. The fire destroyed 23 habitable structures and 7 outbuildings and damaged 2 other structures. A firefighter from the Big Pine Volunteer Fire Department, working in a support role at the incident command post, suffered an acute medical emergency and died on August 11. The fire fully was contained on 8/17/2020. The cost of containment was \$13.9 million.

(CA-Z179) WEST SIDE HILLS, (CA-Z180) SAN JOAQUIN CONFLUENCE, (CA-Z181) MERCED AND MADERA, (CA-Z182) WESTERN SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY, (CA-Z183) FOGGY BOTTOM, (CA-Z184) FRESNO, (CA-Z185) TULARE COUNTY, (CA-Z186) SOUTHERN KINGS COUNTY, (CA-Z187) WESTERN SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY IN KERN COUNTY, (CA-Z188) EASTERN SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY IN KERN COUNTY, (CA-Z189) BAKERSFIELD, (CA-Z190) CENTRAL SIERRA FOOTHILLS, (CA-Z191) SOUTHERN SIERRA FOOTHILLS, (CA-Z198) INDIAN WELLS VALLEY, (CA-Z199) KERN COUNTY DESERT

	08/14/20 10:00 PST	6M	Excessive Heat
	08/20/20 20:00 PST	0	

A large upper high pressure center over the Desert Southwest region built northward and westward on August 14 and maintained its grip over central California for nearly a week resulting in oppressive heat over the area for several days. An Excessive Heat Warning was posted for the San Joaquin Valley and Sierra Foothills for five days and for the Kern County Deserts for seven days as high temperatures neared record levels. In fact, several new records were set for both afternoon high temperatures and overnight high minimum temperatures in the San Joaquin Valley on August 16 and 17 with several locations reporting highs above 110 degrees F and lows above 80 degrees F. Several cities and towns in the San Joaquin Valley, Sierra Foothills and Kern County Deserts opened their cooling centers each afternoon during this heat wave. Local emergencies were declared in Fresno, Tulare and Kings Counties due to an unusually high rate of livestock fatalities which took place between August 14 and August 18. The large high finally loosened its grip on the area on August 21 while a northwesterly flow brought slightly cooler air into the area.

(CA-Z179) WEST SIDE HILLS

	08/15/20 13:26 PST	1	Wildfire
	08/25/20 10:00 PST	0	

Direct Fatalities: M520T

The Hills Fire started on 8/15/2020, in the foothills about 9 miles south of Coalinga, CA. It grew to 2,121 acres before being contained on 8/25/2020. The cause was under investigation. The cost of containment was \$3.9 million. No structures were destroyed or damages. Tragically, a helicopter pilot was killed on August 18 when his helicopter crashed while making water drops over the fire.

KERN COUNTY --- 12.7 W FRAZIER PARK [34.85, -119.17], 12.6 W FRAZIER PARK [34.85, -119.17], 12.4 W FRAZIER PARK [34.85, -119.17], 12.5 W FRAZIER PARK [34.85, -119.17]

	08/15/20 16:15 PST	0	Flash Flood (due to Heavy Rain)
	08/15/20 18:15 PST	0	Source: Trained Spotter

A spotter reported flash flooding from a slow moving thunderstorm which made roads impassible in Pine Mountain Club. A nearby Acurite 5 in 1 weather station reported 1.95 inches of rain in one hour.

Moisture which streamed into central California from the remains of Hurricane Elida and instability provided by a hot airmass over the area resulted in the development of afternoon thunderstorms on August 15. One slow moving thunderstorm produced heavy rainfall and flash flooding at Pine Mountain Club which measured 1.95 inches of rainfall in one hour and resulted in the closure of several roads in the area around Pine Mountain Club.

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TUOLUMNE COUNTY --- 4.4 NNE ASPEN VLY [37.88, -119.34], 4.6 NNE ASPEN VLY [37.88, -119.34], 3.8 N ASPEN VLY [37.88, -119.37], 3.5 N ASPEN VLY [37.87, -119.36]

	08/17/20 15:00 PST	0		Flash Flood (due to Heavy Rain)
	08/17/20 16:30 PST	0		Source: Park/Forest Service

Park Service Rangers reported flash flooding on SR 120. A nearby weather station at Tuolumne Meadows reported 0.42 inches of rain and hail between 1500 and 1600 PST.

Tropical moisture streamed northward into central California around a strong area of upper high pressure which brought record heat to much of the area. The moisture was sufficient enough for scattered thunderstorms to break out over the Sierra Nevada during the afternoon of August 17. One slow moving thunderstorm produced flash flooding along SR 120 in Yosemite National Park near Tuolumne Meadows.

(CA-Z194) SEQUOIA KINGS

	08/19/20 06:15 PST	0		Wildfire
	08/31/20 23:59 PST	0		

The lightning caused Castle fire was discovered on the morning of August 19, 2020. It was located 25 miles north of Kernville on the Sequoia National Forest and just a few miles east of the Giant Sequoia National Monument. It grew slowly at first, reaching 2000 acres on August 23rd. The it grew rapidly to 15,000 acres by August 25th and to 35,674 acres by August 31st. The rapid growth resulted in evacuations of several small mountain communities and the closure of Highway 190 and several other mountain roads. On August 29, the Castle fire was combined with the smaller Shot Gun fire to become the SQF Complex. Containment remained at zero as of August 31st and the cost thus far was \$5.6 Million. This fire continued into September.