

---

9 Dead In California Wildfire, Residents Take Refuge On Beaches In Malibu

---

10/11/2018



**Paradise:** Wildfires burned out of control on Friday across California, killing at least nine people in a mountain town and forcing residents to flee the upscale beach community of Malibu in the face of a monster fire storm.

All nine victims were found in and around the Northern California town of Paradise, where more than 6,700 homes and businesses were burned down by the Camp Fire, making it one of the most destructive in state history, according to California Department of Forestry and Fire protection data.

"This event was the worst-case scenario. It was the event we have feared for a long time," Butte County Sheriff Kory Honea said at a Friday evening press conference. "Regrettably, not everybody made it out."

The remains of five of the victims were discovered in or near burned out cars, three outside residences and one inside a home, Honea said.

Another 35 people had been reported missing and three firefighters had been injured.

The flames descended on Paradise so quickly that many people were forced to

abandon their cars and run for their lives down the sole road through the mountain town.

A school bus was among several abandoned vehicles left blackened by flames on one road.

The Camp Fire, which broke out on Thursday at the edge of the Plumas National Forest northeast of Sacramento, has since blackened more than 90,000 acres and was only 5 percent contained as of nightfall on Friday.

A total of 6,453 homes had been destroyed in Paradise and elsewhere, Honea said, along with 260 commercial buildings. The Tubbs Fire, which destroyed 5,636 structures in Napa and Sonoma counties in October 2017, is listed by Cal Fire as the most destructive in state history.

### **Fire burns toward Malibu**

In Malibu, some 500 miles (800 km) to the south, flames driven by hot Santa Ana winds gusting up to 50 miles per hour (80 kph) raced down hillsides and through canyons toward multi-million dollar homes.

Thousands of residents packed the Pacific Coast Highway to head south or took refuge on beaches, along with their horses and other pets.

Among those force to flee the Woolsey Fire, which had charred some 35,000 acres (14,164 hectares) as of Friday afternoon, were celebrities, including Lady Gaga and Kim Kardashian, who said on Twitter flames had damaged the home she shares in nearby Calabasas with Kanye West.

"Fire is now burning out of control and heading into populated areas of Malibu," the city said in a statement online. "All residents must evacuate immediately."

Malibu and Calabasas, west of Los Angeles, are home to hundreds of celebrities and entertainment executives attracted by ocean views, rolling hills and large, secluded estates.

The blaze, which spewed massive plumes of thick black smoke, also threatened parts of the nearby town of Thousand Oaks, where a gunman killed 12 people earlier this week in a shooting rampage at a college bar, stunning the bucolic Southern California community with a reputation for safety.

The Woolsey Fire broke out on Thursday and quickly jumped the 101 Freeway in several places. On Friday, it climbed over the Santa Monica Mountains toward Malibu.

Authorities were forced to shut down the 101, a major north-south artery, as well

as the Pacific Coast Highway. Los Angeles County Fire Chief Daryl Osby said a "significant number" of homes had been destroyed by the flames but that an accurate count could not yet be made.

Elsewhere, the Hill Fire in Ventura County's Santa Rosa Valley had charred about 6,000 acres (2,428 hectares) as of Friday evening, according to Cal Fire.

In Los Angeles, another, smaller fire in Griffith Park forced the Los Angeles Zoo to evacuate a number of show birds and some small primates on Friday as flames came within less than 2 miles (3 km) of the facility, zoo officials said in a statement.

---