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February 1, 2018

Councilwoman Monica Rodriguez, CD7
Los Angeles City Council
200 North Spring Street
Los Angeles, California 90012

Re: LAMC 85.02 (Vehicle Dwelling)
Revision to prohibit vehicle dwelling in Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones
Weekly street sweeping / sanitation

Dear Councilwoman Rodriguez:

I am writing to you on behalf of the Public Safety Committee for the Sylmar Neighborhood Council to convey a recommendation discussed and approved by our Committee that we believe is critically important for the safety of our community members. Our Board discussed and approved our Committee's position on January 25, 2018 by a vote of (17) Yea, (1) Nay and (1) Abstain.

Over the course of the past several months, the City of Los Angeles, including the community of Sylmar, has experienced several fires that appear to be connected to vehicles used for street dwelling. Attached are just a few examples of some unfortunate incidents that involve RVs and related vehicles, along with mapping for LAMC 85.02 and Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones (VHFHSZ). Some of these fires sadly included loss of life, while others threatened nearby structures. As you know, Sylmar is at great risk for fires along our hillsides, is prone to extremely high winds, and has experienced several significant wildfires over the past few years (Marek, Sayre & Creek wildfires).

The majority of the Green zones where street dwelling is currently allowed run along Foothill Boulevard from Arroyo Street to Balboa Boulevard. Several areas along and above Foothill Boulevard are mapped as VHFHSZs and include the areas of Sylmar hardest hit during the Sayre and Creek Fires, where many homes were lost. We ask that you consider asking for a revision to LAMC 85.02 to remove all Green and Yellow zones from areas mapped as VHFHSZs and change them to Red zones to prohibit vehicle dwelling in these high-risk areas.

We believe that this is a smart and proactive risk mitigation measure that can be taken to better ensure the safety of our community, given Sylmar's unique characteristics, geography and hazards. We feel that this proposal of prohibiting street dwelling within VHFHSZs also compliments Mayor Garcetti's recent announcement of a Task Force focused on removal of homeless encampments in VHFHSZs.

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Additionally, but not to hold up our above request, we ask that all Green zones within Sylmar be posted for weekly street sweeping and sanitation clean-ups. This will significantly improve the living conditions and safety for those living in their vehicles and for the surrounding community. Currently, there is a large amount of trash accumulation and human waste in and around these areas that contribute to blight and unsafe conditions in our community.

Thank you for your work on behalf of our community and in advance for supporting this request. We stand ready to assist you in moving this issue forward.

Sincerely,




Diane Valencia
Chair, Public Safety Committee

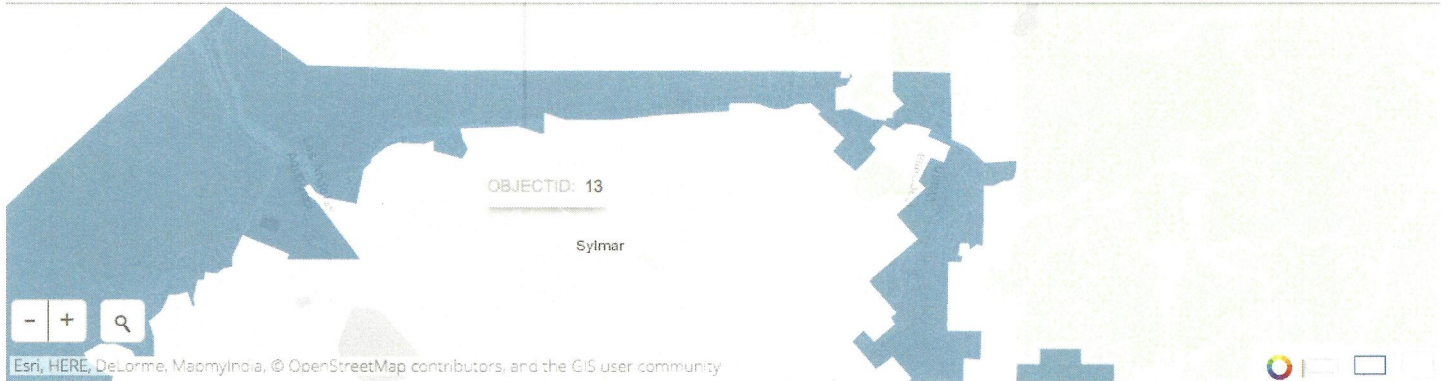
cc: Mayor Eric Garcetti
Mitch Englander – Chair, Los Angeles City Council Public Safety Committee
Mike Feuer - Los Angeles City Attorney
Trevor Richmond - Deputy Chief, Los Angeles Fire Department, Operations Valley Bureau
John A. Sherman - Deputy Chief, Los Angeles Police Department, Operations Valley Bureau
Kevin James – President, Board of Public Works

Zimas.lacity.org - LAMC Section 85.02 (Vehicle Dwelling) overlay



Geohub.lacity.org (Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones)

 GeoHub Search for open data 🔍



OBJECTID: 13
Sylmar

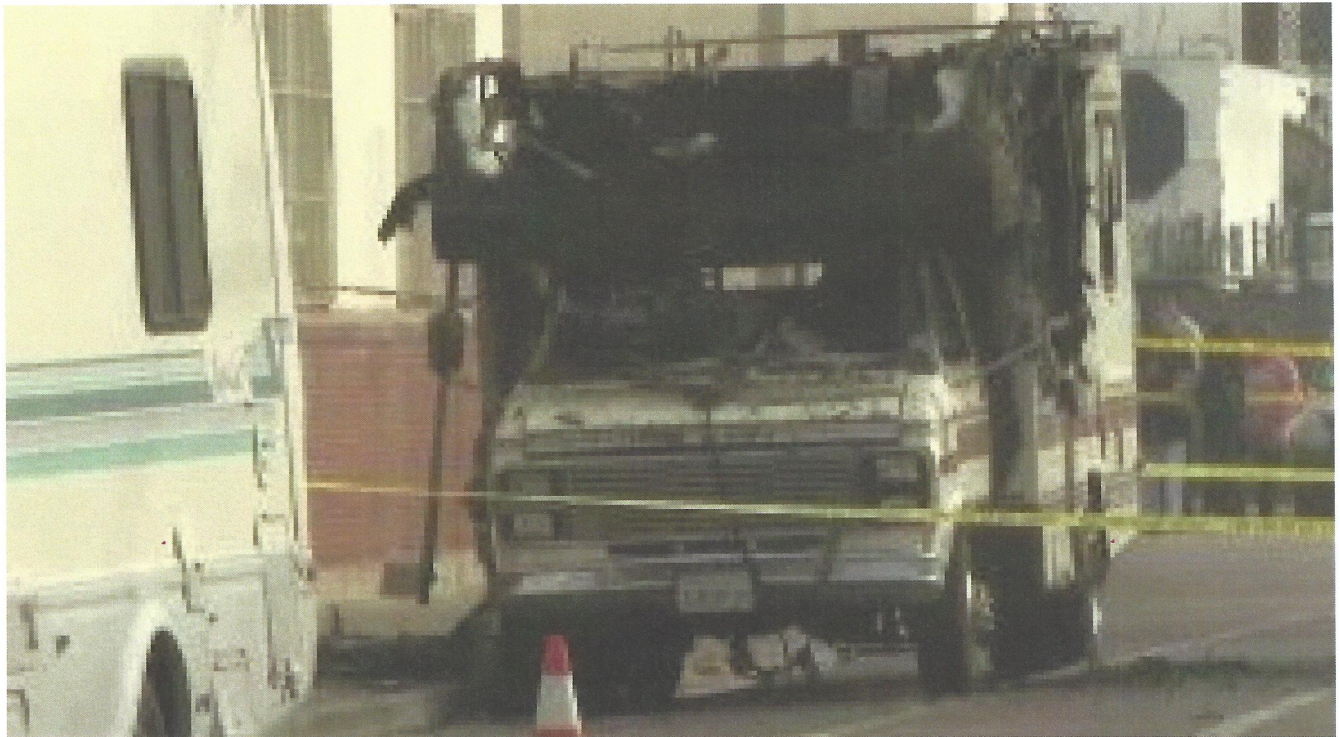
Esri, HERE, DeLorme, MapmyIndia, © OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS user community

Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones

[Open In ArcGIS](#) [Comments \(0\)](#) [Share](#) [Download Dataset](#) [APIs](#)

CIVILIAN FATALITY VEHICLE FIRE 01/02/2018

Civilian Fatality Vehicle Fire; 7:21AM; 200 West E Street; <https://goo.gl/maps/fGETb97DsD82>; Wilmington; Remains of one person (unk age/gender/affiliation) discovered inside a van-based motorhome found parked and fully ablaze curbside in business district; Flames confined to motorhome and quickly extinguished; No other injuries reported; Fire cause under active investigation; LAFD PIO Capt Erik Scott is en route; FS 38; Batt 6; South Bureau; Council District 15; Dispatched Units: E38 AR1 AR37; CH: 7; - Brian Humphrey



By ABC7.com staff

Monday, November 20, 2017

CHEVIOT HILLS, LOS ANGELES (KABC) --

Arson investigators responded after a body was found inside an RV that caught fire in the Cheviot Hills area of Los Angeles.

The RV fire was reported at about 11:15 a.m. in an alley in the 2700 block of S. Westwood Boulevard, Los Angeles Fire Department officials said.

It was later confirmed a person was found dead inside the vehicle, and arson investigators were investigating the scene.

Authorities said the victim was a 46-year-old man who lived in the RV with his wife and two dogs. The couple returned to find the RV on fire, so the man re-entered the RV to try to rescue his dogs.

The cause of the fire was under investigation.

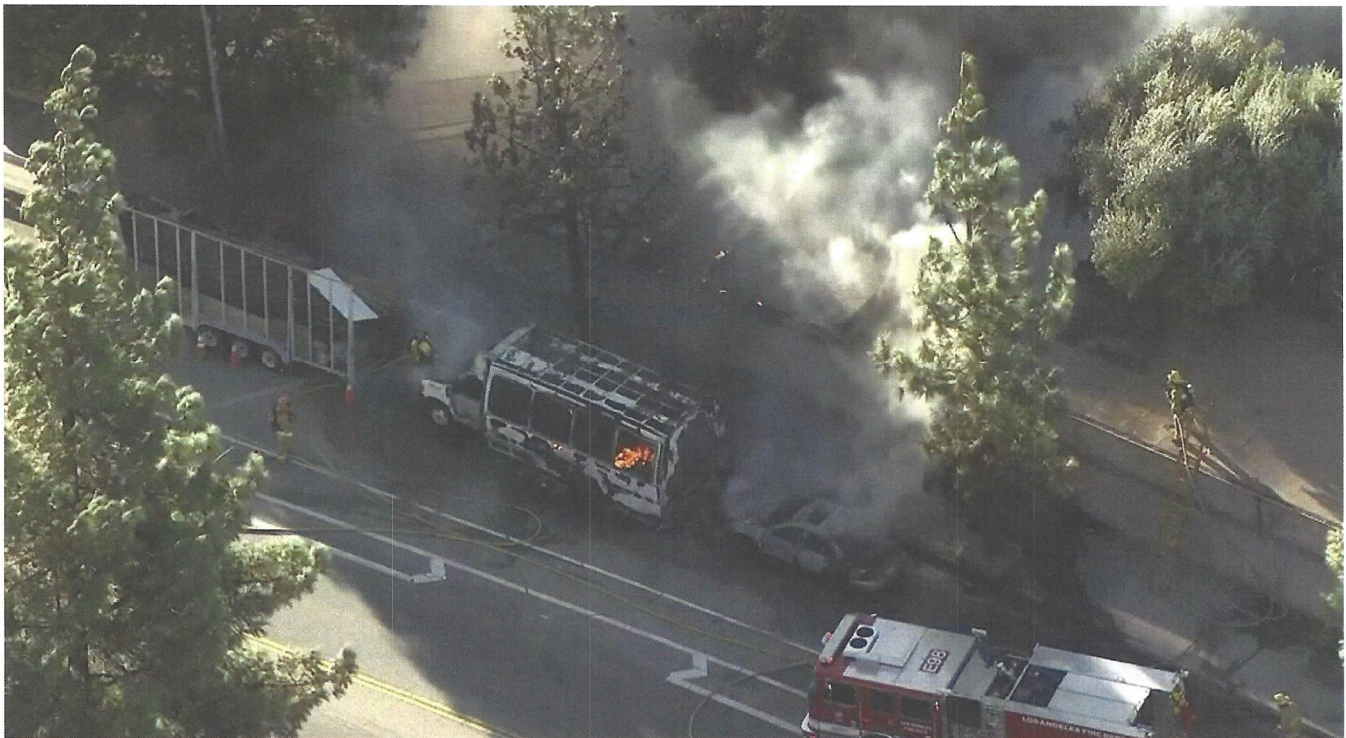


Los Angeles Daily News

October 24, 2017

Multiple fires broke out in the San Fernando Valley Tuesday morning, including one blaze which prompted a closure on the 118 Freeway and led to three people being temporarily detained.

The 118 Freeway fire began shortly before 8 a.m. in an area of heavy brush just north of the freeway and west of Woodley Avenue, Los Angeles Fire Department spokesman Brian Humphrey stated. Aerial video from Sky5 showed the fire burning over the freeway wall about 8:12 a.m. At one point, flames appeared to be jumping as high as 30 feet in the air. Officials stopped all westbound traffic while crews worked to douse the flames, which burned about half an acre. No structures were threatened, according to Humphrey.



A bus and a car were on fire in Sylmar on Oct. 24, 2017, when record-breaking heat and high winds were in the forecast. (Credit: KTLA)

Fire crews spotted a second blaze a short distance away on the south side of the freeway, which was quickly doused, video showed. Three people were detained and questioned about the fires, but were later released, Los Angeles Police Department Officer Sal Ramirez said. Authorities are continuing to search for any possible suspects, Ramirez said.

Firefighters also responded to a blaze in Sylmar that broke out about 8:13 a.m. Two vehicles were destroyed in the fire, which also burned surrounding trees and threatened a structure in the 15800 block of McQueen Street, Humphrey stated. The fire was fully contained after about 30 minutes. No injuries were reported.

Then, just before 9 a.m., Sky5 was over a fire burning in the Hansen Dam area of Lake View Terrace.

March 1, 2017

Partial report by LAPD SLO Sean Dinse, Chatsworth at 8 AM(Facebook)

So today, I just dropped my daughter off at school when I observed smoke plumes in the distance. I responded to the area in an attempt to locate the fire and verify whether emergency personnel were notified. I responded southbound Deering Avenue from Lassen Street in Chatsworth and observed numerous RV's parked on the street. This area is considered industrial and was recently impacted by the recent passing of the Los Angeles Municipal Code 85.02 causing the increase of RVs and persons living in their vehicles.

As I was approaching the area of the fire, I had a pretty good idea that it was going to be a RV on fire. Sure enough, as I was on Variel Avenue approaching Plummer Street the fire department was on scene putting out a Recreational Vehicle fire. I also observed a loan female on the sidewalk, with no shoes across the street from the RV. I parked, exited my vehicle and approached the female to make sure she was ok.

