



San Bernardino Valley Old Fire Recovery Effort Update

August 9, 2004

Population and demographics of San Bernardino Valley

As of the 2000 US Census (from which all following information is based unless otherwise noted) the population of San Bernardino was 185,401. Of the total, 88,022 (or 47.48%) presented themselves as Hispanic or Latino (of any race) while 83,849 (or 45.23%) reported themselves as white and 30,425 (or 16.41%) reported themselves as black. There is some crossover in the white/Hispanic numbers though since in the 1990 and 2000 Census, Hispanic is not considered a race, thus percentages do not add up to 100%.

2004 Estimated Total Population has increased city wide to 196,300 (from the California Department of Finance Demographic Research Unit).

Over 95% of the fire survivors in the San Bernardino Valley were in the 92404 zip code (751 out of 787). The following statistics are from that zip code.

- The reported population was 56,499.
- The total number of households was 17,702.
- The race, ethnicity and ancestry reports are as follows: White 53.19%; Hispanic 38.19%, Black, 15.95%.
- The average household income was \$42,126 and the median income was \$31,121.
- 26.43% reported that they never graduated high school, 27.83% said they have a high school diploma, but no college experience, 25.61% reported that they have some college experience, but no degree with the remaining 20.12% reporting that they have a college degree or higher.

Burn statistics

We have a total of 787 burned residences in our database. 533 of these are total losses with the remaining 254 being partial losses.

Of the 533 total losses, 330 are reported to be in the city. We assume the rest (202) to be in the county. The total reported total losses due to the Old fire are 993 so we assume the rest of the losses (440) to be in the mountain communities.

Of the 787 burned residences in our database, 691 are in the Del Rosa area, 61 in Waterman Canyon, 25 in Devore and 6 in Verdemont.

We have alternate contact information (phone, email or mailing address) for 116 people.



Old fire map overlaid onto San Bernardino area map with effected areas of Del Rosa, Waterman Canyon, Verdemont and Devore noted.

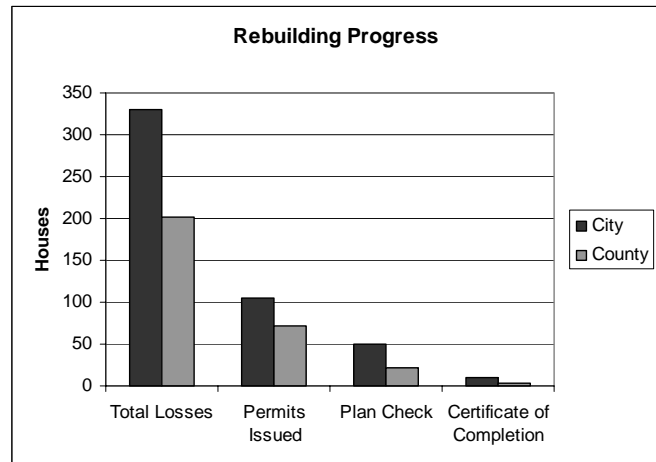
Rebuild Statistics

City

As of July 31, 2004 (information updated by the city at the end of every month) of the 330 total losses within the city limits, there have been 105 permits issued and an additional 50 in plan check or approved and ready for pickup. There are 10 houses complete with a certificate of occupancy.

County

As of July 26, 2004 (the last time we contacted the county database administrator) of the 202 assumed county losses in the valley, there were 71 permits issued, 21 in plan check and 4 complete with a certificate of occupancy.



Recovery Effort Players

The Old Fire Recovery Group of San Bernardino consists of a part time, paid coordinator (Lila Hayes) and Gary Stephens who is a volunteer consultant from the Eaton Canyon Recovery Alliance. There is also a volunteer group of 6 survivors as follows:

- Amelia and Jim Herrmann: Neighborhood outreach and coordination.
- Claudia Oakes: Neighborhood outreach and coordination.
- Bill McKinney: Coordinate with Building Department and other government agencies.
- Marcey Stanton: Media and neighborhood outreach.
- Ramona Payan: Spanish translator and coordination with the Hispanic community.

Paul Vandeventer is our Community Partners advisor

We are in the process of contacting other organizations who are also working with fire victims and so far have found the following:

JoDee Ewing	Fire Survivor	[Lived in Waterman Canyon]	909-475-8603	
Lee Hensley		American Red Cross	909-888-1481	hensleyj@usa.redcross.org
Joseph McNamara	Casework Supervisor	American Red Cross	909-888-1481	
George Kehrer		CARE	818-216-0123	gkehrer@nc.rr.com
Dr. Richard Eberst	Director/Professor	Community-University Partnership partnered w/ Rebuild SB County	909-880-5345	reberst@csusb.edu
Denise Gilliam		FEMA	626-431-3009	denise.gilliam@dhs.gov
Kevin Walton		Lutheran Disaster Response	619-659-0018	
Bev	Caseworker	Lutheran Disaster Response	909-337-9922 909-886-8749	charlie4me@earthlink.net
Kristin Prichard	Executive Director	Rebuild San Bernardino County	909-792-0255	
Mariah Heidental		Wildfire Recovery Project	909-953-9744	
Norma Salas		Wildfire Recovery Project	909-986-7111	

We have additional information about the following organizations:

JoDee Ewing

JoDee is a fire survivor who lived in Waterman Canyon. She has organized a group of Waterman Canyon survivors (don't know if they have a name or not) and has had at least one successful event. She is planning another even for Saturday September 11 of this year. We have invited her to come to our meetings so we can share information and successes. If all goes well, we hope to at least have a partnership with their group and if it seems more appropriate, to integrate our two groups. She might be an excellent "event coordinator" since she has already planned two large events for fire survivors.

CARe

CARe has been in San Bernardino since just after the fires. Their first meeting at our current location was on November 11, 2003. George and his wife Pat have been coming almost every week since. They have given invaluable information to survivors to aid in the recovery process.

CARe kept us together by helping to organize advertising postcards and by offering continuity with weekly meetings.

Community – University Partnership

Community – University Partnership is teamed up with Rebuild San Bernardino County as one of their 25 committee members, but I found the director of this organization through a completely different route. The director is a professor at Cal State, which also sustained damage from the fire but it seems like this organization was around prior to the fire. They are a general service organization and also have fellowships available for professors at SCUSB which focus on volunteering in the community.

They also have a "major partnership" with "Vital Communities Dialogue Collaborative (VCDC)". The VCDC is teamed up with many local organizations (including Calvary Baptist Church where we have our meetings). This organization's purpose is to identify needs in local neighborhoods and to find ways to fulfill those needs.

They have created a "40th Street Regeneration Collaborative" which includes 10 blocks north and south of 40th which runs right through the burn area. The most intriguing part of this group is that they submitted an application to HUD to fund the implementation of the 40th Street Project which is called "Los Vencinos para la Comunidad Revitalización" which will bring over \$1.8 million to address the communities challenges. They will have a full-time office in the area and the director has informally offered this as "a place for [our] group to continue [our] good efforts".

Rebuild San Bernardino County

This organization is focused on helping the uninsured homeowner in San Bernardino Valley. They consist of a paid, full time director and have a volunteer committee of 25 organizations and individuals from the community.

They have been told by FEMA that there are 51 uninsured homeowners in San Bernardino Valley, but FEMA was unable to give them any names due to privacy issues. Since the fire they have secured enough money to rebuild at least 3 houses, but have yet to find anyone to help.

We invited them to also come to our weekly meetings to let the people know about their service and although most of the people who attend are insured, they might know others who weren't. We also told them that we do have a database of almost 800 fire victims and although we can not give them the database, if they prepare a mailing we will send it to everyone on our list.

Wildfire Recovery Project

The Wildfire Recovery Project recently started sending staff to our weekly meetings to keep us updated on what they are doing. Previously they had only come to one meeting and thought we might not want them there "crashing" our meeting. We extended the offer for them to come every week and talk to our group for a few minutes to tell us what they are doing. They are planning on starting weekly meetings

of their own. They have secured a meeting site at a local elementary school, but anticipate it taking several weeks before they get people to start coming.

OFRG Accomplishments

We have been formally organized only since July 15, 2004, but have been meeting since early November via CARE. Since July we have prepared our 5th postcard run (mailed July 28) and our first four-page newsletter (mailed August 5).

We have secured permission to have an information display at a 24 hour Walgreen's near the burn area.

We are preparing a elected official dialogue for Sunday August 15.

We recently found a volunteer consultant to help survivor learn the mechanics of working with contractors. Working with contractors can be as difficult as working with insurance companies and they will walk all over you equally if the survivor is not informed. This woman has been working with contractors for almost 30 years and is herself closely related to a fire victim (she lost her father and the family home in a fire 20 years ago). This past week we had our second meeting where she spoke on issues surrounding working with contractors.

Since our funding we have put together a small web site (www.oldfirerecoverygroup.org) and now have a local voicemail/fax number (909-266-1459) so that local people can feel comfortable calling and not incur long distance charges.

We hope to join forces with the Waterman Canyon group and help them prepare a successful event in September.

OFRG Challenges

Our biggest challenge so far is communication with fire survivors. We have had a difficult time getting survivors to our meetings.

For example, on Modesto Drive there are about 15 destroyed houses. Only one person will attend our meetings. When I asked survivors for their opinion on what we need to ask of our officials at our August 15 meeting, one partial-burn survivor on this street (who has never attended a meeting) said *"take your sights off the pocket books of the insurance and state offices, and focus them on the home owners that [sic] really caused this fire to get out of hand"* and signed it *"Home owner and victim of my neighbors"*

Now that we are contacting agencies and letting them know we are around, we expect to have higher attendance at our meetings. For example, a couple of weeks ago I contacted the County Fire Debris Removal Program and spoke to their director. After an unauthorized letter was sent out to fire survivors about a non-existent "contractor referral service" they started getting calls from people and didn't know where to send them. She called last Wednesday and asked what our group could do for these people. I told her about our "working with contractor" workshops that were taking place and she said she would start referring people to us. We also hope that agencies such as "The Wildfire Recovery Program" will take advantage of our pre-existing schedule and send survivors our way.