

Parameters of the Carr Fire Tornado, California, 26 July 2018

The following information is taken from a report by Kevin Fagan in the San Francisco Chronicle, 17 August 2018.

The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection says in a report that Redding firefighter Jeremy Stoke died July 26, 2018, after he was enveloped in seconds by a fire tornado with a 300 metre diameter base and winds up to 265 km per hour. The fire tornado at one point reached a temperature of 1,480 centigrade.

The report states that Stoke was well familiar with the dangers of out-of-control wildfires, but that this tornado was unlike anything experienced before in California — quick, hot, huge and unpredictable. At 7:39 p.m. Stoke was driving his truck down Buenaventura Road in northwest Redding, working on evacuating residents. One minute later he radioed out a “mayday” call saying he was getting burned over, and then his transmissions abruptly stopped, according to Cal Fire’s Green Sheet, the agency’s report on serious injuries and accidents.

Unlike tornados, which typically form during thunderstorms, fire tornados start at ground level. The Carr fire vortex lasted 80 minutes and grew to a height of 12 km.

<https://www.sfchronicle.com/california-wildfires/article/Massive-Carr-Fire-tornado-trapped-killed-Redding-13159898.php>

