

Editors: Gov. Pete Wilson will tour the fire camp at Pepperdine University today at 4 p.m. Tour will begin at Pepperdine command post. Wilson will be joined by FEMA Director James Witt and James Lyons, assistant secretary of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Contact: Beth Miller on site, or Jan Dana, Kevin Eckery or Ron Low 916-445-4571.

UPI-Sacramento

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FIREFIGHTERS GAIN UPPER HAND IN BRUSH FIRES

MALIBU, Calif, Nov 3 (Reuter) - Firefighters Wednesday began gaining the upper hand against southern California brush fires that destroyed more than 200 homes and drove movie stars from their Malibu mansions.

The harrowing repeat of last week's \$500 million fires swept over the Santa Monica Mountains Tuesday afternoon and burned through the night, but calmer winds and the efforts of 5,000 firefighters Wednesday helped stop the onslaught.

A number of major blazes burned out of control, but Los Angeles Fire Chief Donald Manning said, "Our belief is that the worst is over, that we can stop it."

Flames had threatened the famed Getty Museum, which is located near the ocean and houses some of the world's greatest masterpieces, but officials said the building escaped damage.

Crews began making headway Wednesday morning when the fierce, 60 mph (95 kph) Santa Ana winds that spread the fires began dying down. Tanker planes and helicopters returned to the skies, dumping tons of fire retardant and water on the worst hot spots.

The famed Malibu Colony -- seaside home to such stars as Johnny Carson, Larry Hagman, Pia Zadora -- was spared major damage after it was evacuated, fire officials said.

In Malibu itself, however, many glamorous refugees had been forced to load up their Jaguars, Porsches and Range Rovers and flee.

Mansions belonging to actors Charles Bronson, Sean Penn and Bruce Willis were damaged or destroyed during the night, according to news reports. Neighbours said George C. Scott and Ali McGraw may also have lost their hillside estates.

Actor Mark Hamill, best known for his role as Luke Skywalker in the "Star Wars" films, returned to find his home still standing while dozens of nearby houses had gone up in flames.

"Oh boy, we are lucky," he said.

More than 7,000 people were driven from their homes in towns and communities stretching from the Santa Monica Mountains to the Pacific coast, where three wind-driven infernos scorched more than 35,000 acres (14,000 hectares).

Tuesday's fires came just a day after fire crews declared victory over 15 blazes that devastated other parts of the area over four days, destroying 730 homes and charring 180,000 acres (73,000 hectares) from Los Angeles to the U.S.-Mexico border.

Authorities blamed the Malibu fire on arson and estimated damages would run into hundreds of millions of dollars. Some of the houses were worth \$10 million each.

James Lee Witt, director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, said President Clinton was so concerned about the latest fire damage that he was considering a visit to the devastated areas.

No deaths were reported, but the injury total climbed to 120 firefighters and a dozen civilians, including two men critically hurt with burns covering most of their bodies.

Other major fires forced several thousand more people to evacuate and destroyed dozens of homes in rural sections of Riverside, San Bernardino and San Diego counties.

A thick cloud of choking gray haze hung over Los Angeles, and plumes of smoke could be seen rising skyward.

Los Angeles International Airport diverted planes around the towering columns of smoke and some delays were reported, a Federal Aviation Administration spokeswoman said.

During the Malibu fire, actor Rod Steiger called a local television station from his home and during a live broadcast was given directions on how to find his way out of danger.

Vince Neil of the rock group Motley Crue rushed to save his gold and platinum records. Luxury cars parked outside expensive homes exploded under the intense heat Tuesday night, and palm trees burned like torches.

Looting was reported at abandoned beachfront homes in Malibu and three men were arrested, but authorities said the problem appeared to be limited to a few isolated incidents.

Mayor Richard Riordan declared a state of emergency in Los Angeles but said it was only a precaution to allow the fire and police departments to coordinate their efforts.

"There is no reason to panic," he said in an address broadcast on live television.

REUTER

FIRES DEVASTATE WEALTHY MALIBU ENCLAVE, STARS FLEE

MALIBU, Calif, Nov 3 (Reuter) - Devastating fires swept across southern California for a second day Wednesday, driving movie stars from their mansions, leveling exclusive neighbourhoods and consuming more than 200 homes.

The harrowing repeat of last week's \$500 million fire disaster this time centred on the celebrity enclave of Malibu, where glamorous refugees loaded up their Jaguars, Porsches and Range Rovers and fled in terror.

Mansions belonging to actors Charles Bronson, Sean Penn and Bruce Willis were damaged or destroyed during the night, according to news reports.

But the famed Malibu Colony – seaside home to such stars as Larry Hagman, Pia Zadora and Burgess Meredith – was largely spared major damage after it was evacuated, fire officials said.

The fires that raced through one of America's best-known hideaways for the rich and famous led to some unusual sights.

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Almost miraculously, no deaths were reported in the latest outbreak. But the injury total climbed to 120 firefighters and a dozen civilians, including two men critically hurt with burns covering most of their bodies.

Authorities blamed the new outbreak on arson and estimated damages would run into hundreds of millions of dollars.

Wary crews began making headway against the fires Tuesday as the fierce 60 mph (95 kph) Santa Ana winds that ignited the area like a tinderbox Tuesday began dying down. Giant tanker planes and helicopters returned to the skies, dumping tons of fire retardant on the worst hot spots.

"Our belief is that the worst is over," said Los Angeles Fire Chief Donald Manning. He said firefighters had stopped flames from advancing in the city limits of Los Angeles from Malibu and other fire-ravaged coastal towns.

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"There is no reason to panic," he said in an address broadcast on live television.

But with fires still burning north and south along the coast, more evacuations were ordered in the ritzy communities of Pacific Palisades and Sunset Mesa. Malibu's scenic Pepperdine University was also ringed by fire.

Daybreak revealed scenes of destruction along the hillsides of Malibu. Many expensive estates lay in smouldering ruins while others were still burning.

Huge plumes of smoke could be seen from more than 50 miles (80 km) away.

The latest outbreaks came a day after fire crews had declared victory over 15 blazes that devastated southern California over four days, destroying 730 homes and charring 180,000 acres (73,000 hectares) from Los Angeles to the Mexican border.

President Clinton, who last week declared disaster areas in five southern California counties, sent James Lee Witt, director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, back to the region to assess the new damage.

Fire officials said Wednesday that at least 200 homes had been consumed by the flames in Malibu and more than 2,000 people had been evacuated.

Los Angeles International Airport diverted planes around the towering columns of smoke and some delays were reported, a Federal Aviation Administration spokeswoman said.

The fires roared back to life Tuesday with three brush fires erupting in the wealthy suburbs of Calabasas and Woodland Hills northwest of Los Angeles and cutting a path of destruction across the Santa Monica to the Pacific Coast, driven by hot, dry desert winds.

Other fires were burning out of control across thousands of acres (hectares) Wednesday in rural communities in San Diego and Riverside counties, where at least 30 homes were reported to have been destroyed.

REUTER

NOV 3,1993 Farmers Insurance updates fire claims, customer support

LOS ANGELES--(BUSINESS WIRE)--Following is a current summary of Farmers Insurance activities supporting its customers affected by the Southern California fires.

LOSSES: To date Farmers has received reported claims of 95 homes completely destroyed, 181 homes with smoke or partial damage and 398 homes with wind damage, with losses to date of \$58 million. These are for properties from throughout Southern California, from Ventura to San Diego counties. Farmers' greatest number of claims are in Laguna Hills, Altadena, Pasadena and, now, Malibu.

COVERAGE: Substantial payments for temporary living expenses and contents coverage and structural damage have been made since Wednesday, Oct. 28.

MALIBU/TOPANGA CANYON/CALABASAS UPDATE:

Farmers agents are in the process of contacting all potentially affected customers. Farmers people are visiting catastrophe-relief centers to issue immediate financial assistance. A mobile catastrophe center has been established in Malibu and Farmers is bringing food and water to firefighters. A meeting with claimants in the area will be held Friday or Saturday in Malibu. Claims figures will be included in Farmers' reports when available.

COMMUNICATIONS AND CUSTOMER CONTACT:

- Customers are being advised to directly contact Farmers agents to process claims;
- An emergency claims number, 800/543-5736, has also been established;
- Local meetings with customers are being held in the affected areas with meetings scheduled in Laguna, Pasadena, Temecula and Malibu;
- Agents in the affected areas are continuing contact with all customers to check on their safety and damage status;

- Catastrophe claims centers have been established in Simi Valley, Santa Ana, and Carlsbad. Satellite claims centers have been established in Orange, Laguna Hills, Moreno Valley, San Bernardino and Pasadena. A catastrophe claims center is also being established in Malibu;**
- Farmers is coordinating assistance efforts with Gov. Wilson, the California Department of Emergency Services and FEMA, and is working now on issues of debris removal.**

**CONTACT: Farmers Insurance Group of Companies, Los Angeles
Jeffrey C. Beyer, 213/930-4149 (work)
818/797-5622 (home)**

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REUTER

US PLANS NATIONAL STRATEGY TO REDUCE DISASTER RISKS

WASHINGTON, Nov 3 (Reuter) - The federal government Wednesday said it will draft a national strategy to reduce the risks linked to natural disasters like the renewed firestorms that are again ravaging southern California.

A senior official at the Federal Emergency Management Agency said use of non-flammable roofing materials and the clearing of dry brush could have prevented at least some of the property damage to over 900 homes in California this week.

"We cannot prevent natural disasters from occurring and sometimes we cannot even predict when they will occur, but we definitely know how to reduce the losses associated with these events," Harvey Ryland, senior policy adviser to FEMA's director James Lee Witt, told a conference on natural hazards.

Witt flew to California again late Tuesday after news that devastating fires had roared back to life, with three brush fires erupting in the wealthy suburbs of Los Angeles.

The fires are the latest in a series of natural disasters to strike the United States, just months after "The Great Flood of 1993" devastated the Midwest this summer and caused upwards of \$10 billion in damage there.

Ryland, standing in for Witt, said FEMA would unveil a comprehensive hazards mitigation strategy by January 1995 after a series of meetings around the country with state and local officials and business and community leaders.

"We must put in place policies that lead to a substantial level of risk reduction. This nation can no longer afford the cost of natural disasters," he said. "We do know how to reduce these losses, but it hasn't been done."

He said many states and communities already had mitigation plans in place, including brush clearance ordinances and strict building and zoning codes, but these were often not enforced or applied only to new development.

FEMA's strategy would seek to address all hazards by relying on incentives, such as tax breaks aimed at encouraging developers and individuals to build safer houses, install hurricane shutters and elevate buildings in flood-prone areas.

"We must sell mitigation as a sound financial decision as well as an effective means of preventing disasters," he said, noting that many non-structural measures such as strapping in place fluorescent lights were very inexpensive but could help dramatically reduce damage and costs if a disaster struck.

Ryland said FEMA's strategy would also increase coordination by federal agencies to promote mitigation, rather than continue the current emphasis on disaster relief.



NEWS RELEASE
FEDERAL/STATE/LOCAL
COORDINATING OFFICE



FEMA-DR-1005- II
November 4, 1993

DISASTER INFORMATION FROM:
Federal/State Coordinating Office
245 S. Los Robles (3rd Floor)
Pasadena CA 91101

Media Contacts: **FEMA:** Terry Hamlin (818) 405-7548
 STATE: Greg Renick (818) 405-7276

MEDIA ADVISORY -- NOT FOR PUBLICATION

PASADENA -- For all media representatives requesting assistance from the FEMA/State PIO staff concerning the current Southern California Firestorm disaster, we ask you to check your files and note the above telephone numbers which may have changed since you last contacted us.

Please do not release the above contact telephone numbers to the public. They are for your use only.

However, residents can call 1-800-525-0321; or 1-800-660-8005 for hearing and speech impaired for general information regarding assistance programs.

In addition, disaster assistance applications can be made by calling the Teleregistration number at 1-800-462-9029; or 1-800-462-7585 for hearing and speech impaired.

We appreciate your cooperation in providing the public with information regarding available disaster assistance programs.

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NEWS RELEASE

FEDERAL/STATE/LOCAL COORDINATING OFFICE



FEMA-DR-1005-CA-PR#12
November 4, 1992

DISASTER INFORMATION FROM:
Federal/State/Local Coordinating Office
245 South Los Robles Avenue
Pasadena, CA 91101

Media Contacts:

FEMA: Terry Hamlin (818) 405-7398
STATE: Greg Renick (818) 405-7299

DISASTER APPLICATION CENTERS TO OPEN IN MALIBU AND CALABASAS

PASADENA -- Two Disaster Application Centers (DACs) will open this Saturday, November 6, to provide disaster assistance to those individuals and business owners affected by recent firestorms. State and Federal officials said that the new DACs will be located at:

Calabasas High School Gymnasium
22855 Mulholland Highway
Calabasas, CA 91302

and at the

Los Angeles County Sheriff's Station
23555 Civic Center Way
Malibu, CA 90265

The new DACs will operate from 9:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. daily.

State Coordinating Officer Richard Andrews and Federal Coordinating Officer Frank Kishton encourage individuals, families, and business owners who have suffered losses due to the recent firestorms to visit a DAC as soon as possible to register for disaster assistance. Representatives from federal, state, and local agencies are available at each DAC to discuss various programs.

Disaster victims with urgent needs--such as for housing, food, clothing, and medical or mental health services--should contact the American Red Cross as soon as possible, or immediately notify a DAC representative upon arrival at a DAC.

-more-

MALIBU/2

Affected individuals and business owners may also register by calling the toll-free teleregistration number:

1-800-462-9029

or **TDD, 1-800-462-7585** (for those with hearing/speech impairments.)

Teleregistration is available from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. daily.

For more information on DAC locations and applications, please call the toll-free hotline:

1-800-525-0321

or **TDD, 1-800-462-7585**

Hours for both hotlines are from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. daily, until further notice.

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NEWS RELEASE

FEDERAL/STATE/LOCAL COORDINATING OFFICE



FEMA-DR-1005-CA-DR#4
October 30, 1993

DISASTER INFORMATION FROM:
Federal/State Coordinating Office
245 South Los Robles Avenue (3rd Floor)
Pasadena, CA 91101

Media Contacts:

FEMA: Alex Newton (818) 405-7398
STATE: Greg Renick (818) 405-7299

FEMA, STATE OPEN FOUR DACs

Four Disaster Application Centers (DACs) opened Saturday to accept applications for federal and state disaster assistance from individuals and business owners who have been affected by the Southern California Firestorms. Each DAC includes representatives from federal, state and local agencies.

The Centers are located as follows:

1. Arcadia Community Regional Park (LA COUNTY)
405 South Santa Anita Avenue
Arcadia (open through 11/5)
(Cross Street - Huntington Drive)
2. Laguna Beach Recreation Center (ORANGE COUNTY)
505 Forest Avenue (Forest & Broadway)
Laguna Beach (open through 11/5)
(Cross Street - Pacific Coast Highway)
3. Sheriff's Training Facility (VENTURA COUNTY)
Camarillo Airport
273 East Pleasant Valley Road
Camarillo (open through 11/2)
4. French Valley Airport (RIVERSIDE COUNTY)
37552 Winchester Road
Murietta/Rancho California area (open through 11/2)
(Between Auld Road and Boreal Road)

Applicants can apply at any DAC, regardless of the city or county in which they live. They may also register and apply via the toll-free telereregistration number 1-800-462-9029. Operators fluent in a number of languages are available to assist callers. Persons with speech or hearing impairments may call the toll-free TDD number 1-800-462-7585.

DACs will remain open until 7 pm today and be open from 9 am to 7 pm daily.

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The Governor's Office of Emergency Services and the Federal Emergency Management Agency encourage media outlets to provide this information to their audiences frequently.

PANIC, FEAR ABATE

► FEMA promises rapid aid.

By MARILYN KALFUS
The Orange County Register

Laguna Beach residents breathed a collective sigh of relief Saturday as feared Santa Ana winds failed to appear and federal officials set up shop to help reconstruct this fire-scarred city.

"Things now are very normal and very abnormal," said Laguna Beach police Capt. William Cavanaugh. "The panic and fear are over, and we're starting to rebuild. But if you look around the disaster area, it still looks like a bomb went off."

By late Saturday, the Ortega fire still was raging out of control, adding every minute to the more than 20,500 acres of Cleveland National Forest land that it has already consumed. But with help from mild winds and more than 2,000 firefighters, the Coto de Caza mansions that were threatened Thursday were out of the fire's reach.

The dreaded dry Santa Anas aren't expected back until late Monday at the earliest, but even then, they should be much weaker than the 60 mph gusts that propelled last Wednesday's inferno.

Federal officials pegged the damage for all 15 Southern California fires at \$500 million. Of that, \$250 million is expected to be covered by private insurance companies, and the other half will be handled through the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

FEMA Director James Lee Witt promised that applicants wouldn't have to wait longer than 10 days to receive checks. In the meantime, the American Red Cross is dispensing vouchers and grants for food, clothing and shelter.

State Insurance Commissioner John Garamendi promised to make sure insurance companies also make payments quickly: "We don't want any foot-dragging. If it doesn't go smoothly,

we'll hammer them."

Workers from county, state and federal offices turned the Laguna Beach Recreation Center into a bustling, paper-shuffling disaster-assistance headquarters. As of 7 p.m. Saturday, 85 homeowners applied for loans and grants from various agencies assembled by FEMA.

The American Red Cross counted 383 homes — 380 in Laguna Beach — as destroyed or seriously damaged in the fires. They said an additional 329 homes had minor damage. The Orange County Fire Department's figure was substantially lower — 320 Laguna Beach homes destroyed — but it is expected to rise.

President Clinton Saturday pledged assistance, saying, "We'll be there for the follow-up." In a conference call from Washington, D.C., with administration officials dispatched to California and with state disaster officials, Clinton said, "If there's anything else we can do, you just pick up the phone and call."

Roger Johnson, head of the General Services Administration, which supplies the federal government, told Clinton that GSA supplies were coming in from around the country, including trailer loads of fire hoses, sleeping bags and tents.

Johnson's Laguna Beach home survived.

On the third floor of the Wells Fargo Bank, Red Cross workers counseled grief-stricken victims, handed out food and hotel vouchers, passed out prescriptions and served doughnuts, sandwiches and juice.

Initially some disaster victims were reluctant to ask for help.

"Their whole attitude is, 'We're not used to taking charity; we're used to giving it,'" said Betty Jacobson, a Red Cross nurse.

"Everybody's in denial," she said. "We had to pull people away from the rubble who were looking for family treasures."

Also Saturday:

► Investigators looking into the Laguna Beach arson logged about 60 telephone tips, ranging from witnesses who overheard people claiming to be the fire setter to a man who alleged the firestorm was part of a conspiracy by President Clinton and the CIA.

A fire investigator discounted reports that the Laguna Beach fire may be linked to the one in Anaheim Hills and Villa Park, saying there was no evidence to support that assertion. However, he said investigators are reviewing all of the fires in Southern California, looking for similarities.

► Police said looters stole about \$60,000 worth of jewelry and tapestries in one of four incidents as residents fled the firestorm. Burglars also broke into two homes and stole safes as people were evacuating.

► Lookie-loos showed up for the weekend. Traffic slowed and there were at least two fender benders as folks from as close as Newport Beach and as far away

as Salt Lake City descended on the town to see the damage for themselves.

► U.S. Forest Service officials confirmed that the Ortega fire was set by the roadside near the lower San Juan campgrounds. Gov. Pete Wilson walked through the Laguna Beach disaster center Saturday afternoon, stopping to chat with fire victims.

Homeowner Bill Halbert challenged the governor, who had criticized residents Thursday for not clearing the brush by their homes.

"I thought it was a little insensitive," Halbert, 53, an advertising executive, said later. "Many of us did that (cleared brush) and we still lost our homes. It was more luck of the draw than the fault of the owner."

Halbert, garbed in gray sweat pants and a white polo shirt, and his wife, Ginny, 52, who wore morale-boosting bright yellow sunflower earrings, spent 2½ hours shuttling from table to table. They applied for a U.S. Small Business Administration loan to

rebuild the one-story, four-bedroom home on Pitcairn Place they had cherished for 22 years.

"It was our retirement," Ginny Halbert said. "That's what we had counted on."

"I just feel like for the first time in my life, I'm really not impatient," she added, while waiting at a table. "We're all in this so I'm going to have to wait. I don't have anything else to do."

Fire victim Eric Rodig said that while Laguna's image is that of expensive homes, "The reality is a lot of people have lived here a long time. They couldn't purchase their homes today."

"To people living outside, there's a sense that they'll just bounce back," said Rodig, 49, who lived on Skyline Drive. "It's a false illusion."

Register staff writers Gina Shaffer, Edward Iwata, Jeordan Lagon and Tony Saavedra contributed to this report.

U.S. Emergency Aid Officials Promise Improved Effort

Assistance: New head says federal agency will be much more helpful to fire victims than it was after last year's riots.

By CARLA RIVERA
TIMES STAFF WRITER

Faulted for its performance after recent major disasters, including the Los Angeles riots, the Federal Emergency Management Agency is ready to mount a major "out-reach" effort to ensure that Southland fire victims receive all the aid they need to rebuild homes and lives, its director promised Friday.

James Lee Witt, who assumed charge of the federal government's beleaguered disaster agency in April, said FEMA has adopted a new, aggressive approach that will speed delivery of vital services to residents hit hard by devastating wildfires.

"We're not the old FEMA anymore," said Witt, a close friend of President Clinton's who formerly headed the Arkansas Office of Emergency Services. "We're an agency that is proactive instead of reactive; we want to make people understand that they are customers."

Witt, speaking at a news conference at the agency's Pasadena field

office, said four disaster application centers will open in various Southland locations today to accommodate fire victims who want to apply for federal and state assistance.

The locations are: Arcadia Community Regional Park, 405 S. Anita Ave., Arcadia; Laguna Beach Recreation Center, 505 Forrest Ave., Laguna Beach; the Sheriff's Training Facility at Camarillo Airport, 273 E. Pleasant Valley Road, and the French Valley Airport, 37562 Winchester Road, Murietta, in Riverside County.

The centers will open at 1 p.m. today. After that, they will be open daily from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. Sundays through Fridays and 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. Saturdays.

In the past, FEMA has been attacked as a cold bureaucracy that put the burden on citizens to prove that they deserved assistance.

Witt vowed Friday that the agency's efforts will extend beyond merely accepting applications.

For example, representatives of private insurance companies will be on hand at the disaster centers to work directly with fire victims, the first time such an experiment has been tried, said Witt.

The agency will also adopt more of a caseworker approach to ensure that victims are advised of all aid programs for which they might qualify, and so that each case will be sure to be followed up, Witt said.

The agency hopes to be able to dispense relief checks within seven to 10 days of application, Witt said. FEMA routinely promises to act within that time frame, but in past disasters victims have waited weeks and sometimes months for relief checks.

Witt said the agency is attempting to right past practices that placed much of the onus of gathering information and filling out dozens of forms on the often dazed and emotionally racked victims of disaster.

"We're going to be doing everything we can do for the [fire victims], just like we did for the Midwest flood victims," he said.

FEMA received relatively good reviews for its performance following this summer's massive Midwestern floods, opening dozens of disaster centers and responding quickly with aid.

It was the first bit of positive news for the agency in years. As recently as January, FEMA's reputation was at such a low ebb that critics were calling for its abolition.

It was subjected to severe criticism for its laggardly response after Hurricane Hugo, which swept through Southeastern states, and the Loma Prieta earthquake, both in 1989, as well as in the wake of Hurricanes Andrew and Iniki, which devastated South Florida and Hawaii last year.

A congressional oversight com-

mittee branded the agency a "turkey farm" of inexperienced and inept political appointees.

Much of the sharpest criticism of FEMA's relief programs has come from Los Angeles, where 50% to 60% of riot victims were denied disaster aid last year. A class-action lawsuit on behalf of thousands of riot victims, filed against the agency in June, alleged that it had illegally denied them relief.

Witt said he could not comment on the matter since it is still pending.

Cynthia Robbins, directing attorney of Urban Recovery Legal Assistance, one of the public-interest law firms that brought the suit, said she hoped the agency's response to fires would renew attention to the plight of riot victims.

"It's heartening," she said. "I hope it means that this new Administration and FEMA are willing to carefully rethink and review their operation in order to increase efficiency and quickly offer assistance that will speed the recovery of a community blighted by disaster."

Several California officials said they are impressed with Witt and believe he can turn FEMA around.

"California has had problems with FEMA in the past, both after Loma Prieta and the riots," said Democratic U.S. Sen. Diane Feinstein. "But it's a new agency and we should give them a chance."

Criticized aid agency sends help Fire victims may see centers today

By Joyce Price
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

9/11

While firefighters battle wild fires raging across Southern California, the Federal Emergency Management Agency has initiated plans to set up offices in the area, probably by today, to help those who have lost homes or businesses.

Victims of Hurricane Hugo in September 1989, the San Francisco earthquake a month later and Hurricane Andrew in South Florida in August 1992 might scoff at the news of FEMA's arrival in another major disaster area.

Many of them remember an agency that was slow to respond to their needs. After Hugo devastated much of the South Carolina low country, victims in rural areas waited as long as 10 days for federal disaster centers to open.

"Andrew in South Florida was a prime example of how government can become a disaster victim itself," said FEMA spokesman Marvin Davis, who said the agency was "caught flat-footed by the massive numbers of people who were left homeless" by that hurricane.

After a barrage of complaints about FEMA's response in that emergency, President Bush named a task force headed by Transportation Secretary Andrew Card Jr. to coordinate disaster relief in South Florida.

Coordinating disaster relief is normally FEMA's job.

And the Pentagon sent at least 20,000 soldiers to help distribute relief in that stricken area.

"We don't expect as severe a need" in the aftermath of the California fires as existed after Andrew, Mr. Davis said yesterday.

"The extent of devastation is less. ... The people affected are different [more affluent], and there's not the massive loss of infrastructure as there was in South Florida," he said.

"There was just no place [for displaced people] to stay in South Florida after Andrew. ... That's why we had to put up those tents."

In fact, "we don't expect the immediate needs to be more than agencies such as the Red Cross and the Salvation Army can furnish," the FEMA spokesman said.

Because of the wealth of many of those whose homes were damaged or destroyed by the California fires, Mr. Davis said private insurers may be the first line of response for many victims.

He said federal assistance will be in the form of low-interest (4 percent) loans of up to \$100,000 for residences and \$500,000 for businesses from the Small Business Administration and outright grants from FEMA of up to \$11,900 for those unable to pay back loans.

Because many of the homes destroyed were worth around \$1 million, FEMA's assistance would be inadequate, he said.

"But if someone's insurance didn't cover the full loss, that person would be eligible for additional assistance" from the federal government, Mr. Davis said.

Those left homeless by the fires may be eligible for disaster housing assistance for up to 18 months, he said, adding that those who suffered losses should call 800/462-9029.

Although no one has assessed the losses from the California brush fires, in part because many are still burning, FEMA Director James Lee Witt said there is enough money in the president's disaster fund to take care of the problems, said David Martin, another FEMA spokesman.

Mr. Martin could not say how long California fire victims will have to wait for assistance. He said it will depend on the nature of their situations.

Firestorms ebb, questions flow

Six of 13 Calif. fires tied to arson

By Haya El Nasser
USA TODAY

3A

LOS ANGELES — The smoke is clearing over southern California as firefighters tame one of the worst firestorms ever. But the mystery of who set six of 13 major wild fires last week remains.

While keeping a wary eye on forecasts for more hot Santa Ana winds that could cause flare-ups, firefighters Sunday began pulling out of six counties where fires left a half-billion-dollar trail of destruction.

Officials hope most of the fires will be completely under control by week's end. Already, the worst fire, in Laguna Beach, is fully contained, and fires that started in Thousand Oaks and Altadena were expected to be contained today.

Arson task forces have stepped up efforts to catch suspects, setting up hot lines and poring over clues.

Investigators have found a device they say was used to start a fire near Chatsworth but would not describe it.

And Los Angeles fire officials said that since Sept. 1, more than 30 letters threatening arson had been sent to law enforcement officials and private citizens.

A local television station reported that several letters — signed "Fedbuster" — were sent by someone seeking revenge on federal agents for seizing his or her assets.

According to the report, one letter said: "They burned me, now I'm going to burn them back. I fight fire with fire. Like my puns, chump? Sizzle. Sizzle. You think the Oakland fire was big? You should see my plans."

Officials say they have no reason yet to believe that the letters are linked to the fires, but the FBI is checking them for fingerprints.

"It's the single hardest crime ... to prove," says Doug Allen, president of the California Conference of Arson Investigators. "You have to prove that nothing else caused this fire."

California Gov. Pete Wilson is offering a \$50,000 reward for information leading to the arrest of arsonists.

"I wish I could get my hands on the bastard," Wilson said, while touring devastated areas. "I'd like to strangle him."

Serial arsonists are typically males, ages 16 to 23 — usually loners who suffer from depression but who get uplifted by the idea of causing a lot of commotion, Allen says. That's why many of them are inspired after a big fire breaks out.

Last week, for example, one of the first major fires was started accidentally when a homeless man lit a campfire to keep warm in Altadena.

Within 24 hours, a dozen oth-

er big fires had broken out — half of them suspected to be arson, including Laguna Beach.

While investigators search for clues, the Federal Emergency Management Agency rushed to help victims.

FEMA opened four emergency assistance centers and promised relief checks within 10 days.

Insurance experts estimate

half the losses are uninsured. Officials already are worrying about additional losses that could come if heavy winter rains trigger floods and mudslides on scorched hills.

"The fire is only the tip of the iceberg," says Angeles National Forest Supervisor Michael Rogers. "It may be that the homes we saved may be lost in the floods."

WILDFIRES AT A GLANCE

ACRES BURNED: 167,724

STRUCTURES DAMAGED, DESTROYED: 787 (651 homes)

PEOPLE DISPLACED FROM HOMES: About 25,000

FIREFIGHTERS, CIVILIANS INJURED: 62

PRELIMINARY DAMAGE ESTIMATE: \$500 — \$1000 — \$10000 — \$100000 — \$1000000

State's 'Heartfelt Thanks' Send Firefighters on Way

LOS ANGELES—Authorities prepared to send home some fire crews yesterday in one of the first signs of victory over Southern California firestorms that caused at least \$500 million in damage.

"It's time for them to go home," said Los Angeles County Fire Chief Ray Blackburn, referring to the hundreds of firefighters from other western states. "They have our heartfelt thanks."

Cooler weather and lack of winds helped 9,000 firefighters tame the fierce blazes that raged for four days and nights, destroying more than 700 buildings and scorching more than 170,000 acres.

The fierce Santa Ana winds that swept westward from the deserts to fan the firestorms that began last Tuesday were not forecast to return until Tuesday or Wednesday. Even then, forecasters said, they would be mere whispers compared to the howling 60 to 70 mph gusts that whipped up the initial flames.

As fire crews savored their victory, homeless families—some with nothing but the clothes on their backs—jammed the four "one-stop" government relief offices set up to process requests for rebuilding loans and temporary housing.

"I'm so numb," said Nancy Goldsworthy, a

45-year-old architect, as she clutched forms in one hand and her 22-month-old daughter in the other. "I think I appear to be a normal person but I'm not. I'm shellshocked."

"We'll apply for whatever loans we can pay back and for whatever grants we can get," she said.

While many of the homeless were wealthy professionals who moved into posh hotels to search for apartments, others—some former servants from now-destroyed mansions—were desperate for help just to get by. "We just want enough to buy food and sleeping bags," one Mexican immigrant said.

Sensitive to severe criticism of the federal government's slow response to last year's riots in Los Angeles and Hurricane Andrew in Florida, the Federal Emergency Management Agency has promised to get out relief checks in seven to 10 days.

OCT 3 1 1993

Raging Blazes Subside

Injury Total Hits 84; Californians Brace For More Searing Winds

Compiled From News Services

LOS ANGELES — Firefighters gained the upper hand Friday on infernos that caused more than \$400 million in damage across Southern California. But crews were racing against time as searing winds were expected to return and whip up the flames again.

Calm, cooler weather helped extinguish four wildfires and contain several others after walls of flame leveled exclusive suburbs, destroyed more than 700 homes and scorched 180,000 acres from Ventura County, north of Los Angeles, to the Mexican border. Still out of control were a 35,000-acre blaze in Ventura County that incinerated 35 homes and a 20,000-acre fire in the Cleveland National Forest.

More than 6,000 firefighters — some from as far away as Oregon — were battling the remaining blazes.

The Santa Ana winds that caused the parched region to ignite like a tinderbox Wednesday were expected to pick up over the weekend, increasing the danger to population centers.

The National Weather Service said that the winds were expected again today but that they would not as strong as the 50 mph winds that whipped wildfires into walls of flame earlier in the week.

"This area burns very aggressively with no winds at all. I'm very worried," U.S. Forest Service officer Tom Harbour said at a fire camp in Altadena, where 118 homes and buildings were destroyed this week. As he spoke, the fire no longer posed a threat to houses but raged out of control in the San Gabriel Mountains overlooking Altadena, 15 miles northeast of Los Angeles.

In Pasadena, Andres Huang, 35, a transient, pleaded innocent to a misdemeanor charge of setting the fire that engulfed parts of Altadena by lighting brush at his hillside camp to

keep warm. He was jailed in lieu of \$25,000 bail; trial was set for Nov. 15.

No deaths were reported, but the injury total climbed to 84, including 67 firefighters.

The fire disaster was California's worst since a blaze killed 25 people, destroyed 3,000 homes and caused \$1.75 billion in damage in Oakland in 1991. Millions of people saw their lives disrupted. Many roads were closed, and huge clouds of acrid smoke blanketed the area.

Refugees filled shelters, some wearing what remained of their possessions.

Clues suggested that at least six of the 15 major fires were the work of arsonists, including one that raged through the seaside artists' colony of Laguna Beach, destroying more than 300 homes and forcing 24,000 people to evacuate.

After touring devastated neighborhoods in Laguna Beach, Gov. Pete Wilson offered a \$50,000 reward for information leading to the arrest and conviction of "the sick animal who did this thing."

On Friday, detectives found an "incendiary device" that started an 1,800-acre blaze in Ventura County that injured four firefighters, two

critically.

Damage in Orange County — the hardest-hit area — was estimated at between \$300 million and \$400 million, said county Administrative Officer Ernie Schneider. The loss from one Los Angeles County fire was put at \$60 million, and the firefighting effort was expected to cost millions more. The Laguna Beach fire was declared fully contained late Thursday. On Friday, authorities allowed residents to return to their homes.

Mary Sinclair, a British-born resident, likened the scene of devastation to what she saw during the Nazi blitz of London in World War II.

"This is how it was when the bombs went off and none of the houses were left standing," she said as she and her husband surveyed the ruins of their four-bedroom home.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency planned to open aid-application centers by today in all five counties declared federal disaster areas. James Lee Witt, director of the agency, toured fire zones by helicopter.

In Washington, Thomas F. McLarty III, the White House chief of staff, said the agency, already taxed by floods in the Midwest, would not require more money because private insurance will play a large role in covering damage.

ORANGE COUNTY REGISTER

NOV 01 1993

A boost from cool breezes

CITIES: From Laguna Beach to Anaheim Hills, residents and volunteers give thanks then dig in to begin the cleanup.

By MARY ANN MILBOURN
and ANDY NORAN

The Orange County Register

An army of volunteers and city workers rolled up their sleeves Sunday and got down to the serious work of rebuilding their communities after last week's devastating wildfires.

The Laguna Canyon fire was declared contained by officials at 6 a.m. Sunday, and the Ortega blaze was 75-percent contained by early evening. The two wildfires and the earlier Anaheim Hills Stagecoach blaze, which broke out late Tuesday, destroyed 390 structures, consumed nearly 31,000 acres and injured six people.

Laguna Beach Fire Chief Rich Dewberry said firefighters were on alert for hot spots and embers.

Though still concerned about high winds that forecasters said would return tonight, Dewberry

"It's a bit windy, but it's damp and overcast," Dewberry said. "We're basically sitting on things, so when we do get the occasional whiff of smoke — which we do — it doesn't become a problem."

LAGUNA BEACH

Healing

American Red Cross field workers in their navy-blue uniforms coordinated disaster relief below the graceful rotunda of the Wells Fargo Bank. Officials reported receiving more than \$200,000 in contributions for their relief efforts in Laguna Beach.

Scores of insurance adjusters, like the red-shirted crews pulled together from across the nation by State Farm Insurance, took to streets and city offices to assess damage and hand out checks.

"We have 200 people throughout Southern California, including a couple of people at the police station to meet policyholders," said Brad Wallace, a State Farm spokesman who lives in Mission Viejo.

Federal workers saw 110 families, advising them of loans, grants and tax-relief options.

Hundreds of volunteers in T-shirts and shorts flooded relief centers, such as Laguna Presbyterian Church, to distribute food, clothing and comfort.

Mary Pat Strauss of Irvine offered shelter to any who needed it. "Two couches and three sleeping bags available," her handwritten note advised. It was one of dozens, but Strauss said she had few takers — only a friend and a couple evacuated from the Turtle Rock neighborhood of Irvine on Wednesday night.

"It almost seems like they have more volunteers than victims," she said.

Schools

All Laguna schools will be back in session today, and buses will run on their

said Laguna v thankful that
the predicted for Sat-
urday didn't materialize.



BRUCE STRONG/The Orange County Register

GIVING THANKS: Sharon Hardy, who evacuated her Top of the World home, was one of many churchgoers moved by the service at Laguna Presbyterian Church. Her house was not damaged.

schedules, Supt. Paul M. Possemato said.

Thurston Middle School, which lost 14 classrooms in the blaze, will be in session a half-day today, with students being released about 11 a.m.

On Tuesday, Thurston will go

on a split schedule with seventh- and eighth-graders attending class 7:40-11:40 a.m. Sixth-graders will attend 11:45 a.m.-3:45 p.m. Possemato said the split schedule is expected to last about two weeks. Bus service will be available to students on both

schedules.

Crews were busy restoring electricity, telephone and cable-television service to houses that survived on ashen streets.

Southern California Edison Co. crews erected the last pole and strung the last wire by late Saturday.

Southern California Gas Co. workers spent the day trying to isolate the homes that were still without gas. They said it would be several days before their work was complete.

Dimension Cable television crews expected to finish rewiring the town by late Sunday.

Police

City Council members pored over phone messages, news accounts and conversations with officials to determine how best to steer the town through the double-whammy that hit Laguna last week.

Many residents were still angry about the lack of water and electrical backup for pumps to fight the fire.

"Because of (the council's) inability to put in a reservoir at Top of the World, they ran out of water," said Bill Wachtel, an Emerald Bay resident.

State

Reacting to news reports that Gov. Pete Wilson mistakenly delayed deploying aircraft to help combat fires raging in Southern California, council members said they expect Tuesday to call for a special investigation by the state Office of Emergency Services into how the fire was fought.

"When I was there at 5 p.m., planes were dropping fire retardant, putting out the fire," Councilwoman Ann Cristoph said. "I suppose that if they were (there) at 3, it could have been stopped in the open space somewhere, but it's hard to say. People were doing their best."

Looting

Police were checking creden-

FINANCIAL EXPERTS WILL ANSWER YOUR QUESTIONS TODAY

Have a question about filing a damage claim with your insurer after the January 17 disaster? Do you need a lawyer? Do you need a public adjuster? Do you need a contractor? Do you need a realtor? Do you need a mortgage lender? Do you need a title company? Do you need a home inspector? Do you need a pest control company? Do you need a landscaping company? Do you need a pool service? Do you need a window treatment company? Do you need a painting company? Do you need a carpet cleaning company? Do you need a furnace repair company? Do you need a water heater repair company? Do you need a dryer repair company? Do you need a refrigerator repair company? Do you need a stove repair company? Do you need a dishwasher repair company? Do you need a garbage disposal repair company? Do you need a sink repair company? Do you need a toilet repair company? Do you need a bathtub repair company? Do you need a shower repair company? Do you need a door repair company? Do you need a window repair company? Do you need a roof repair company? Do you need a siding repair company? Do you need a foundation repair company? Do you need a basement repair company? Do you need a crawlspace repair company? Do you need a attic repair company? Do you need a chimney repair company? Do you need a fireplace repair company? Do you need a furnace repair company? Do you need a water heater repair company? Do you need a dryer repair company? Do you need a refrigerator repair company? Do you need a stove repair company? Do you need a dishwasher repair company? Do you need a garbage disposal repair company? Do you need a sink repair company? Do you need a toilet repair company? Do you need a bathtub repair company? Do you need a shower repair company? Do you need a door repair company? Do you need a window repair company? Do you need a roof repair company? Do you need a siding repair company? Do you need a foundation repair company? Do you need a basement repair company? Do you need a crawlspace repair company? Do you need a attic repair company? Do you need a chimney repair company? Do you need a fireplace repair company?

tials closely in the fire-damaged neighborhoods after five looting incidents were reported.

Police Capt. Bill Cavanaugh said the worse loss was at a house in the 1600 block of Eleanor Lane, where a resident evacuated his home Wednesday and came back Thursday to find it unburned but ransacked. The resident's loss included a 17th century tapestry valued at \$40,000, a \$20,000 men's sapphire ring, a \$3,000 gold bracelet and \$500 in cash.

Two shop owners in the 1000 block of Coast Highway took up an offer from some transients for some help in moving some things. The shop owners later reported a purse missing and Cavanaugh said at least one check has been forged.

Lookie-loos

Sightseers were a real problem, backing up roads and generally adding to the confusion.

"I live in Top of the World and it took me 30 minutes to get home instead of five because of lookie-loos," Lucas Saxe said.

Counseling

Psychologists and other counselors said most fire victims were still too shell-shocked to come in for help. Those who did were still having a hard time sorting through their loss.

"It's so humiliating for many of them to come in to look at used clothes," said Sheila Diskin, who was helping people at the First Presbyterian Church. "These are people who used to be the ones doing the giving."

COTO DE CAZA

Frayed nerves were beginning to soothe after firefighters finally seemed to be getting a handle on the stubborn Ortega fire.

"The fire is pretty much out. It's just that they want to get a line around it before the winds come up again. It should be completely contained by Monday night," Fire Capt. John Bryden said.

Residents of Coto de Caza and surrounding neighborhoods took a break from worry.

"Last week was horrible. We were so stressed out that today we said, 'Let's just play cards,'" said Peggy Simkins, who sipped wine between hands of canasta Sunday afternoon at Coto de Caza's tennis club.

Ortega (74) Highway will remain closed through Wednesday.

ANAHEIM HILLS/CREST DE VILLE
By Sunday, Orange Mayor Gene Beyer said the fire that threatened Anaheim Hills and the Crest de Ville development last week had been vanquished.

He said he had agreed to act as liaison, helping his constituents access local, state and federal aid.

But mostly, Beyer said he and his neighbors Sunday took stock of their blessings.

"Really, it came out well for us," Beyer said. "We didn't have the destruction like a lot of communities. Even so, for us, one house is too many."

Register staff writers Anne Valdespino and Bonnie Weston contributed to this report.

ORANGE COUNTY REGISTER

OCT 9 1 1993

OFFICIALS RESISTED WATER WARNING

SAFETY: Laguna's fire chief accurately predicted the disaster.

By JAMES V. GRIMALDI
The Orange County Register

LAGUNA BEACH — For more than two years, fire officials had warned city officials that there wasn't enough water to fight the kind of wildfire that devastated the city this week, city records show.

Laguna Beach Fire Chief Rich Dewberry repeatedly has said that a larger reservoir — like the 3 million-gallon tank the City Council has stalled for three years — would improve the water supply to fight infernos such as the one that leveled 380 homes Wednesday and Thursday.

But city officials repeatedly rejected the Fire Department's recommendations. The city manager this month called them a "wish list."

Firefighters said they were forced to battle the fire with extremely low water pressure for more than six crucial hours when three key reservoirs ran dry and pumps that could have replenished them went dead in a power outage.

Some residents said they are seeking resignations of the three council members who have been at loggerheads with the independent Laguna Beach Water District over the reservoir. The city owns the proposed location of the reservoir.

"The city has put up roadblock after roadblock to stop this project," said Darren Reelinger, a member of United Laguna, a 500-member civic watchdog group. In a July 23, 1991, memo, Dewberry chillingly foreshadowed Wednesday's devastation, describing what would happen in a neighborhood that proved to be one of those destroyed by fire Wednesday.

"The available water supply is marginal because of potential fire flow," Dewberry said. "In cases where homes are threatened by wildland fire, it is not uncommon to render the water supply incapable of keeping up with the demand."

In a memo to the council three weeks before the fire, City Manager Ken Frank said the volume of water Dewberry recommended was unnecessary "especially since most of the wildland areas adjacent to the 1,000-foot elevation are grasslands, rather than eucalyptus forest, and every other year they are pruned by a herd of goats hired by the city."

In an additional memo this year, Dewberry warned that Santa Ana wind conditions could spread wildfires through canyons and into residential areas next to wildlands.

"In many cases where homes are threatened by wildland fire, it is not uncommon to exceed the storage and supply capability be-

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

cause of the extreme demand," Dewberry wrote May 26. "It is reasonable to believe that fire, at some points, would extend through the community, placing demand on the" reservoir system.

On Saturday, Dewberry reiterated his position that more water was needed because firefighters faced unusually low water pressure and were forced to let some homes burn unabated.

However, Dewberry, a lifelong Laguna Beach resident who was appointed by the city manager, has been careful not to take a political position on the controversial water tank.

"Based on the fire we had this week, our existing water supply was marginal," Dewberry said Saturday night. "Anytime you can have more storage for water, and you have the opportunity, it is appropriate to add to the supply to enhance the water flow to fight fires."

Mayor Lida Lenney said Saturday she could not find a single firefighter who had trouble with water pressure while battling the blaze.

In a letter to the district just 10 days before the fire, Frank demanded that the water board cease attempts to replace the 500,000-gallon reservoir and to find another site.

Frank said the reservoir would hinder public access to the area, raise the ridgeline 17 feet, "totally obliterate the existing topography of the site, and disrupt wildlife movement and habitat."

The water district waged an unsuccessful campaign to improve the water supply by warning that Laguna had the potential for a conflagration like the Oakland hills fire that destroyed 2,900 homes. In a February 1993 newsletter the district warned

that the city is surrounded by 15,000 acres of open space vulnerable to wildfire.

"The (district) must pump water to its higher elevations, as most of our water storage is located at lower elevations," the newsletter said. "In the event of a wildfire or an earthquake, we could lose power, preventing the ability to pump water to the higher elevations."

The city was propelled in opposing the reservoir by powerful slow-growth groups, including Laguna Greenbelt, Laguna Canyon Conservancy and Village Laguna.

Register staff writers Gina Shaffer, Chris Knap and South County News reporter Barbara Diamond contributed to this report.



GOVERNMENT COMES TO THE RESCUE

Federal and state authorities received 110 emergency-assistance applications Sunday, and pledged to begin writing checks by week's end.

Disaster victims lined up at the Laguna Recreation Center for the second day of government-assistance offers. Altogether, 195 people applied for fire-related assistance over the weekend.

"It's our intention to cut checks within seven to 10 days. People who came in Saturday and Sunday will receive assistance even faster," said Cory La Blanca, spokeswoman for the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

FEMA is coordinating multiagency efforts that range from small-business loans to psychological counseling.

More than half of the local claims involve homeowners with home offices, said Carol Lambert, a U.S. Small Business Administration loan specialist, a marked dif-

ference from the situation after the 1992 Los Angeles riots.

That complicates matters for the fire's victims: Not only are their homes and workplaces destroyed, but also their personal and work records.

Lambert said, however, that recent SBA measures streamline the loan-request process. Some applicants after the 1992 riots criticized FEMA and the SBA for what they claimed were onerous application procedures.

Laguna Beach's fire victims appeared particularly surprised by Internal Revenue Service representatives, who said 1992 tax returns still could be amended. Last week's fire-related costs can be claimed on last year's tax return.

"The primary advantage is (victims) may be able to get a refund check faster. Otherwise they'd be waiting until April 1994," said Ron Edgar of the IRS.

Here are some of the services being offered by the FEMA-coordinated Disaster Assistance Program through Friday:

► Low-interest SBA loans on personal property up to \$100,000 and business losses up to \$1.5 million. Call (800) 488-5323.

► FEMA-sponsored mortgage- and rental-assistance grants. Call (800) 525-0321 or (800) 550-8085.

► Individual and family grants up to \$12,000 through the California Department of Social Services. Call (800) 759-5907 or (800) 952-8349.

► IRS-sponsored income-tax assistance. Call the IRS at (800) 829-1040 or (800) 829-4059. Call the California Franchise Tax Board at (800) 852-5711 or (800) 822-6268.

► Social Security assistance, for help in delivering Social Security checks, due Wednesday. Call (800) 772-1213.

By ELLIOT BLAIR SMITH/The Register

BURRELLE'S75 EAST NORTHFIELD ROAD / LIVINGSTON / NEW JERSEY 07039
(201) 992-6600 / (800) 631-1160**TV
CLIPS**

DATE November 1, 1993
TIME 6:30-7:00 PM
NETWORK ABC
PROGRAM World News Tonight

ACCOUNT NUMBER 63/6297 PS
NIELSEN AUDIENCE 14,473,900

PETER JENNINGS, anchor:

In Southern California, firefighters have spent the day racing the wind and now they hope to contain or extinguish all the remaining wildfires by tomorrow before the Santa Ana winds pick up again. Nearly 700 homes have been destroyed, and despite the fact that private insurance will cover many of the losses, the federal government's share is still very large and growing. Here's ABC's Erin Hayes.

ERIN HAYES reporting:

The firefight is now focused on cooling the hot spots. This is still a serious battle and expensive one. The air assault along here has already run into the millions; dozens of firefighting helicopters have been crisscrossing the fire zone. There is overtime for thousands of firefighters and police. The tab will run near the \$100 million mark and may go well over. Who will pay? California picks up 25 percent. But FEMA, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, will pay the biggest part of the bill, 75 percent.

Mr. JAMES LEE WITT (Federal Emergency Management Agency Director): We have enough money to cover this disaster.

HAYES: That, ironically, is because of this summer's Midwestern floods. Congress gave FEMA a huge extra appropriation for that disaster, and right now there's money to spare. But all the costs here aren't tallied yet. FEMA still expects to pay for cleanup and to provide millions in housing assistance. Many here lost everything, like George and Esther Stevenson.

* * *

(SUMMARY: Hayes reports that many people don't know how much their insurance will cover.)

BURRELLE'S75 EAST NORTHFIELD ROAD / LIVINGSTON / NEW JERSEY 07039
(201) 992-6600 / (800) 631-1160**TV
CLIPS**

DATE November 1, 1993
TIME 7:00-9:00 AM
NETWORK NBC
PROGRAM Today

ACCOUNT NUMBER 63/6297 PS
NIELSEN AUDIENCE 4,795,760

ELIZABETH VARGAS, anchor:

Firefighters in Southern California are slowly gaining control of the devastating fires that have scorched much of the area in the last few days. The weather has been cooperating, but all of that could change later in the week. In the meantime, victims of the flames are also slowly gaining control of their disrupted lives. We have more now from Larry Carroll.

LARRY CARROLL reporting:

Faith and hope revived in Sunday services will be called upon today by Southern Californians battered by a week of fiery disaster.

* * *

(Carroll tells how the fires are under control.)

* * *

CARROLL: Residents of the burned-out areas began to turn their attention to rebuilding. Insurance companies held group meetings of policyholders. FEMA chief James Witt has promised to begin issuing government checks within 10 days.

Mr. JAMES LEE WITTE (FEMA Director): It's very important that all of us pull together, because what we do--everything we do is to help the local community and those victims.

CARROLL: But as people sift through the ashes of their memories and wildlife returns to burned-out hillsides, fire officials remain glued to weather forecasts. Yes, there could be flare-ups. But this time, they say, they will be ready. Larry Carroll, NBC News, Los Angeles.

BURRELLE'S75 EAST NORTHFIELD ROAD / LIVINGSTON / NEW JERSEY 07039
(201) 932-6600 / (800) 631-1160**TV
CLIPS**

DATE November 1, 1993
TIME 7:00-9:00 AM
NETWORK NBC
PROGRAM Today

ACCOUNT NUMBER 63/6297 PS
NIELSEN AUDIENCE 4,795,760

KATHERINE COURIC, co-host:

In Southern California, firefighters have all but snuffed out the devastating fires that burned across more than 170,000 acres, so now the focus is shifting. NBC's Sara James is in Altadena, California, this morning, an area hard-hit by the fires.

Sara, good morning.

SARA JAMES reporting:

* * *

(James discusses people who lost their homes to the fires.)

* * *

Unidentified Man: So, if you turn me down then--then I'll be able to get a grant?

Unidentified Woman #1: FEMA will be able to help you.

JAMES:

Federal emergency workers are here, processing claims, promising prompt action. Help also comes from next door, around the corner, from families and friends and neighbors, from churches.

Unidentified Woman #2: Gracious God, you have brought us through the flames. We come alive; we come with our bodies intact; we come with hearts brimming in gratitude.

JAMES: At the United Methodist Church in Laguna Beach, the service for kids this Halloween Sunday was about surviving something much more frightening than ghosts and goblins.

* * *

(James continues discussing fire survivors.)

BURRELLE'S75 EAST NORTHFIELD ROAD / LIVINGSTON / NEW JERSEY 07039
(201) 992-6600 / (800) 631-1160**TV
CLIPS**

DATE November 1, 1993
TIME 8:30-9:00 PM
NETWORK All News Channel
PROGRAM News

ACCOUNT NUMBER 63/6297-PS
NIELSEN AUDIENCE N/A

STAN TURNER, anchor:

Southern California's brush fires are nearly contained. Fire officials say the weekend's cooler moist air gave the firefighters the break they needed. But they feared the dry destructive Santa Ana winds may return tomorrow. Damage is estimated at \$1/2 million so far. Some owners of destroyed homes have returned to sift through the damage. Emergency officials say they will help pick up the pieces.

Mr. FRANK KISHTON (California FEMA Director): And, we are committed to be here until this recovery operation is completed. And we don't consider that operation completed until we hear every family has rebuilt and returned to their house.

TURNER: Officials say there's a dangerous side effect to the fires. The hills have been stripped of grass that holds the dirt in place. Winter rains could trigger massive mudslides.

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SAN FRANCISCO CHRONICLE

NOV 02 1991

Timing, Luck Spared Lives in Southern California Fires

By Rob Hoeseler
Chronicle Staff Writer

Dramatic differences in timing, response and preparedness between the fires in Southern California and the devastating East Bay hills fire two years ago combined with blind luck to spare lives last week, authorities said yesterday.

Although hot, dry winds played a key role in both blazes and the topography of the two regions is strikingly similar, there are big differences in population density and the types of vegetation that fueled the blazes.

The East Bay hills fire killed 25 people and destroyed more than 3,200 residences on 1,600 acres. The two Southern California fires that accounted for the greatest loss of real property — in Altadena and Laguna Beach — claimed no lives, destroyed almost 500 homes and burned over 13,000 acres.

"They had more time and more warning," Assistant State Fire Marshal David D. Walker said of the two Southern California fires. "It wasn't like the Oakland hills fire that was in a residential neighborhood immediately."

"You don't have the same population density there, and there was a different type of fuel loading," Walker said. "It is a more Mediterranean climate, and the vegetation is chaparral and chamisa, which is commonly called greasewood and burns like hell. They are not tall trees like eucalyptus."

Time to Evacuate

Both the Altadena and Laguna Beach fires started some distance from the first homes they devoured, allowing orderly evacuations.

Laguna Hills Fire Chief Rich Dewberry credited Orange County's sophisticated communications system with allowing different agencies to work together "without stepping on each other."

The outbreak of the fire at mid-

traffic was light and many of the coastal city's residents were away at work. To prevent evacuees from jamming up, orders to leave were given only as the fast-moving fire threatened a neighborhood. All four lanes of the Pacific Coast Highway were converted to south-bound use for the fleeing residents. As many as 24,000 people were ordered to leave, giving firefighters freedom to respond to the fires.

Altadena Fire Captain Lester Furell said that high public awareness of the danger of winds and fuel helped spare life there after the fire erupted in the predawn hours Wednesday. "We have had a

vegetation clearance program in effect for many years, and most people were expecting the Santa Ana winds," he said.

"The blaze started far away from residential areas, and, in most cases, people in the area were aware of it," Furell said. "As the fire started to grow, we began to evacuate people quickly."

Different in Oakland

Oakland Fire Department spokesman Don Parker pointed out that 21 of the 25 East Bay hills fire victims died within the first hour in the area between Charing Cross Road, near the Caldecott Tunnel, and Hiller Highlands,

when hot winds caused the blaze to flare up on a Sunday morning, Oct. 20, 1991, when many people were at home.

"At the place we had loss of life, we had no way to notify people," he said. "There was just such an incredible amount of fuel there. In the early stages... 75 percent came from eucalyptus trees."

Density, he said, was one of the biggest problems contributing to loss of life. All of Hiller Highlands, containing about 450 condominiums, burned in 16 minutes.

Nine people died along narrow Charing Cross Road when flames came up the hillside, trapping
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them in a traffic jam. Eight others died nearby.

In the aftermath of the East Bay hills fire, Oakland's communications system was singled out for criticism along with lax attention to clearing fuel.

"Hopefully, we're not the only ones that learned a lesson in our fire," Parker said. "I think they benefited too."

LOS ANGELES TIMES

DATE: NOV-02-93

Santa Ana Winds, Fire Danger to Return

■ **Preparedness:** Police and firefighters plan special patrols to deter arsonists like those believed to have set last week's blazes.

By ERIC MALNIC
and JOHN L. MITCHELL
TIMES STAFF WRITERS

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Hot, dry Santa Ana winds are expected to return today, and police and firefighters will be on special patrol across Southern California to deter arsonists who might attempt to take advantage of the dangerous fire conditions, officials said Monday.

Arsonists were blamed for at least six of last week's devastating fires. No suspects have been arrested as yet in any of those blazes, and investigators fear that some may attempt to strike again today.

Volunteer citizen groups, equipped with portable radios, were scheduled to join police and fire personnel in the patrolling effort that will begin today in areas where brush is thickest and fire danger is the greatest. Fire units were being placed on "red flag" alert.

The Treasury Department's Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, which serves as the nation's federal arson investigation arm, is coordinating the investigative efforts of at least 35 agencies probing the Southern California fires.

The FBI has sent copies of recent letters threatening arson to the bureau's central laboratory in Washington for fingerprint identification and development of personality profiles of the authors.

Fire officials disclosed last week that more than 30 letters threatening arson were received by various Southern California police and fire departments and by citizens between Sept. 1 and the outbreak of the fires. The officials said they had no evidence that the letters were connected to any of last week's fires.

The officials said that a man calling himself "Fedbuster"

sent 15 letters at random, promising to set fires to get back at agents who seized his assets. KCBS-TV broadcast excerpts from some letters it attributed to Fedbuster, that read in part:

"They burned me, now I'm going to burn them back. I fight fire with fire. . . . You think the Oakland [Hills] fire was big? You should see my plans."

"I'm going to set a big fire, actually more than one, bigger than Oakland on October 20, 1991—[going to] settle the score with one of these agencies and other government people that screwed me bad."

Steve Ruda, a spokesman for the Los Angeles Fire Department, said that despite some clues, the department's arson investigators have yet to figure out the identity of Fedbuster.

"The clues are not specific, they are general," Ruda said. "The writer doesn't specifically state when or where he is going to set fires, only that he is threatening to set fires."

Orange County Fire Chief Larry Holmes said the

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situation is ripe for renewed strikes by arsonists.

"They all recognize how much attention these fires got nationally," Holmes said. "With these wind conditions coming, it is more likely that they will come out again."

"There is a whole list of people who are apt to start fires," Holmes said. "When the media begins to cover it like this, it just becomes a feeding frenzy for them."

Forecasters said the winds should gust up to 50 m.p.h. over some areas of the Southland today and Wednesday, accompanied by warm temperatures and low humidity—conditions similar to those that whipped last week's brush fires into destructive firestorms that destroyed at least 815 buildings, including 685 homes.

With the 13 blazes that charred more than 170,000 acres, fully contained and largely extinguished by Monday night, the main work of the hundreds of firefighters still spanning the lines was to prepare for today's winds and to ready the land for the winter rains.

In many fire areas, firefighters were using hand tools to snuff out the few remaining hot spots and to unearth smoldering brush buried by bulldozers that could still be hot enough to start new fires when the winds pick up.

The next big task—should Southern California get through the next few days without another major trial by fire—will be to repair slopes where the heaviest runoff is expected during winter rains, smoothing over bulldozer tracks that could erode into gullies, cutting shallow "water bars" to divert the runoff, and spiking down heavy mesh to fasten unstable hillsides in place, said Fire Capt. Joe Sing of the California Department of Forestry.

The Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors today is expected to appropriate an estimated \$1 million for emergency flood-control measures, including extra sandbags for residents who live below denuded hillsides.

In a memo to the board, Public Works Director T.A. Tidemanson warned of a "substantially increased risk of flood damage during the present storm season and for several years hereafter" as a result of the fires in Malibu-Thousand Oaks, Atadema and Chatsworth. The money would be used to build concrete debris basins and other barriers, clear sediment from existing basins and buy 1.2 million extra sandbags, a public works spokeswoman said.

The emergency expenditure is not expected to hurt the cash-starved county because the money

would be drawn from Flood Control District revenue.

The preparation for rain will include a major reseeding effort in the burn areas, so grass will grow to help hold the topsoil in place. "There's sides of hills where the fire burned so hot that it's burnt almost white," Sing said. "In a scenario where there's runoff, the best thing is to go in there and reseed."

Hand crews will shovel earth smooth where firebreaks were slashed across the land, and bulldozers will drag huge steel claws to break up fire-baked earth to prepare it for seeding, Sing said.

The big tractors will plow under some brush that was cut by firefighters during the battles to stem the blazes, he said. The plowed brush will decay slowly, enriching the soil and promoting new growth.

As the fire crews worked, fire victims continued to stream into disaster centers seeking federal and state aid.

Officials of the Federal Emergency Management Agency said 475 families have registered for assistance at four disaster application centers set up in Laguna Beach, Arcadia, Camarillo and Murietta in Riverside County.

At the centers, workers from state and federal agencies are pro-

cessing requests for temporary housing assistance, disaster unemployment insurance and low-interest loans for rebuilding homes and businesses.

Frank Kishlon, FEMA's coordinating officer for the disaster, said the first checks to meet emergency housing needs were issued Monday. He could not provide figures on the amount of money dispersed or on how many families had qualified for aid.

FEMA, criticized in the past for its slow response after major disasters, has promised this time to speed up its process and, for the first time on a wide-scale basis, is using a new hand-held electronic system designed to expedite claims from the field.

With the small, computer-like devices, inspectors are able to submit information on damage and repair estimates that are then fed into the system for processing. The computers free inspectors from having to travel with their data to field offices, often miles away from disaster sites, officials said.

"During the Loma Prieta [earthquake] disaster, there was about a 21-day turnaround for application, but with this system, it will take as little as three days," said Robert Lambert, a FEMA emergency management specialist.

One hundred furnished apart-

ments are being made available rent-free for a month for victims of the fires, according to Herb Rosenbloom, president of the R&B Apartment Management Co., which operates the national Oakwood Apartments chain.

The firm is providing 25 apartments at each of four locations—Newport Beach, Long Beach, Torrance Hills and Anaheim. Inquiries should be made through local Red Cross service centers, the firm said.

Richard Andrews, director of the state Office of Emergency Services, said more than \$41 million has been spent by state and local agencies to fight the destructive fires.

Andrews said it is the largest mobilization and test of the California fire mutual aid system in history.

Curtis Brack, a meteorologist with WeatherData Inc., said the Santa Ana winds are being gener-

ated by a high-pressure system over the Rocky Mountains that is pushing air toward Southern California and by a trough of low pressure off the coast that is pulling the air offshore.

He said that as the air spills downhill through the San Gabriel Mountains, it will dry out and heat by compression, gusting up to 50 m.p.h. near mountain passes and at up to 40 m.p.h. in the coastal valleys.

The high temperature at the Los Angeles Civic Center on Monday was 75 degrees, after an overnight low of 61. High temperatures today and Wednesday should range from the 70s at the beaches to the middle 80s in the coastal valleys, Brack said.

Times staff writers Kevin Johnson, Tracey Kaplan, Daryl Kelley, Carlos Lozano and Mack Reed contributed to this story.

LOS ANGELES TIMES

DATE: NOV-02-93

Scars From Firestorm Keep Oakland on Constant Vigil

■ Preparedness: New activism of volunteers is one sign of the changes that took effect after disastrous '91 blaze.

By RICHARD C. PADDOCK
TIMES STAFF WRITER

OAKLAND—When contractor James Servais saw smoke billowing in the Oakland hills last week, he knew just what to do: he raced to his truck, grabbed the fire hose and hooked it up to a nearby hydrant.

Construction workers rebuilding houses destroyed in the huge Oakland fire two years ago dropped their tools, picked up the hose and attacked the wind-driven flames that shot 30 feet in the air. By the time the Fire Department arrived 11 minutes later, the volunteer firefighters had the blaze under control.

"I don't want to be a victim any more," said Servais, who lost two homes in the 1991 fire and now keeps a fire hose in his truck. "The bottom line is, no matter what kind of Fire Department you have, there are never enough people so

for its handling of the fire, has taken such steps as setting up its own weather stations in the hills and buying an infrared scanner so its helicopter can hunt for hidden embers. The city also required flameproof building materials for new construction and modified its fire hydrants so firefighters from other cities can hook up.

With a new tax assessment approved by voters, the city also moved aggressively to clear vegetation in the hills—even bringing in goats to eat brush in inaccessible areas.

"I think the city is much better prepared than it was two years ago," said Oakland Mayor Elithu Harris. "We learned a lot. After the storm, people always get a little complacent. But in this case I think we have maintained our vigilance."

Offering its experience this past week, the city sent officials to Southern California to help fire victims there, in particular by offering guidance on the establishment of one-stop centers to aid victims in rebuilding.

At Oakland's emergency centers, burned-out residents could meet with representatives of the Red Cross and the Federal Emergency Management Agency, replace a driver's license, stop a newspaper subscription, transfer phone service, find information about lost animals, get mental health counseling and obtain information about insurance reimbursement or home rentals.

Two years later, the centers have evolved into a place where victims can process permits for rebuilding their homes and arrange to hook up their utilities without delays faced by other builders.

When the fire broke out in the Oakland Hills on Oct. 20, 1991, the Oakland Fire Department was unaware of the high fire danger that day and was poorly prepared to deal with a major crisis.

"We were criticized for not being responsive to a red flag alert," said Fire Department spokesman Don Parker. "But we were not in the loop. We didn't even know that the California Department of Forestry had issued a red flag alert. Now we pay more attention to the weather."

Oakland's new municipal weather stations provide immediate readings on temperature, winds, humidity and the moisture content of brush. When the readings indicate a high hazard, the Fire Department begins patrolling danger

■ ARSON SQUADS

Police, firefighters plan special patrols to deter arsonists. B1

we have to get citizens back involved."

The new activism of volunteers is one sign of the changes that took place in the Oakland and Berkeley hills since California's worst fire killed 25 people and destroyed 2,810 homes.

Oakland, which got poor marks

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areas and responds with more engines to any reports of fire.

The 1991 conflagration began from a brush fire that firefighters thought they had extinguished the previous day. Now, firefighters are ordered to stay with a blaze when conditions are hazardous and to turn over the soil to make sure the fire is out.

During the huge fire, the region's water supply system was so overloaded that some firefighters ran out of water. Now, the city is buying four trucks with miles of hose that can pump water from San Francisco Bay or a distant water mole.

Similarly, the city has purchased a new communications center to replace the radio system that was so overwhelmed that dispatchers could not send fire engines to the proper locations.

Firefighters from other jurisdictions who came to Oakland's aid in 1991 found that the city had a different size hydrant hookup than nearly every city in the state. Oakland is converting all its hydrants to match the equipment of other cities.

Another critique in the wake of the 1991 fire—that help and residents trying to evacuate were hampered by narrow, winding roads—proved more difficult to solve. Although some streets have been widened, most were not. Instead, the city has imposed strict limits on street parking in the hills.

In the aftermath of the Oakland blaze, the state Legislature approved a law requiring fire-resistant roofs in high-fire areas, effective in 1995. Oakland approved even tougher restrictions that took effect immediately, requiring new roofs to meet the strictest standards for fire resistance.

In addition, siding on homes must be able to tolerate high heat for an hour without igniting and attics must be vented so that heat does not collect and cause houses to explode.

"In the Berkeley and Oakland hills there have been five major fires in the last 100 years and each time they would rebuild just like before," said Assemblyman Tom Bates (D-Oakland), who represents the burned area and sponsored the state measure. "Maybe this time the message got through."

One reason the 1991 fire was so disastrous was the vast amount of dry vegetation in the hills. This

year, out of 16,000 properties inspected, about 4,000 were cited for overgrown brush or for not having spark arresters on their chimneys. Property owners who do not correct the problem will find the work done by the city and the cost tacked onto their property tax bills.

In areas where it is difficult for crews to work, the city has contracted with a goat herder whose goats can clear about an acre of brush a day, even eating the poison oak. "They eat anything and everything," said former Oakland City Councilwoman Marge Gibson-Haskell, who lost two homes in the fire.

In another step to help prevent another disaster, fire departments have agreed that engines will disregard city limits when a fire is reported in the hills. When the alarm sounded for the Oakland fire last Wednesday, 11 engines from four jurisdictions converged on the neighborhood.

Recognizing the limits on its emergency services, however, Oakland also has begun training hundreds of volunteers in how to deal with disasters such as fires and earthquakes.

"They can't always wait for the Fire Department," Mayor Harris said. "We're starting a volunteer fire reserve so there will be more people available to help in a disaster."

ORANGE COUNTY REGISTER

NOV 01 1993

Weary firefighters keep on plugging

PEOPLE About 2,000 from as far away as Idaho set up camp at Ronald W. Caspers Wilderness Park on Ortega Highway.

By ANNE VALDESPINO
The Orange County Register

Red-eyed firefighter Bill Rodman, 21, of San Juan Capistrano was ready for bed. Sitting on a wooden stump, he stared straight ahead with a blank look. At 4 p.m. Sunday, he was so fatigued he was just about brain-dead.

Part of a firefighting army 2,000 strong, Rodman made his temporary home in Ronald W. Caspers Wilderness Park, where three-person tents dotted the hills and dozens of fire trucks parked in a clearing.

Sunday afternoon most of the camp was still sacked out. Some snoozed in their clothes in sleeping bags, snoring in broad daylight while fire engines rolled around them and announcements blared over a loud public-address system.

But by 5 p.m. the camp began to stir as the sun set. Some firefighters returned from the day shift while others prepared to fight all night. Most work for the Forest Service, but they also came from fire departments in Orange, Riverside and San Bernardino counties and Camp Pendleton.

Many made their way to the mess tent for the main meal of the day — chicken-fried steak, mashed potatoes

and gravy doubled as breakfast and dinner.

Wearing yellow uniforms and totting firefighting gear, they milled about, clothes and faces sooty, fingernails filthy. All were working 12-hour shifts that sometimes stretched longer.

They headed for makeshift bathrooms where men and women washed under a single shower head, too tired to care about privacy.

It wasn't the Ritz-Carlton but the firefighters were loving it.

"Before I came here I was in Laguna Beach. So I've been working since Wednesday night," Rodman said. "My dad and my two brothers are

firefighters and once you get to know your fires good, it's fun. For me, it's a way of life."

Working round the clock paid off. The Ortega fire was 75 percent contained by Sunday night.

Local resident Rodman was lucky. It wasn't long distance, so he'd called his girlfriend, Candy, every night. Others were missing loved ones as far away as Idaho.

Rodman can sleep anywhere, he said. But Bob Shoemaker, 41, of McCall, Idaho, tossed and turned. The aches and pains accumulated hiking up hills were keeping him awake.

Brush fires aren't his gig, he said.

A smoke jumper, Shoemaker parachutes into the mountains to snuff out small forest fires. Helicopters swoop down and pick him up.



DAVE YODER/The Orange County Register

OFF TO WORK: A helicopter takes off Sunday from the fire camp at Ronald W. Caspers Wilderness Park, ferrying a group of firefighters to the Ortega fire.

"When we signed on we made a commitment to be regular firefighters," Shoemaker said. "We knew we'd be ground-pounders. We must have hiked 12 or 13 miles today. After that your feet are beat, your knees are beat, your whole body is beat."

But he wasn't complaining much. Shoemaker's been a fireman since he was 19. He's worked "as far south as the Mexican border and as far north as the Siberian Sea."

He loves the job and he'll spend the money he earns playing Santa Claus. "I have two boys, Logan, 8, and Lawson, 5. This will be a nice check and my boys want mountain bikes for Christmas."

ORANGE COUNTY REGISTER

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WHY THE WAIT?

AFTERMATH: Firefighters complain that they sat after the Anaheim Hills fire was contained while blazes raced toward Laguna Beach, but county officials say they made timely decisions.

By JEORDAN LEGON and SONNIE WESTON
The Orange County Register

P. NEWS 12
Scores of firefighters sat idly by in Anaheim Hills on Wednesday while fire raced toward Laguna Beach.

County officials said they made timely decisions given the threat to Anaheim Hills and the complications of moving strike teams from one trouble spot to the next. But firefighters who were left to rest in Anaheim Hills said Sunday they felt frustrated.

"We were sitting there on a hill in Orange just looking at the smoke," said Orange city firefighter Chuck Tuggie. "We were hearing on the radio that they had 100 acres fully engulfed and 18 strike teams were being requested, but no one was telling us to go."

When the Laguna fire was reported at 11:50 a.m. Wednesday, the Anaheim Hills fire was 95 percent contained. Dozens of firefighters in Anaheim Hills were resting or dousing live embers. Some were napping on the yards of saved homes and others rested underneath shade trees.

Anaheim Operations Chief Bob Hirst said his firefighters were mopping up around noon when they noticed the smoke billowing from Laguna. He said the firefighters were anxious to shift to that battlefield.

"When there's a fire going, it's hard to hold them back," Hirst said.

His first strike team wasn't called until about 1:30 p.m. — one hour and 40 minutes after the Laguna fire was reported.

Orange County Fire Capt. Dan Young said many units were not called to the Laguna blaze initially because the roads to the town were jammed with evacuees.

County dispatch records show 10 strike teams — 50 fire engines — were requested at 12:19 p.m. The first strike team pulled into Laguna at 1:23 p.m. — minutes before neighborhoods began to evacuate.

Young said the lag time was reasonable, given the distance many units traveled to get from fires elsewhere to Laguna. It took time to evaluate the spread of the Laguna fire and decide how many units were needed.

Young also said that fire officials were hesitant to redeploy the more than 400 firefighters assigned to Anaheim Hills in case hot spots there reignited.

"These guys can't drop their hoses and go to a new fire," Young said. "We had a fire that destroyed two homes and still had hot spots going. Only an idiot would pull all firefighters off that thing. You would have had another Oakland."

He also said the flames in Laguna Canyon were growing too fast for firefighters to contain. "Nothing could have stopped them," he said.

But burned-out-homeowners said they have a hard time believing that nothing could have been done to save their homes. Toby Woodhouse, who lost her Myrtle Hills home, said she reported a distant smoke patch to Laguna fire officials at 11:45 a.m., begging for air support that came too late to save her house.

"It's so frustrating," she said. "At one point, I know it was containable. Air service would have been a very viable route to go, I would have thought."

Orange County fire officials said they didn't waste time in calling for air support. At 12:14 p.m., dispatch records show that Assistant Chief Chip Prather ordered planes and opened a communications channel for them to communicate with local dispatchers.

No air support arrived until 1: p.m. Young said fires already consuming homes elsewhere in the area priority of available airplanes. He also dismissed as unrealistic suggestions that aircraft carrying water or chemical retardants could have stemmed the fire.

ORANGE COUNTY REGISTER

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HEFTY DONATIONS AID RED CROSS EFFORT

About \$200,000 in donations has streamed into the Orange County Red Cross since Wednesday's devastating fire.

According to Terry Hartshorn, chairman of the Orange County Red Cross and PacificCare Health Systems, the donations will be used to provide shelter, crisis counseling, food, first aid and long-term recovery assistance.

Among the donors: IBM, BMW and Home Savings of America and FHP.

Also Sunday, state Sen. Art Torres scheduled a workshop today in Laguna Beach to inform insurance policyholders of their rights. The workshop will be at 7 p.m. at Laguna Beach Community Presbyterian Church, Turner Hall classrooms 201 and 202, 415 Forest Ave.

GENERAL ASSISTANCE

► American Red Cross: Family-services center has moved from 515 Forest Ave. to 260 Ocean Ave., Laguna Beach (Wells Fargo Bank Building, third floor).

► Federal Emergency Management Agency assistance: Laguna Beach Disaster Application Center, Laguna Beach Recreation Center, 505 Forest Ave., open weekdays 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. and Saturdays 1 p.m. to 7 p.m. until Nov. 5. Information: (800) 462-9029 from 8 a.m.-5 p.m. daily. There is also a number for the hearing-impaired, (800) 462-7585. Operators speak Spanish and other languages.

CHILD CARE

► Orange County Child Care Hot Line: (714) 960-7370.

► All Heart Nanny Service: Free babysitting services at the Newport Beach Marriott Hotel & Tennis Club for all evacuees. Romona Bruce, (714) 433-9432.

ANIMALS

► Animal Assistance League: Taking information regarding lost or found animals. (714) 978-PETS.

► B-Major Kennels: 9761 W. 11th St., Garden Grove: (714) 531-7473. Will board animals free, up to pony size.

► D and T Sunshine Services: Free animal shelter, (714) 494-9865.

► Hidden Valley Ranch: Boarding of horses. 215 Olinda Drive, Brea: (714) 524-2631.

► Irvine Animal Care Center: Temporary housing for animals and assistance in locating lost pets. 15129 Sand Canyon Road, (714) 724-7740.

► Laguna Beach Animal Shelter: Temporary housing for animals and help finding lost pets. 26612 Laguna Canyon Road, (714) 497-3552.

► Orange County Fairgrounds' Equestrian Center: Claim lost pets at 83 Fair Drive, Costa Mesa. Stray horses, goats, sheep, rabbits, ducks, geese and others have been dropped off there. Information: (714) 708-1655.

► Orange County People for Animals: Coordinating rescue services for animals and listings for boarding services for animals. (714) 751-6272.

► Pet Metro Co.: 17942 Sky Park Circle, Suite 1, Irvine. Free pet food, supplies and veterinarian services. (714) 756-5656, Ext. 233.

► Veterinary Centers of America: Free boarding of animals left homeless, except horses. VCA Ana Brook Animal Hospital, 335 N. Brookhurst St., Anaheim. (714) 772-8220.

MEDICAL

► Laguna Beach Community Clinic offers free medical and counseling services. Medical: 460 Ocean Ave., call (714) 494-0761 for appointments. Counseling: 255 Thalia, call (714) 494-9429 for appointments.

► Free back-injury care for south-county fire victims: Chris A. Hawn, D.C. (714) 349-1116. Family Chiropractic of Laguna Niguel, 30001 Town Center Drive, Suite 2, Laguna Niguel.

► Orange County Optometric Association: Free eye exams, plus discounted and free glasses, contacts, contact-cleaning supplies and eye drops. (800) 934-7483.

BUSINESS ASSISTANCE

► Chris Tootter, ARMS, Relocation Management Services for businesses. Consulting advice at no charge for two weeks. (800) 266-2767.

COUNSELING

► Excellence Unlimited, David Aronson, Ph.D., and Sheryl Aronson, Ph.D., 24-hour counseling service to people of all ages. (714) 493-1966.

► Jewish Family Service of Orange County: (714) 939-1111.

► Laguna Beach Community Clinic: Offering counseling at its offices at 259 Thalia St., Suite 8, through the weekend to community members, particularly children, about fire issues. Free to Laguna Beach residents. Information: (714) 494-8429.

► Orange County Mental Health Department, Laguna Beach: 8 a.m.-5 p.m. Crisis clinic counseling services. Walk in at 30818 S. Pacific Coast Highway or call (714) 499-1877 (adults), (714) 499-5346 (children).

► South Coast Counseling Group: Free counseling for fire victims. (714) 251-9630 or (714) 520-4834.

► South Coast Medical Center, Laguna Beach: (714) 499-7501.

► West Newport Community pet-loss support group: 8 a.m. First and third Thursday every month. 883 W. 15th St., Newport Beach. (310) 959-3164.

► YMCA: Free counseling to fire victims. Call (714) 442-1000 weekdays.

CLOTHING/SUPPLIES

► Dorothy's on Broadway Thrift Shop: Free clothing, housing supplies and other items to fire victims 355 Broadway, Laguna Beach. 10 a.m.-6 p.m. (714) 494-1911.

► Fashion Island, Newport Beach: Many merchants are offering discounts on shoes, clothing, household items and food. (714) 721-2000

► Home Base: Free shovels, trash cans and work gloves for fire victims. Call American Red Cross, (714) 835-5381.

► Early Parenting Center: Diapers, formula, bottles and other baby supplies. Contact the American Red Cross, (714) 835-5381.

► Laguna Beach volunteer agencies: Food, clothing, shelter, counseling services and other referrals. 7 a.m.-7 p.m. through Nov. 5. (714) 376-9288.

FOOD

► Five Feet restaurant, Laguna Beach: Free food for fire victims with vouchers, available at Red Cross sites. (714) 494-1165.

► Marie Callender's Restaurant: Pies, baked goods and bottled water to be distributed to Red Cross shelters and emergency-operation stations.

HOUSING

► Arnel Management Corp.: Providing a list of furnished apartments ready for immediate occupancy. Waiving security deposit for fire victims. (714) 434-5100.

► Brook Furniture Rental: Free temporary-housing location service. (714) 645-4772.

► California Apartment Association: Rental referral program. Apartment Association of Orange County, 12822 Garden Grove Blvd., No. D, Garden Grove. (714) 838-5350.

► Community Coalition: Services include housing assistance to child care. Also, referrals for general services such as counseling and legal assistance. (714) 376-9288.

► Cort Furniture Rental: Temporary housing assistance, (800) 937-2849.

► Evans Rents: Free relocating service. Costa Mesa, (714) 650-1855; Tustin, (714) 835-2834.

► Hyatt Hotels in Ventura, Los Angeles and Orange counties are providing reduced room rates to fire victims in need of short- and long-term housing and other aid. The Hyatt Regency Irvine and Hyatt Newport are among hotels offering reduced rates.

► Irvine Co.: Assisting fire victims with apartment-rental information. Credit checks, security deposits and other pre-rental procedures will be eliminated for fire victims. Call (714) 720-2407.

► Laguna Outreach: Housing, pet care for gays and lesbians. Referrals for general services such as therapy and counseling. Call Kristen Enos, (714) 745-4333.

► Apartment listings: Newport-Mesa Association of Realtors, 401 N. Newport Blvd., Newport Beach; Irvine Association of Realtors, 16267 Laguna Canyon Road, Irvine; South Orange County Association of Realtors, 34922 Calle del Sol; Capistrano Beach and Laguna Board of Realtors, 939 Glenneyre St., Laguna Beach.

► UFDelta Mobile homes: The Salvation Army has been offered 60 mobile homes for residents who wish to stay on their property. Mobile homes will be delivered free of charge. Rental rates negotiable. Contact Ian Robinson at (714) 546-7880.

► Oakwood Apartments: Free use of 50 apartments in Newport Beach.

Long Beach and Anaheim for 30 days. Contact Red Cross Service Center for referral. (714) 835-5381.

► Western National Property Management: Fire Victim Assistance Hot Line is (714) 750-RENT, 8 a.m.-5 p.m.

► Newport Dunes Resort: Free RV spaces through Thursday. Call (714) 729-DUNE.

► William Lyon Property Management Co.: Offering discounted rents at six of its south-county apartment projects. The company is cutting 5 percent off rents, plus offering month-to-month arrangements. The projects include three communities in The Resorts Apartments, Also Viejo; Country Club Villas, Laguna Niguel; The Bluffs at Monarch Beach, Dana Point; and Capistrano Pointe, San Juan Capistrano.

► Zaby's Motor Lodge, Harbor Boulevard and Katella Avenue, Anaheim, and Rip Van Winkle's Inn, 301 W. Katella Ave., Anaheim, are offering reduced rates to fire victims. (800) 995-9093.



BRUCE STRONG/The Orange County Register

WISH LIST: A blackboard outside Laguna Presbyterian Church lists items needed by fire victims, tells victims where to go for help, and talks volunteers where help is needed.

LEGAL ASSISTANCE

- Orange County Bar Association Information Helpline: (714) 541-6222, (714) 756-6306.
- Orange County Bar Association Lawyer Referral Service: Waiving attorney-referral fees for victims of the fire. (714) 835-8811.
- Law offices of David, Punell, Keathley & Willard: Offering free help with claims processing and other legal work. (714) 640-0700.
- Law offices of Paone, Callahan, McHolm & Winton: Offering free help with claims processing and other legal work. (714) 955-2900.

TAXES

- Orange County/Long Beach Chapter of the California CPAs: Providing tax information and assistance to residents who suffered property losses. Laguna Beach Recreation Center, 505 Forest Ave., Laguna Beach. 9 a.m.-7 p.m.
- Disaster Information seminar: Free insurance and tax seminar for fire victims. Chet Hollifield Federal Building, 24000 Avila Road, second floor training room, Laguna Niguel. 6 p.m. today. (714) 643-4060.

LOAN ASSISTANCE

- Orange County Teachers Federal Credit Union: Deferred payments on existing loans. Interest-free loans available for members. (714) 547-4141, Ext. 70.

Please see A10 Page 9

► **Sanwa Bank:** One- to three-month deferral on existing loans. No fee, low interest on new loans. Contact bank locations in Santa Ana, (714) 285-4570; Newport Beach, (714) 476-7000; and Mission Viejo, (714) 582-5641.

► **Wells Fargo Bank:** Special loan program for fire victims. It includes personal loans to homeowners up to \$25,000 and renters up to \$5,000, at 2.47 percent. If you have a Wells Fargo home loan or credit card, you can defer payments by calling (800) 522-1294 (mortgages) or (800) 642-4720 (credit cards). Small-business owners can get a 90-day insurance bridge loan up to \$100,000 by calling (800) 545-2844.

INSURANCE ASSISTANCE

► **Policyholders' rights workshop,** sponsored by state Sen. Art Torres. 7 p.m. today, Laguna Beach Community Presbyterian Church, Turner Hall classrooms 201 and 202, 415 Forest Ave.

► **Federal Emergency Management Agency:** National tele-registration number, (800) 462-9029.

► **Kinko's Copy Centers:** Offering free fax/copy service to assist fire victims with processing insurance claims. For nearest location, call (800) 743-COPY.

► **State Department of Insurance:** Toll-free hot line: (800) 927-4357

► **Ricoh Co.:** Free videotaping of home fire damage for insurance purposes. Call Kevin Shute, (714) 566-3575.

► **The American Institute of Architects, Orange County Chapter:** Will track down original building plans for insurance appraisals. The plans will be supplied free to owners. For information, call the AIA/OC, (714) 557-7795.

► **The Laguna Art Museum,** photographic archive of works by prominent California architects, available for fire survivors. For information, call (714) 494-8971.

MAIL

► **The Letter Box:** Free mailboxes to residential and business fire victims on Ortega Highway. (714) 661-4342.

TELEPHONES

► **GTE and MCI:** Free long-distance calling for fire victims. GTE Building, 295 Broadway, Laguna Beach. (800) 227-3356.

► **PacTel Paging:** Free paging service, includes use of a PacTel pager for up to 90 days and express voice mail. Information: (800) 807-2437.

► **Pacific Bell:** Free voice-mail and call-forwarding services to victims who have lost telephone service. Voice-mail orders: Residence customers, (800) 273-7000, Ext. 345; business customers, (800) 540-8020. Call-forwarding orders: Residence customers, (800) 491-2355; business customers, (800) 300-2355.

SENIORS

► **Alzheimer's Association,** Orange County chapter: Coordinating offers from licensed facilities to provide free short-term care for Alzheimer's patients affected by the fires, (714) 283-1111.

► **United States Eldercare Referral Agency:** Temporary lodging. Call Robert Rosenberg, (800) 848-1008.

► **South County Senior Services,** (714) 498-0400.

STORAGE

► **All Aboard Mini Storage** in Anaheim and San Gabriel: Free storage space through Dec. 31. Information: (714) 563-0331 (Anaheim) or (818) 289-6964 (San Gabriel).

MISCELLANEOUS

► **Southern California Gas Co.** is waiving bills for customers whose residences were destroyed. (800) 427-2200.

► **Bank of California** is considering payment deferrals for up to four months on home mortgages, unsecured installment loans and commercial lines of credit.

► **30 Minute Photos, Etc.:** Free reproduction of photos damaged by fire or water. 92 Corporate Park Plaza, Irvine. (714) 474-3942.

► **D and T Sunshine Services:** Local transportation for people whose cars were destroyed, (714) 494-9865.

► **Integrated Waste Management Board Consumer Hot Line:** List of approved landfill or recycling centers to dispose of fire debris. 8 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday through Friday. (800) 553-2962.

► **Orange County Environmental Health Division:** Questions regarding food safety, (714) 667-3600. Questions regarding proper handling and disposal of hazardous chemicals, (714) 1-3700.

► **Salon Chandon, Brea Mall Embassy Suites Court:** Offering firefighters free haircuts and rehydration treatment for their skin. (714) 990-4260.

DONATIONS

To Red Cross:

► **Irvine Co.,** \$250,000. Also matching employees' contributions, plus collecting donations at the company's 21 shopping centers.

► **United Way of Orange County,** up to \$100,000.

► **Dreyfus Corp.,** \$50,000.

► **FHP International Corp.,** \$25,000. Also matching employees' contributions.

► **Maryn's,** \$30,000 in-kind donations.

► **IBM,** \$25,000.

► **Home Savings of America,** \$25,000.

► **Auto Trader,** \$20,000.

► **San Diego Gas & Electric,** \$12,500.

► **Kmart,** \$10,000.

► **Allergan Inc.,** \$10,000.

The drawing is Wednesday. (11-7)
850-4752.

and firefighters

P.6

► Avco Financial, \$10,000.

► Fluor Corp., \$10,000.

Others:

► McDonald's, more than 8,000 meals to firefighters, emergency workers and fire victims.

► Prudential Real Estate Affiliates Inc., selling \$1 raffle tickets for a fund raiser for United Way. Also hosting a live auction and bake sale.

► Western Digital Corp., food for emergency shelters and firefighters and has started a food and clothing drive.

► HomeBase Inc., shovels, trash cans and work gloves to be distributed to fire victims through the Red Cross. Also accepting Red Cross vouchers for the purchase of home-related supplies.

► Taco Bell Corp., food to shelters

► , 7,000 gallons of diesel fuel and two 4,000-gallon water trucks to help the firefighting efforts.

► Suro & Co., Newport Beach, collecting food and clothing for fire victims.

► Continental Lawyers Title Co., reducing basic title rates by 50 percent on single-family homes for fire victims.

Compiled by Register staff

5/5



NEWS RELEASE

FEDERAL/STATE/LOCAL COORDINATING OFFICE



FEMA-DR-1005-CA-PR#6
November 1, 1993

DISASTER INFORMATION FROM:
Federal/State Coordinating Office
245 South Los Robles Avenue (3rd. Floor)
Pasadena, CA 91101

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Contacts:

FEMA: Alex Newton (818) 405-7398
STATE: Greg Renick (818) 405-7299

WHAT'S HAPPENING TODAY ... (for news media only)

Daily news briefings continue today to provide accurate and timely information about disaster response and recovery. The briefing is held at the joint State/Federal Disaster Field Office in Pasadena. Spokespersons are available to the media at 2:30 pm daily at 245 S. Los Robles, Pasadena. All media representatives are invited and encouraged to place this recurring forum on their calendars.

A demonstration of the Automated Construction Estimation (ACE) will be given at this afternoon's news briefing by Bob Lambert, a technician from Federal Emergency Management Agency headquarters (see below).

STATUS TO DATE (for general release)

Acres Burned:	173,603
Structures Lost:	731
Injuries:	52
Firefighting Personnel:	8105

OTHER NEWS & INFORMATION (for general release)

ACE To Speed Inspections

Enormous strides are on the horizon for disaster damage inspection activity. Latest device in the field to speed up processing is an electronic inspection unit, the Automated Construction Estimation (ACE). Federal and State inspectors are employing the compact hand-held device to input damage figures. The figures are immediately transmitted to offices in San Bruno, California, where further processing is speeded by the new device.

###

FEMA tries to improve image with quick response to fires

The Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — The Federal Emergency Management Agency, frequently criticized as slow and inefficient, is hoping to avoid another public relations catastrophe with a quick response to the Southern California wildfires.

FEMA opened four service centers in hard-hit areas this weekend to take applications for loans and aid.

FEMA Director James Lee Witt acknowledged that the agency had a reputation to overcome. He promised a new spirit of cooperation with local governments and the insurance industry — and prompt delivery of aid checks.

"We are reorganized," Witt said. "We are a new agency."

"People need money right away. They've gone through enough losing their homes," Brooks said as victims of the Altadena fire began filling out forms at the FEMA service center in Arcadia, northeast of Los Angeles.

The agency offers outright grants and low-interest loans to individuals and businesses hit by disasters, as well

as temporary housing money and counseling.

Preliminary damage estimates from the wildfires that roared through Southern California last week were set at \$500 million.

Criticism of FEMA generally follows disasters. Victims of hurricanes Hugo, Andrew and Iniki had little good to say about the agency, and a class-action lawsuit filed by victims of last year's Los Angeles riots accused the agency of illegally denying them benefits.

The agency drew generally favorable reviews for its quick response to last summer's floods in the Midwest.

Firefighters stamped out the few brush fires still burning on Sunday. Calmer, cooler weather allowed weary crews to extinguish or contain most of the fires that ravaged the region for four days.

Thirteen major fires in a 200-mile stretch from Ventura County to the Mexican border torched 167,700 acres, damaged or destroyed 787 buildings (including at least 650 homes) and injured 82.

The National Weather Service said

FEMA ACTION

The fire recovery will mark some FEMA firsts:

■ Insurance industry representatives will staff the service centers to advise people about private insurance and coordinate claims.

■ The agency is promising to deliver checks within seven to 10 days of a claim's approval. FEMA has failed to deliver on this commitment in the past, but Witt said this time would be different.

■ FEMA will write checks to people for some losses covered by private insurance in cases where the insurer cannot pay promptly, agency spokesman Oscar Brooks said. The insurer then can reimburse FEMA.

the Santa Anas — hot desert winds from the East or Northeast — could begin blowing again tonight and Tuesday. The winds are expected to blow at 20 mph to 30 mph with gusts up to 45 mph — milder than the winds that spread the wildfires.

Malibu Fire Contained—for the Moment

6,000 Firefighters Work to Save Real Estate of the Rich and Famous

By William Hamilton
Washington Post Staff Writer

MALIBU, Calif., Nov. 3—More than 6,000 firefighters fought house to house to save some of the nation's most valuable real estate today and, as fearsome winds diminished, they hoped they had broken the back of a fast-moving brush fire that threatened to consume this famous beach colony.

"Our belief is the worst is over," Los Angeles Fire Chief Donald Manning declared this morning after a harrowing night when it seemed that flames would sweep down the Pacific coast and into affluent neighborhoods of Los Angeles.

Tonight, more than 30 hours after it started, the fire still burned out of control, although generally confined to canyons and mountainous areas that rise from the narrow strip of beach winding along the coast. But authorities expressed concern that the blaze might yet revive enough to move closer to residential neighborhoods.

Almost untouched were the beachfront houses in this town that has attracted actors and entertainers since the birth of Hollywood. However, at least one actor, Sean Penn, saw his canyon mansion reduced to ashes.

More than 35,000 acres have been charred and at least 200 buildings destroyed in this most spectacular of more than a dozen blazes that have seared Southern California since early last week. The Malibu fire began to the north in Calabasas, and suspicion that it was set prompted Gov. Pete Wilson (R) to offer a \$125,000 reward today for information leading to arrests in any of the fires.

This morning, Pacific Coast Highway was closed to traffic for 45 miles and crowded with hundreds of fire and emergency vehicles. Overhead, twin-rotor Chinook helicopters flew back and forth to the ocean, where they dunked huge buckets, filling them with sea water to splash on fires raging through offshore hills. At a combination boutique and hair salon nestled in brush on the inland side of the highway, Jori Listama marveled that his girlfriend's business had survived the night.

Early this morning, he had peered through the skylight at the hill behind the building and seen a wall of fire moving over the top. "It looked for sure it was going to get this place," he said.

But the highway was lined with fire trucks, practically enough to assign an engine to each building. Outside the salon was a truck from Pomona, east of Los Angeles, and its crew spent hours dousing the building and surrounding vegetation.

That tactic helped to save buildings along the highway—million-dollar oceanside houses and a motley assortment of bars, restaurants and stores inland. But the owners of houses perched on the hillside and farther inland were not always as lucky.

Along Pacific Coast Highway, many houses were burned to the ground and surrounded by blackened soil. Others had survived, almost inexplicably because the ground around them was burned completely.

Dian Roberts watched from the highway Tuesday as five members of a family lingered on the roof of their house while flames moved closer. When the five finally began going down the hill, Roberts said, "flames that must have been 30 feet high were right behind them and chased them." At least one, she said, suffered serious burns.

Despite the extent of damage, initially estimated at about \$130 million, only one fatality has been reported. The Associated Press said late tonight that Duncan Gibbins, a British director and screenwriter, who had been severely burned when he tried to rescue his cat, had died at 41. Authorities said 120 firefighters have been injured, none seriously.

After being unable to stop wind-driven flames racing from Calabasas to the coast Tuesday, firefighters have sought to contain the fire to an inland area roughly bordered by Pepperdine University on the west of Malibu and Topanga Canyon on the east. They were aided by gradual diminishing of blustery Santa Ana winds. Both edges of the containment area have provided some of the most dramatic battlegrounds. Until this morning, fires threatened the 6,800-student Pepperdine campus, where a command center was established. Topanga Canyon is considered a crucial stopping point because to its east is Pacific Palisades, a heavily populated Los Angeles neighborhood where Ronald Reagan lived before he became president.

Appearing with Fire Chief Manning today, Mayor Richard Riordan emphasized that no fires had spread into the city. But that threat remained, and many residents of Pacific Palisades and Santa Monica

when the sky glowed orange, people were packing valuables in case they had to evacuate.

Early this evening, authorities reported that the fire had jumped Topanga Canyon Boulevard, which bisects the canyon east of Malibu, reviving fears that new residential areas nearer Los Angeles might be threatened and promising another long night for concerned residents.

Many Californians such as Sonny and Betty Karliss, who had to evacuate their home near the J. Paul Getty Museum in Malibu when fire came perilously close at 4 a.m. today, accept the dangers inherent with where they live.

"We have 180-degree panoramas from every room of the house," Sonny Karliss, a retired real estate broker, said today while the couple waited at a Red Cross evacuation center in Pacific Palisades.

Twice, they have lost their backyard to mudslides, most recently in torrential rains last February that helped end a six-year drought. Their homeowner's insurance has been canceled because of the risk, and now they cannot find anyone willing to repair their patio.

Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt signaled today that he, for one, thinks it may be time to reassess the kind of risks Californians take when building in what essentially is a desert. Interviewed on ABC's "Good Morning America," he said, "I think, once this is all over, we're

going to have to really do some soul-searching about the process of building into these deep canyons."

The Malibu fire was the worst of four that began Tuesday in a second week of blazes that have destroyed more than 1,000 houses and about 215,000 acres.

The smallest current fire, in San Bernardino County east of here, tamed Monday night. One in Diego County was reported contained tonight after burning 1,500 acres.

In Riverside County to the east, a blaze that burned 8,000 acres is almost under control, official said. A fire in Ventura County northwest of here has burned more than 43,000 acres but was reported 99 percent contained.

Clinton: More Fire Help To Come

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Clinton, calling the fires in Southern California an "agonizing tragedy," is promising more federal help, including an immediate \$15 million.

"You are not facing these fires alone," Clinton said Wednesday night in a five-minute satellite address intended for Southern California.

A wildfire that began on Tuesday claimed 200 homes as it roared through the seaside town of Malibu, charring 35,000 acres. It was the latest in a series of fires that has burned more than 1,000 homes and 215,000 acres in Southern California in the past 16 weeks.

He praised efforts of those fighting the fires.

"Until these fires are out, those in the inland empire, and the new ones tearing through the Santa Monica Mountains, our work will continue and we won't rest either," Clinton said.

"With these new fires, the federal response has already begun.

We've provided 37 air tankers, 100 fire crews amounting to 2000 federal fire fighters, 86 fire engines and 22 helicopters," Clinton said.

He said the \$15 million would go to the California Office of Emergency Services "to help pay for the state and local firefighting costs."

Clinton said the amount would be "supplemented as further costs are identified in the coming weeks."

"We are going to try to help communities shoulder their extraordinary expenses that they are facing through no fault of their own," he said.

He said fighting such disasters puts "unbearable strains on budgets of state and local governments."

Clinton earlier declared much of the area as major disaster areas, making the counties affected available for federal disaster relief and low-cost loans.

Clinton said Federal Emergency Management Agency Director James Lee Witt and California Gov. Pete Wilson both had told him "the federal efforts are well coordinated with the extraordinary work being done by private citizens, state and local governments."

"I know there are people who suffered losses who are upset and frightened, perhaps spending the night in a shelter," Clinton said.

"This has to be a terrifying experience for children awakened at night by their parents and carried away from their homes, before their loss; for property owners, some of whom have faced down a wall of fire with nothing more than a garden hose in their hands and a prayer in their hearts; and especially for the gallant, heroic men and women who are fighting these fires and risking their lives to save people and property from being consumed by the blaze," Clinton said.

AP-NY-11-04-93 0133EST

CLINTON OFFERS AID TO FIGHT CALIFORNIA FIRES

WASHINGTON, Nov 3 (Reuter) - President Clinton offered federal aid to southern Californians battling wildfires telling them Wednesday night they will not have to face the destruction alone.

He offered some \$15 million in federal funds to help some of the most prosperous communities in the United States pay the cost of fighting the fires.

"This advance will be supplemented as further costs are identified in the coming weeks," Clinton said in brief televised Oval Office remarks.

"Until these fires are out ... our work will continue and we won't rest either," Clinton said.

"I know this is a big burden to California with all your other troubles, so we ought to do what we can to help," he added.

Last week several hundred homes were incinerated and a new round of fires has engulfed 300 houses in the celebrity enclave of Malibu. Loss estimates are running into the hundreds of millions of dollars.

Clinton said the federal government has responded to the latest fires by sending 37 air tankers, 2,000 federal fire fighters, 86 fire engines and 22 helicopters have been dispatched to the region.

Last week, Clinton declared several southern California counties disaster areas making them eligible for federal emergency aid.

Federal Emergency Management Agency Director James Lee Witt was dispatched to the scene of the fires along with Agriculture Secretary Michael Espy, Clinton said. White House Chief of Staff Thomas McLarty is coordinating the response effort, he said.

"I know words alone will not heal your hurt or make you whole, but I hope you will take some solace in knowing that your country is concerned about you and that I am closely following the work being done to protect you," Clinton said. REUTER

REUTER

Clinton pledges \$15 million for firefighting effort

WASHINGTON (UPI) — President Clinton ordered Wednesday that \$15 million, 37 airtankers and 2,000 federal firefighters be given to California officials to help combat the devastating wildfires sweeping the Los Angeles area.

In a message televised via satellite from the Oval Office, Clinton said White House Chief of Staff Thomas McLarty is coordinating the federal response, while Federal Emergency Management Agency Director James Lee Witt and Agriculture Secretary Mike Espy are both on the scene to assess the damage in Southern California.

Clinton said the \$15 million would be handed over to the California Office of Emergency Services "to help pay for the state and local firefighting costs."

"This advance will be supplemented as further costs are identified in the coming weeks," Clinton said.

Saying "We're facing those fires together," Clinton commended the efforts of the pilots who fly into strong Santa Ana winds to dump water on the fast-moving fires.

"Their actions and the work of countless others define the word courage, and we can never repay them for what they've done and what they're still prepared to do," Clinton said.

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Clinton Promises Fire Aid

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Clinton called the new fires near Los Angeles "a terrifying experience" and promised a strong federal response to help, including an immediate \$15 million.

"We ought to do what we can to help," the president said Wednesday night in a five-minute satellite television address from the White House.

A wildfire that began Tuesday claimed 200 homes as it roared through the seaside town of Malibu, charring 35,000 acres. It was the latest in a series of fire that have burned more than 1,000 homes and 215,000 acres in Southern California in the past 1{ weeks.

"All of the rest of us ought to pull together. That's what Americans do," Clinton said.

"With these new fires, the federal response has already begun. We've provided 37 air tankers, 100 fire crews amounting to 2000 federal fire fighters, 86 fire engines and 22 helicopters," Clinton said.

He said the \$15 million would go to the California Office of Emergency Services "to help pay for the state and local firefighting costs."

Clinton said the amount would be "supplemented as federal costs are identified in the coming weeks."

He said fighting such disasters puts "unbearable strains on budgets of state and local governments."

He praised "the gallant, heroic men and women who are risking their lives and fighting these fires." He saluted "pilots ... flying after dark in strong winds."

Clinton earlier declared much of the area as major disaster areas, making the counties affected available for federal disaster relief and low-cost loans.

Clinton said he had spoken earlier in the evening top both Federal Emergency Management Agency director James Lee Witt and California Gov. Pete Wilson and that both told him "the federal efforts are well coordinated with the extraordinary work being done by private citizens, state and local governments."

"I know there are people who suffered losses who are upset and frightened, perhaps spending the night in a shelter," Clinton said.

"It has to be a terrifying experience," Clinton added.

He said those in California who have suffered such losses, or whose homes are threatened, should know "you are not facing these fires alone."

AP-NY-11-03-93 2126EST

FIRES DEVASTATE MALIBU ENCLAVE, MOVIE STARS FLEE

MALIBU, Calif, Nov 3 (Reuter) - Weary firefighters began gaining the upper hand Wednesday against a southern California firestorm that drove movie stars from their ocean-view mansions and destroyed nearly 300 homes.

The wind-driven wildfires — a harrowing repeat of infernos that devastated the region last week — unleashed their fury this time on the celebrity enclave of Malibu, where glamorous refugees loaded their Jaguars and limousines and fled overnight.

A number of blazes continued burning out of control for the second day and new flareups threatened more structures, but Los Angeles Fire Chief Donald Manning declared "the worst is over." Fire crews were aided by calmer winds and a fleet of water-dropping aircraft.

Malibu's rich and famous found themselves reduced to mere mortals when their multimillion-dollar estates were overrun by the worst fire in the town's history.

Mansions belonging to Sean Penn and Bruce Willis were damaged or destroyed during the night, according to news reports.

Actor Gary Buscy decided to stay put, Mark Hamill was thrown off his property by firefighters, pop music star Vince Neil grabbed his gold and platinum records before fleeing and Ali McGraw had to hike up a hill to see if her house was safe.

But the famed Malibu Colony — seaside home to such stars as Larry Hagman and Burgess Meredith — was spared major damage after it was evacuated, fire officials said.

Hamill, best known for his role as heroic Luke Skywalker in the "Star Wars" films, returned to find his home still standing while dozens of nearby houses had gone up in flames.

"Oh boy, we are lucky," he said.

Others were not so fortunate. "By the time I left it was like 'Apocalypse Now,'" said novelist Richard Christian Matheson, who had time only to grab his cat and a half-finished manuscript.

More than 7,000 people were driven from their homes Tuesday in towns and communities stretching from the Santa Monica Mountains to the Pacific coast, where three wind-driven infernos scorched more than 35,000 acres (14,000 hectares).

An army of 5,000 firefighters began making headway Wednesday as the fierce 60 mph (95 kph) Santa Ana winds that ignited the area like a tinderbox Tuesday began dying down.

The latest fires erupted just after fire crews declared victory over 15 blazes that devastated other parts of the area over four days, destroying 730 homes and charring 180,000 acres (73,000 hectares) from Los Angeles to the U.S.-Mexico border.

Authorities blamed the Malibu fire on arson and estimated damages would run into hundreds of millions of dollars. Some of the houses were worth \$10 million each.

Governor Pete Wilson said the state, a firefighting foundation and several insurance companies were joining together to offer a \$125,000 reward for help in arresting the person who set the blaze.

James Lee Witt, director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, said President Clinton was so concerned about the latest fire damage that he was considering a visit to the devastated areas.

No deaths were reported, but the injury total climbed to 120 firefighters and a dozen civilians, including two men critically hurt with burns covering most of their bodies.

Other major fires forced several thousand more people to evacuate and destroyed dozens of homes in rural sections of Riverside, San Bernardino and San Diego counties.

A thick cloud of choking gray haze hung over Los Angeles, and plumes of smoke could be seen rising skyward.

Flames moved menacingly close to the famed Getty Museum, housing some of the world's greatest masterpieces, but officials said the building escaped damage.

Looting was reported at abandoned beachfront homes in Malibu and three men were arrested.

Mayor Richard Riordan declared a state of emergency in Los Angeles but said it was only a precaution to allow the fire and police departments to coordinate their efforts. "There is no reason to panic," he said in an address broadcast on live television. REUTER

Malibu Wildfire Dies Down, But Hot Spots Plague Firefighters

MALIBU, Calif. (AP) — Helicopters swooped up Topanga Canyon ferrying giant buckets of ocean water as an army of firefighters stepped up their assault Wednesday on a wildfire that claimed 200 homes in this celebrity seaside town.

The hot, dry desert winds that fed Tuesday's firestorm died down overnight. But erratic gusts Wednesday from the sea and the mountains swirled embers of flame from the brush, posing a threat to homes.

"The winds, thank God, have died down, which have allowed the crews to gain the upper hand," Gov. Pete Wilson said.

A huge cloud of black smoke hung over the seaside enclave that is home to such celebrities as Bruce Willis, Demi Moore, Burgess Meredith, Mark Hamill and Mel Gibson. Evacuees returned on bicycles and rollerskates because police closed off a 45-mile stretch of the Pacific Coast Highway.

Among the victims was actor Sean Penn, whose \$4 million Spanish-style mansion was destroyed.

"I don't know if he evacuated or if he was there at the time," said his publicist Carol Stone. Penn wasn't immediately available for comment.

Arson investigators located where the fire broke out, but didn't immediately know whether it was set.

The fire, which began Tuesday morning 12 miles north of Malibu in the Santa Monica Mountains, destroyed 200 canyon ranches and seaside mansions and charred 35,000 acres as it roared through this mile-wide, 27-mile-long coastal strip.

It was the latest in a series that has burned more than 1,000 homes and 215,000 acres in Southern California in the past 11/2 weeks.

As the winds subsided Wednesday, nearly 5,000 firefighters stepped up their attack on volatile hot spots. But the blaze remained out of control. The Santa Ana winds were expected to end Wednesday night, and cooler weather near the coast was predicted for Thursday.

Twin-rotor Chinook helicopters dumped Volkswagen-size buckets into the ocean and swooped up Topanga Canyon to bomb flames with salt water.

C-130 air tankers carrying orange fire retardant painted the canyon's east wall to stop fire from creeping toward the densely populated Pacific Palisades area of Los Angeles. At least one home was destroyed Wednesday as Tuna Canyon went up in flames.

Malibu Colony, a gated beachfront strip of celebrity and millionaire homes, was spared, as was Pepperdine University, where 300 students spent Tuesday night in the gymnasium as flames roared past campus.

The J. Paul Getty Museum, with its priceless collection of Greek and Roman antiquities, was safe, a spokeswoman said.

Flames slashed through yards around canyon retreats belonging to Gibson, Charles Bronson, Dick Van Dyke and former Sen. John Tunney. But their homes were barely touched.

In front of a coastal highway home owned by "Diehard" star Willis and Moore, the actor's new black Porsche was covered with white ash.

"He and his wife and the kids left last night," said neighbor and caretaker Artie Cirincione. The couple have two children and are expecting their third.

Curt Pierose was among the lucky ones. He stayed up all night hosing down his \$1 million oceanview home _ and saved it.

"Was it worth risking my life? Probably not," Pierose said.

"But I live on a cul de sac. And I had some room to work. So I thought I'd try it."

Sheriff's deputies and California Highway Patrol officers patrolled empty streets to prevent looting. Three men found stacking televisions on the beach were arrested for investigation of looting, said Deputy Irma Becerra.

Federal Emergency Management Agency Chief James Lee Witt toured Malibu and said his agency was setting up disaster aid centers "in record time."

Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt predicted the latest fires would cause up to \$500 million in damage and warned that rain will spawn mudslides.

"I think once this is all over we are going to have to do some soul-searching about the process of building into these deep canyons with all the brush," Babbitt said.

Director-screenwriter Duncan Gibbins, 41, remained in critical condition Wednesday at Sherman Oaks Hospital and Health Center with burns sustained when he tried to save a cat from his burning home Tuesday. Ron Mass, 40, also was in critical condition.

Elsewhere:

— Firefighters surrounded half of an 8,000-acre wildfire in Riverside County, 80 miles east of Los Angeles, that destroyed or damaged 17 structures, injured six people and forced hundreds to leave their homes.

— Firefighters contained 70 percent of a 1,500-acre fire in San Diego County that threatened homes near Poway.

AP-DS-11-03-93 1743EST

TV CLIPS

DATE November 3, 1993
TIME 6:30-7:00 PM
NETWORK PBS
PROGRAM Nightly Business Report

PAUL KANGAS, co-anchor:

The winds in Southern California remain erratic tonight. And that's causing concern for firefighters and residents trying to battle brushfires there. Damage estimates have now exceeding \$1/2 billion. Today the Federal Emergency Management Agency said it will draft a national strategy to reduce the risks from natural disasters. FEMA officials say the nation can no longer afford the high-cost disasters, particularly since it knows how to reduce losses.

DATE November 3, 1993
TIME 8:00-9:00 PM
NETWORK Cable News Network
PROGRAM PrimeNews

SUSAN ROOK, co-anchor:

And now to the president of the United States:

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(Clinton talks about communities coming together in the wake of the wildfires.)

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President BILL CLINTON: After designating several counties as major disaster areas, we dispatched forest service air tankers and federal firefighters to the scene. At my direction, Mr. McClarty, the White House chief of staff, has coordinated the federal response. The director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, James Lee Witt, traveled immediately to the scene of the fires, along with agriculture secretary Mike Espy and our general services administrator from Orange County, Roger Johnson. We work with Governor Wilson and his emergency director Nick Andrews, as well the leader in your congressional delegation, especially your senators, Boxer and Feinstein.

And until these fires are out, those in the Inland Empire, and the new ones tearing through the Santa Monica Mountains, our work will continue and we won't rest either. For these new fires, the federal response has already begun. We're providing 37 air tankers, 100 fire crews, amounting to 2,000 federal firefighters, 86 fire engines, and 22 helicopters. I've just spoken with FEMA Director Witt, and he assures me that the federal efforts are well-coordinated with the extraordinary work being done by private citizens in state and local governments.