



Long Beach Fire Department

Significant Increase in Fires

... More Than Fighting Fires

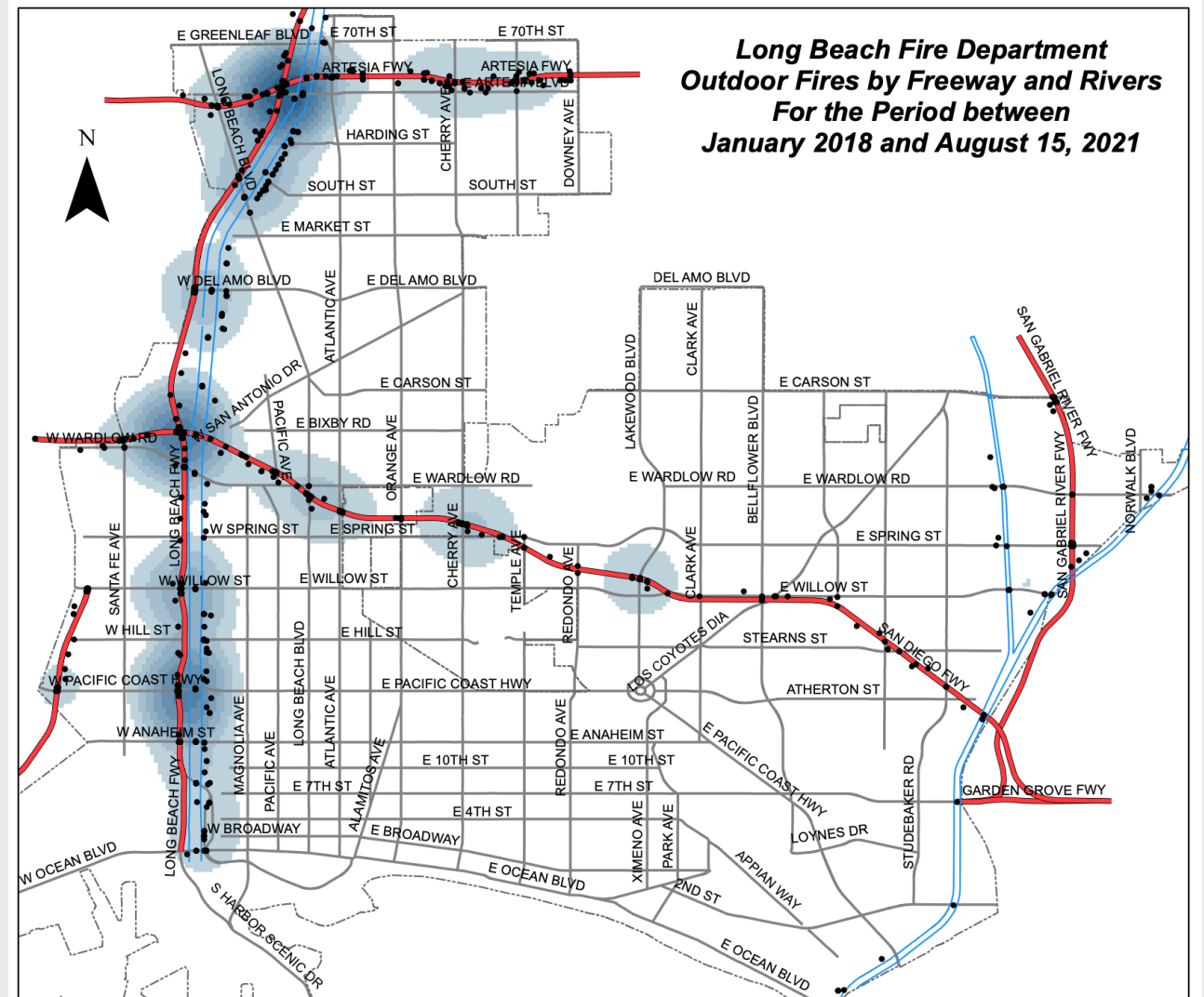
How is an outdoor fire defined?

Outdoor fire

- Brush fire
- Dumpster fire
- Grass fire
- Trash/refuse fire
- Tree fire
- Check illegal burn
- Check extinguished fire

Outdoor fires by Freeway and Rivers

- < 500' 91, 405, 605, 710 Freeways
- < 500' LA, San Gabriel, and Coyote Creek



Numbers increase year to year

Long Beach Fire Department Outdoor Fires

For the Period between January 2018 and August 15, 2021

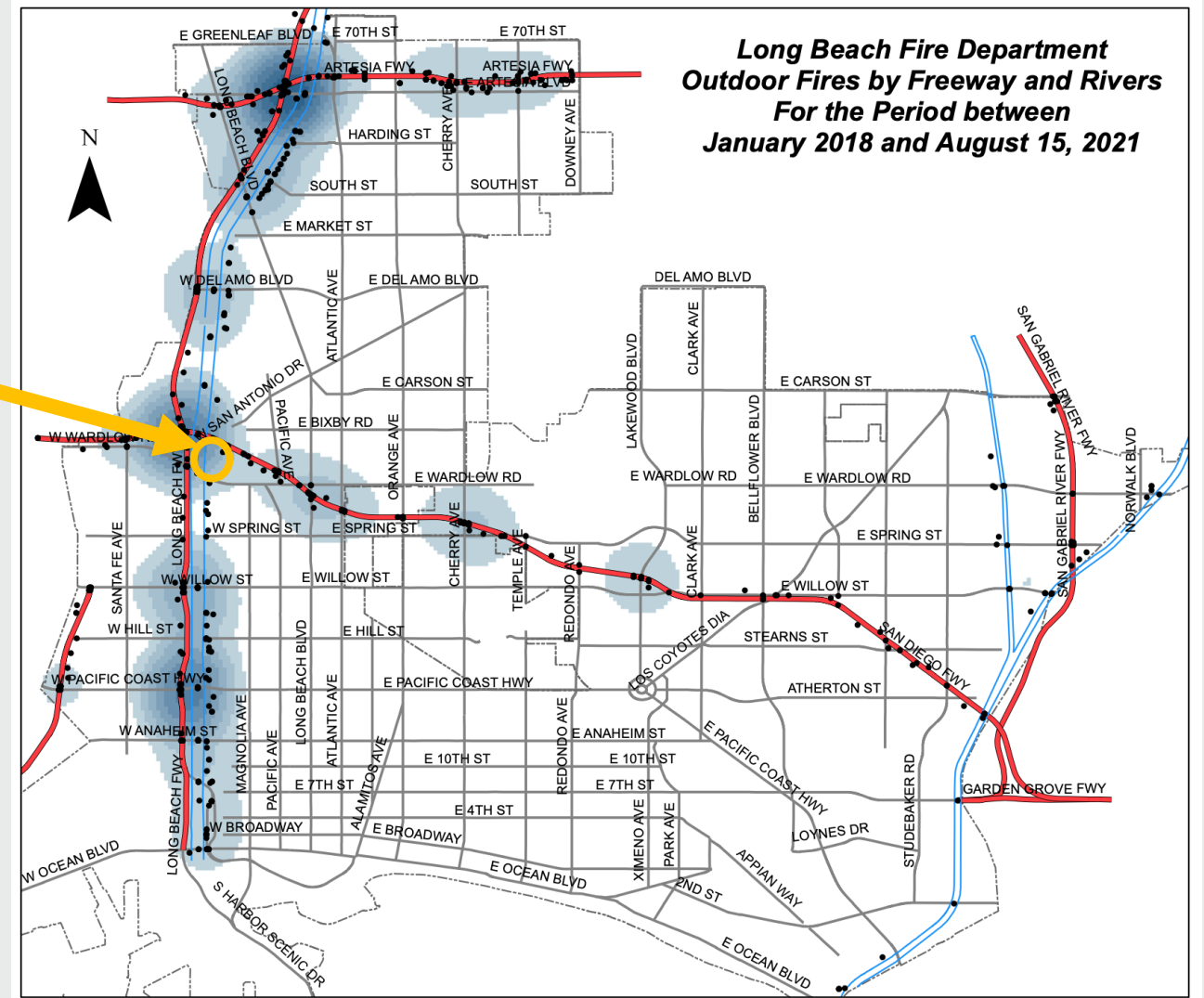
Fire Statistics

Period	All Fires		Outdoor Fires		Outdoor Fires by Freeway and Rivers	
	Count	Δ% Year-to-	Count	Δ% Year-to-	Count	Δ% Year-to-
2018	2,900		911		143	
2019	3,279	13%	1,014	11%	260	82%
2020	3,882	18%	1,457	44%	434	67%
As of Aug 15, 2021	2,657	*	1,107	*	367	*

**Period incomplete, % Increase cannot be calculated*

Recent fire in Council District 7

- South of 405 Fwy / East of 710 Fwy
- 3 Acres burned
- 26 Units committed
(equivalent to a third alarm fire)
- Auto Aid response from LA County
(Two engines + Battalion Chief)
- Resource drawdown for a significant amount of time

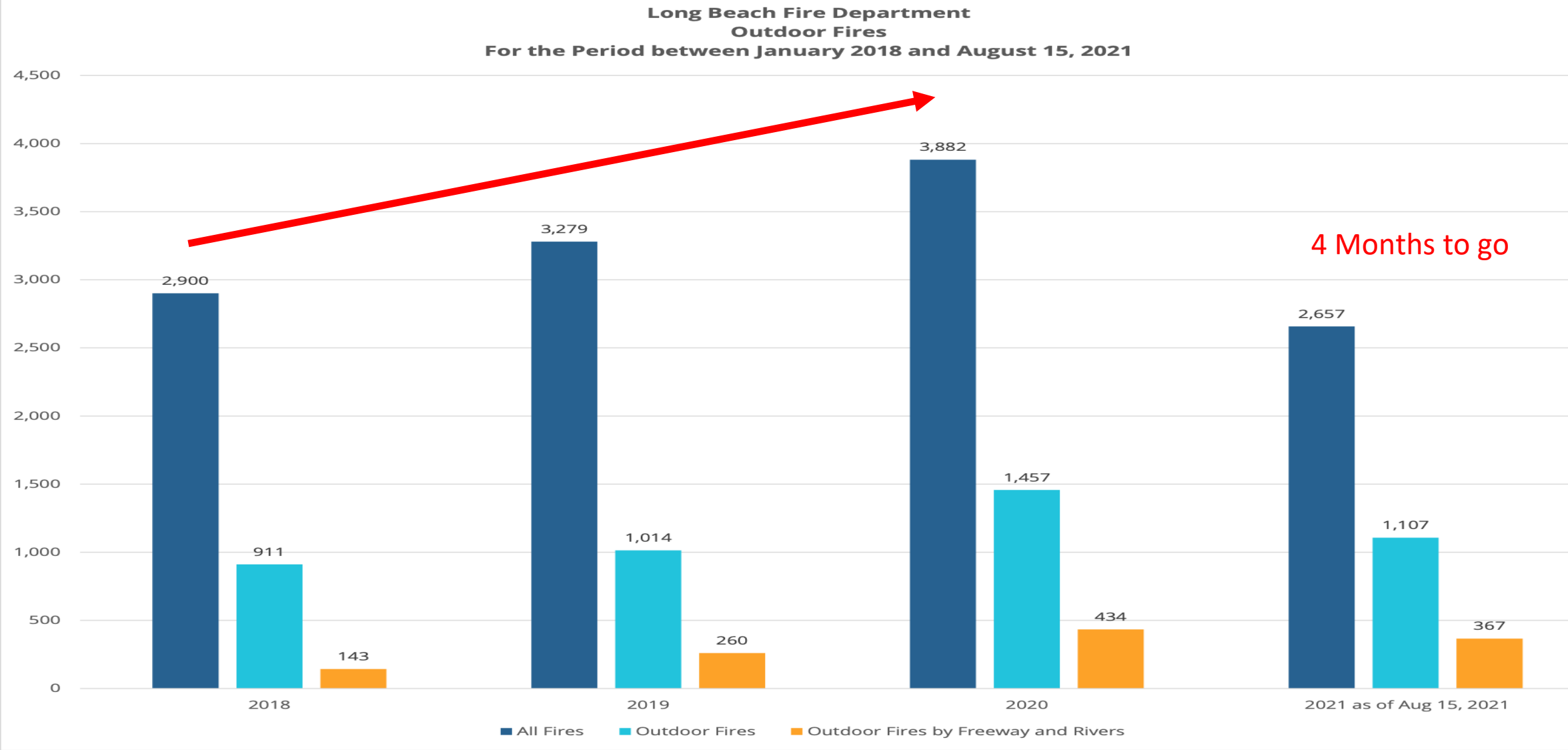


Recent fire in CD7

- All southbound lanes shut down except for HOV
- Offramps shutdown
- Major water supply issues
- Units on scene for 5 hours (initial attack to mop-up)
- Multiple 911 calls throughout the next day (larger fuels may smolder for multiple days)

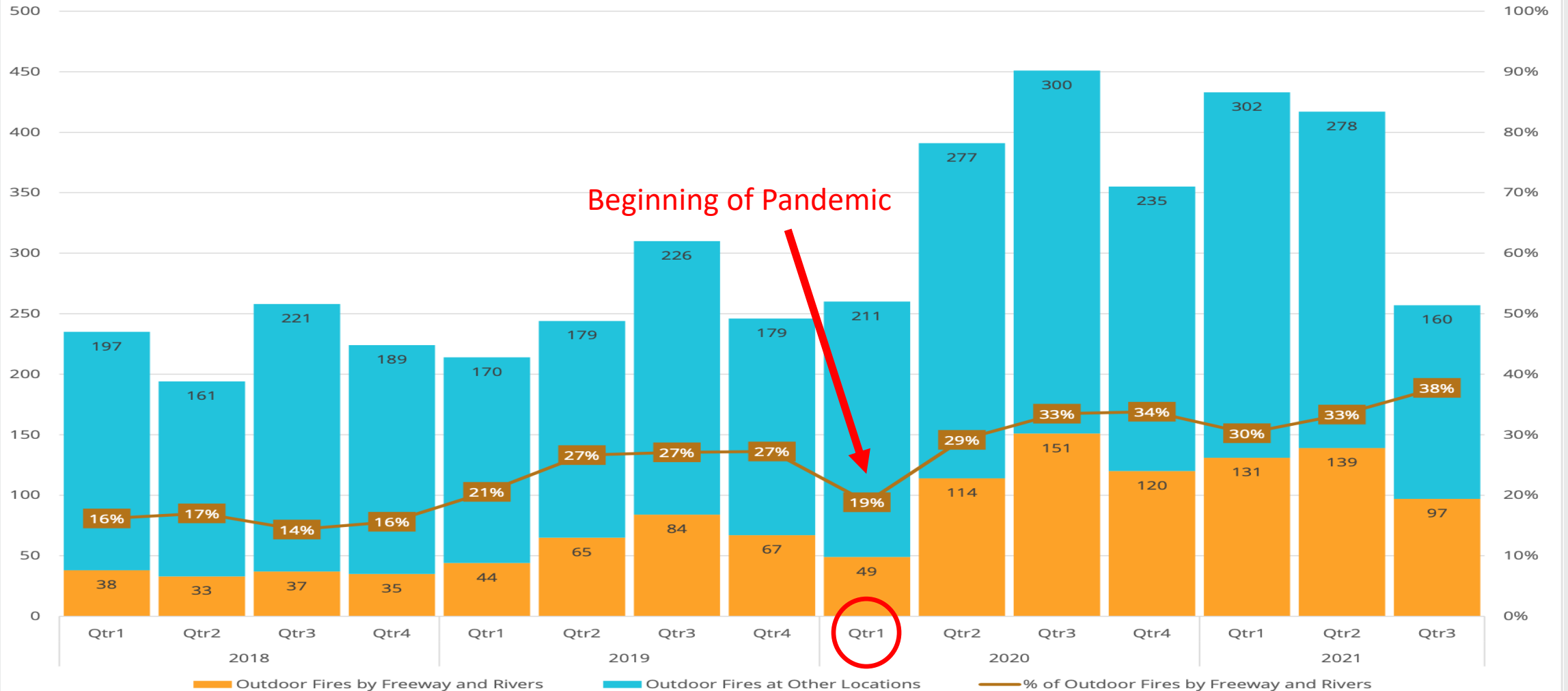


How are we looking this year?

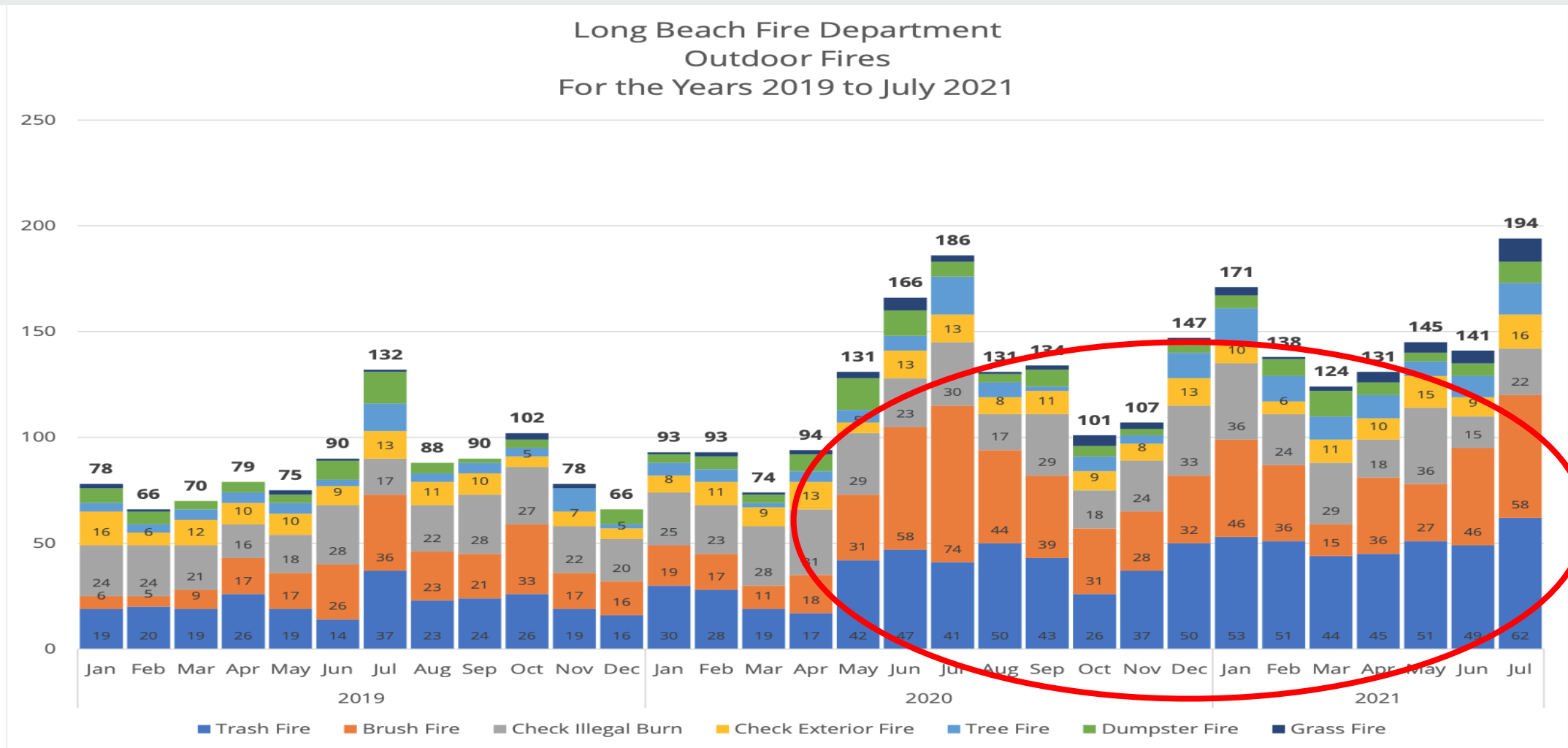


Trending up...

Long Beach Fire Department
Percentage of Outdoor Fires by Freeway and Rivers
For the Period between January 2018 and August 15, 2021



Consistent increase in trash, brush, & grass fires...



What's changed?

Dry/dead vegetation and ground cover

Overgrown areas with significant litter, duff, and ladder fuels. (Also provides concealment for encampments)

Increase PEH encampments in and adjacent to heavily vegetated areas

- Cooking fires
- Heating fires
- Burning trash
- Arson



Areas of concern along freeways...

Encampments come and go from embankments lining all freeways. Main areas of focus with large encampments include:

- 405 & 710 interchanges
- 710 & 91 interchanges
- 405 South, South of Atlantic
- 405 S. transition to 605 N.
- 91 Fwy at Cherry and Paramount
- 103 Fwy at Willow
- Caspian Drainage
- 405 Fwy at Bellflower Blvd.
- 405 Fwy at Lakewood Blvd.
- 405 Fwy North of Stearns St.



Areas of concern along riverbeds...

Homeless encampments are continually disassembled and cleaned up but quickly reappear along the many riverbeds in Long Beach. Large camps are located at:

- San Gabriel North of 2nd Street
- San Gabriel at the 405 Fwy
- Coyote Creek at Willow
- Nearly every overpass of the LA River
- Coyote Creek at Wardlow Rd.



Misc. areas of concern throughout the City...

Other miscellaneous encampments throughout the City include:

- Shoreline Dr. at the Convention Center
- Shoreline Dr. around Catalina Landing
- Anaheim St. and Walnut Ave.
- Nature Center (various locations)
- Wardlow at Los Coyotes Diagonal
- Traffic Circle (various locations)
- PCH and Clark
- 7th St. and Channel Dr.

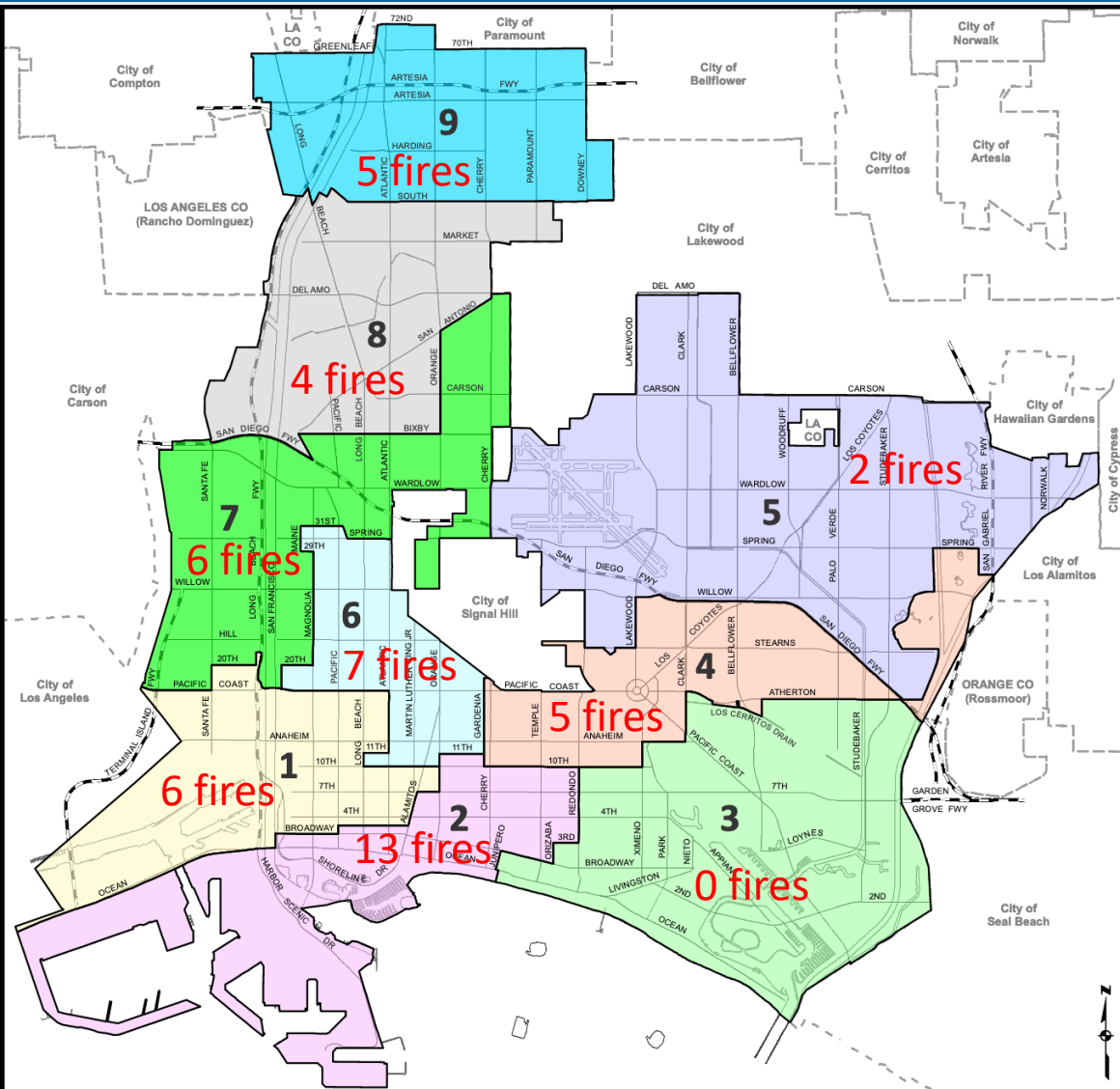


Fires under investigation

July 2021 – The Arson Unit investigated 47 fires. Of those, roughly 60% were deemed PEH related



Fires under investigation



- Outdoor fires occur nearly every day
- Fires with no suspects, witnesses, or property damage are typically not reported or investigated
- The following are the total number of fires that were investigated by Council District in July

Increased park fires...

Recent Park Fires

Admiral Kidd Park – 7/18/2021

Deforest Park – 10/6/2020

Davenport Park – 5/10/2021

Rotary Park – 12/3/2020 & 6/6/2021

Gumbiner Park – 12/18/2020

Somerset Park – 5/21/2021



Fires in vacant structures occupied by PEH



Fires related to PEH are not exclusive to outdoor areas. These include vacant structures throughout the City and under freeway overpasses. These become major safety hazards for first responders:

- Weakened structural members
- Exposure to bio-hazardous waste
- Illegal electrical
- Propane / butane bottles
- Breaches in walls and floors
- Drug paraphernalia
- Potential physical threats
- Confined space & access issues (bridges)

Damage to property...

- On April 15, 2021, a small brush fire in Long Beach burned several vacant school buses.
- At least three school buses were destroyed.
- Brush fires travel with wind direction or topography. Residential neighborhoods, business parks, or city structures/equipment may be in this destructive path.



Challenges created by outdoor fires

- Resource commitment for extensive periods of time, creating delays to service in “first-in” areas
- Increase in suppression foam consumption
- Excessive fatigue to fire personnel
- High risk operation working from freeways
- Exposure to bio-hazardous waste
- Extensive resources required
- Water supply issues
- Bridge encampment fires will create unique hazards and will involve multiple city departments to mitigate



Summary

Semper Paratus

- Annual mandatory RT-130 wildland training
- Invaluable experience gained through wildland deployments and skills applied to outdoor fires in our City
- Extensive wildland training in the Fire Recruit Academy (state recognized)
- Continual training with regional partners (annual spring drill with LA County)
- Fire personnel state qualified in a variety of wildland overhead positions



Thank you!

Jeff Hardin
Deputy Chief
Operations Bureau