
'My kids are Deceased': US Wildfire Kills 2 Children, 4 Others

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The weather on Sunday is expected to offer no relief for firefighters, with temperatures over 37.7 Celsius, low humidity and gusty winds, the National Weather Service said.

A 70-year-old woman and her two great-grandchildren were among six killed when a wildfire raged through an area of northern California and engulfed entire communities, officials and family members said.

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[Shasta County Sheriff](#) Tom Bosenko told a news conference in the city of Redding at the edge of the blaze on Sunday that one more person had died in a residence consumed by fire, bringing the total to six, including two firefighters. He said the latest victim had not complied with an evacuation order.

Bosenko said authorities are still looking for seven people after finding nine others who had been reported missing.

More than 38,000 people remained under evacuation orders on Sunday in and

around Redding, a city of 90,000 people about 257 km north of the state capital Sacramento.

The Carr Fire, which has destroyed more than 500 buildings, is the deadliest and most destructive of nearly 90 wildfires burning from Texas to Oregon. The Carr Fire has charred 36,095 hectares of drought-parched vegetation since erupting last Monday.

Redding Police Sergeant Todd Cogle confirmed that three bodies discovered at a fire-ravaged home on the outskirts of Redding were two children and their great-grandmother. The victims identified by relatives on Facebook and in news media reports were James Roberts, 5, his sister Emily, 4, and their great-grandmother, Melody Bledsoe, 70.

Bledsoe's granddaughter, Amanda Woodley, said on Facebook the elderly woman desperately put a wet blanket over the children as their home burned. "Grandma did everything she could to save them she hovered over them both with a wet blanket," Woodley said in a Facebook post.

The children's mother, Sherry Bledsoe, was quoted by the Sacramento Bee as saying: "My kids are deceased. That's all I can say."

"We are simply not getting a break," said Chris Anthony, a division chief with the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (Cal Fire). The blaze remained unpredictable, he said by telephone from Redding. "Under these conditions that we are seeing right now, it's not going to take much for the fire to have the extreme spread that we saw a couple of days ago."

Officials battling the blaze told the news conference in Redding they were feeling more optimistic on Sunday afternoon and starting to gain ground on Carr Fire. They pledged to return people to their homes as soon as possible.

An army of some 3,500 firefighters and a squadron of 17 water-dropping helicopters had carved buffer lines around just 5 percent of the fire's perimeter as of Sunday. Officials at the news conference said over 160 fire departments from California and around the country have been deployed to help quell the week-long blaze.
