

Scottsdale's Diamond Fire reflects preparation and coordination



It was just after 4:30 p.m. on a warm Tuesday evening in late June when a small brush fire started near 130th Street and Ranch Gate Road. A nearby resident noticed the flames and called 911.

The Scottsdale Fire Department said her call was the first report of what would be called the Diamond Fire, which grew rapidly and led to the evacuation of more than 1,100 people.

The fire threatened homes, wildlife, the natural environment – and tested the community's preparedness and resilience. The incident also demonstrated how the city of Scottsdale and supporting agencies rallied together in a well-coordinated effort to respond – showcasing Scottsdale's commitment to safeguarding its residents and the McDowell Sonoran Preserve.

As the Diamond Fire rapidly spread due to dry conditions and gusty winds, Scottsdale firefighters were first on scene – later joined by nearly 150 personnel from multiple agencies, including the United States Forest Service – and air support from the Arizona Department of Forestry and Fire Management. The result of this cooperation was a more substantial firefighting effort, and the right allocation of personnel and equipment to battle the fire from various fronts.

By 5 p.m., Scottsdale police officers had evacuated the immediate area, but as the fire moved north, even more residents had to be evacuated. Additional police officers were activated to handle the expanding evacuation area and secure the fire scene. The department's proactive approach helped

keep people safe from the immediate danger, and officers worked into the night with the American Red Cross Arizona to open an evacuation center at Cactus Shadows High School.

The city's social media platforms also played a crucial role in disseminating real-time information, ensuring that residents remained informed and connected throughout the crisis.

By 7 p.m. the following evening, the fire was 93% contained at 1,960 acres – a smaller figure than originally estimated thanks to a coordinated interagency response. Evacuation orders were lifted, allowing residents to return home.

Recognizing the fire's potential ecological impact, the city has partnered with Maricopa County Parks and Recreation Department and the McDowell Sonoran Conservancy to conduct damage assessments and develop a restoration plan.

Volunteers have combed the desert, launching "seed balls" to help reestablish native plant species and speed the return of the desert's natural beauty.

The Diamond Fire is a valuable lesson in disaster preparedness and underscores the significance of maintaining defensible spaces around homes and businesses to reduce the risk of future wildfires.

We urge residents to:

Be Ready: Create and maintain defensible space and harden your home against flying embers.

Get Set: Prepare your family and home ahead of time for the possibility of having to evacuate.

GO! When wildfire strikes, evacuate early for your safety.

Scottsdale remains dedicated to ensuring the safety of its residents and the preservation of its natural surroundings in the face of future challenges. [Learn more at ScottsdaleAZ.gov](https://www.scottsdaleaz.gov), search "wildfire."



City limits use of natural grass in new construction

In support of water conservation, the city adopted an ordinance prohibiting natural grass in front yards of new single-family homes. Feedback gathered from Scottsdale Water customers indicated strong support for the initiative, prompting the adjustment to the city's revised code.

The city has challenged itself and residents to reduce water

consumption by 5%. In the first six months of 2023, city government reduced water use by 9% when compared to the average past three years. Residents and businesses stepped up as well, reducing water use by 7%, comparatively. The combined result? 657 million gallons of water saved!

Grandfathered in, but want to get rid of your water-sucking grass? The city also incentivizes permanent water reduction through a variety of rebate programs, including grass removal.

Info: [ScottsdaleAZ.gov](https://www.scottsdaleaz.gov), search "rebates."

Scottsdale's Veterans Day Commemoration will be in a new location this year. Join us from 10:30 a.m. – noon Nov. 11 on the Memorial Lawn at Scottsdale Civic Center, as we join American Legion Post 44 and other veterans service organizations in honoring those who have served in the U.S. armed forces. This year's keynote speaker is Michael McLaughlin, Rear Admiral, USN (Ret.). In years past, this commemoration was held in the afternoon at McCormick-Stillman Railroad Park. It will be relocated this year to the area surrounding the Scottsdale Memorial for the Fallen, which was dedicated earlier this year, to mark the occasion in partnership with local veterans' organizations. [Search "Veterans Day" at ScottsdaleAZ.gov to learn more.](#)

Canal Convergence – One Water Brewing Showcase. Enjoy craft beers brewed with Scottsdale's ultra-pure recycled water from 6-10 p.m. Saturday and Sunday, Nov. 4 and 5, as part of the annual Canal Convergence event. Scottsdale Water directly delivers recycled water from the Advanced Water Treatment Plant to participating breweries for this unique event. In 2019, Scottsdale Water became the first Arizona agency permitted to treat recycled water for potable use – water that is safe for humans to drink. [Info: CanalConvergence.com, search "one water brewing."](#)

Envision. Plan. Play. Provide feedback for the "Shape Scottsdale Parks" master planning process. Your feedback will help prioritize goals so the city's parks and recreation programs and facilities can meet evolving community needs. The long-range plan identifies key initiatives, policies and strategies to guide Scottsdale's parks and recreation programs and services over the next decade. Visit [ShapeScottsdaleParks.com](#) to take an online questionnaire, comment on interactive maps and stay informed on upcoming milestones via an email subscription.

Hispanic Heritage Month is Sept. 15-Oct. 15. Each year, we celebrate the histories, cultures and contributions of Americans whose ancestors came from Spain, Mexico, Central and South America, and the Caribbean. Learn about Gerbacio "Harvey" Noriega, the Scottsdale cowboy whose likeness adorns the city's official seal. Noriega was one of many remarkable Mexican Americans who helped shape Scottsdale's culture. Search his name at [ScottsdaleAZ.gov](#) to learn more.

Bring holiday cheer to Scottsdale families and seniors. Donate toys, gifts, food or money to help brighten the season for those in need. [Info: ScottsdaleAZ.gov, search "Scottsdale Shares."](#)

Create safer neighborhoods by hosting or attending a block party. GAIN – Getting Arizona Involved in Neighborhoods, our state's answer to National Night Out, unites communities Saturday, Oct. 14. Learn how to host a successful gathering at [ScottsdaleAZ.gov, search "block parties."](#)

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If you have questions or suggestions, please email communications@ScottsdaleAZ.gov

General city information:
480-312-3111 or email questions@ScottsdaleAZ.gov

Things To Do

For complete details, search event names in **bold** at [ScottsdaleAZ.gov](#):

- Celebrate **Railfair**. 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Sept. 30 and Oct. 1.
- The **Halloween Spook-Track-Ula** happens Oct. 6-31.
- Rid yourself of unwanted electronics at the **Electronics Recycling Event**. 7:30 a.m.-2 p.m. Oct. 7.
- Paiute Neighborhood Center's **Fall Festival and Health Fair** takes place Oct. 14.
- Witness the talents of K9s and their handlers at the **Desert Dog Police K9 Trials & Public Safety Expo**. Oct. 21 and 22.
- Get a head start on holiday shopping at the **Granite Reef Senior Center's Arts and Crafts Fair**. 9 a.m.-2 p.m. Nov. 4.
- **Day of the Dog** includes a puppy stampede, exhibitors, yoga with puppies and more. 11 a.m.-3 p.m. Nov. 18 and 19.



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