Fires in the Oakland - Berkeley Hills

The October 1991 "Tunnel" fire in the Berkeley- Oakland Hills provided the impetus for the development of the Hills Emergency Forum. However, it was not the first major urban-wildland intermix fire in this region. Historically the East Bay has proven prone to wildland fire.

The area's recorded fire history shows 15 major fires since the first fire documented in 1923. When mapped it becomes apparent that the fires often reoccur in the same general areas and show similar environmental conditions.

September 1923 - Berkeley / North of UC Berkeley campus. 584 homes destroyed and 130 acres. Diablo wind. Ignition: smoker.

June 1929 – Oakland/ Lake Temescal. 300 acres grassland. West wind, burned from Lake Temescal toward Skyline Boulevard and Tunnel Road. (Source Berkeley Daily Gazette June 22, 1929). Ignition: unknown.

November 1931 - Leona. 5 homes destroyed and 1800 acres burned. Diablo wind. Ignition: unknown.

November 1933 - Redwood / Joaquin Miller. 1 life, 5 homes and 1000 acres. Diablo wind. Ignition: smoker.

September 1937 - Broadway Terrace. 4 homes, 700 acres. West wind. Ignition: Backyard fire.

September 1940 - Broadway Terrace. 30 acres. West wind. Ignition: unknown.

September 1946 - Buckingham/ Norfolk. 1,000 acres. Diablo wind. Ignition: arson & rekindle.

November 1955 - Montclair. 10 acres. West wind. Ignition: unknown.

October 1960 - Leona. 2 homes, 1200 acres. Diablo wind. Ignition: unknown.

November 1961 - Tilden, Briones, Roberts & Chabot. 4 fires, 400 acres. South-west wind. Ignition: arson.

October 1968 - Oak knoll. 204 acres. West wind. Ignition: unknown.

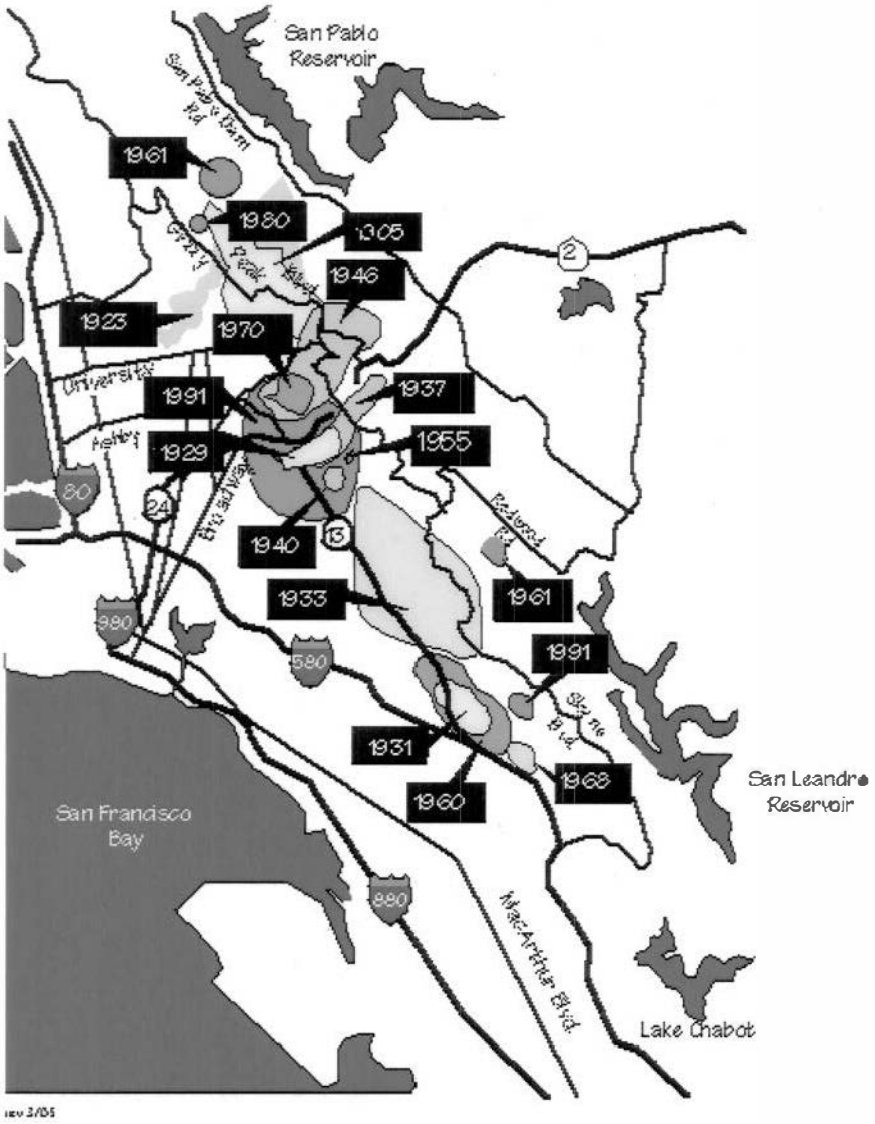
September 1970 - Buckingham/Norfolk. 37 homes destroyed, 21 homes damaged, 204 acres. Diablo wind. Ignition: arson.

December 1980 - Berkeley/ Wildcat. 5 homes, 2 acres. Diablo wind. Ignition: power line.

October 1990 - Leona. 200 acres. West wind. Ignition: vehicle accident.

October 1991 - Buckingham/Norfolk (Tunnel Fire). 25 lives. 3354 homes 456 apartments 1600 acres, estimated $1.5 billion damages. Diablo wind. Ignition: rekindle.

Fire Danger in the East Bay Hills



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