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KTLA

3 New Water Main Breaks Soak Mulholland, South L.A.

KTLA News

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LOS ANGELES -- Three more water mains have burst in the Los Angeles area -- one along Mulholland Drive in Beverly Hills and two in South Los Angeles.

A 20-inch ruptured pipe near the 13600 block of Mulholland Drive was reported around 1:55 a.m. Tuesday, a Los Angeles Fire Department dispatch supervisor said.

The rupture was located between Coldwater Canyon Avenue and Beverly Glen Boulevard, southeast of Sherman Oaks.

Water was sent gushing downhill, flooding nearby streets, including Donington Place.

Homeowner Kyoo Ro showed KTLA his tennis court and pool, which were both filled with mud and water. Firefighters worked to protect Ro's property from any further damage.

Department of Water and Power workers eventually shut off the water supply sometime before 4:45 a.m.

Mullholland is closed between Coldwater Canyon Road to Deep Canyon.

Around 2 a.m., two pipes burst in the South Los Angeles area -- one at the intersection of 83rd and Wall Streets and another a few miles away at Van Ness and Florence Avenues.

Fire officials say a sinkhole opened up at 83rd and Wall Streets, causing significant flooding.

Crews were on the scene of both broken mains, and drivers were being warned to avoid the area of Van Ness and Florence, if possible.

Meanwhile, officials are trying to figure out whether there's a connection between some 40 water mains that have ruptured in the Los Angeles area since September 1.

USC has announced that its major civil engineering center -- the USC Center on Megacities -- will join the Jet Propulsion Lab and Cornell University to determine just what is happening on the thousands of miles of pipes operated by the Department of Water and Power under the city's streets.

Engineers will pore over DWP records, visit the sites of water main breakages, and study characteristics of the system like pipe age, diameter, and expected pressures.

It has been said the city's new water-rationing plan could be straining the system, causing the rash of burst pipes.

But, USC engineering professor Jean-Pierre Bardet says similar increased frequency of pipe breakages are occuring in other Southland cities where the water conservation plan is not in effect.

"We are not in any way prejudging the issue," he said. "We are finding facts, not assuming them."

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