

BLUE SHEET

California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE)

Preliminary Summary Report of Serious CAL FIRE Injuries, Illnesses, Accidents and Near-Miss Incidents



Burn Over / Near Miss

September 13, 2014

BLACK Incident

14-CA-MEU-008882

14-CA-MEU-008889

California Northern Region

This Preliminary Summary Report is intended as an aid in accident prevention, and to provide factual information from the first 24 hours of the accident review. To that end it is published and distributed within a short time frame. Information contained within may be subject to revision as further investigation is conducted, and other reports and documents are received.

Lookout

Communications

Escape Routes

Safety Zones

SYNOPSIS

On Saturday September 13, 2014, at approximately 1625 hours, a rapidly moving wildland fire burned over two local agency Type III engines and one CAL FIRE utility vehicle; destroying one of the two engines and the utility. The second engine sustained significant heat damage. Two local agency fire personnel suffered minor injuries, and were treated and released at a local medical facility. During the same fire run, firefighters on a CAL FIRE engine having to take refuge in a structure. The CAL FIRE engine sustained minor damage. The engine operator suffered minor injuries and was treated and released at a local medical facility.

NARRATIVE

On Saturday September 13, 2014, the BLACK fire was approximately 50 acres and actively burning with spotting at ¼ mile. The fuel type was primarily oak woodland intermixed with grasslands and areas of chamise. Two local government Type III engines were operating at a structure (Structure 1) along a ridge with the Division Group Supervisor (DIV C) in a utility. At the same time, a CAL FIRE engine had staged next to a separate structure (Structure 2) approximately 100 yards to the south along the same ridge within DIV C.

At approximately 1625 hours, the fire made a rapid, upslope run through a large area of chamise and manzanita located below the road that accessed the structures. All of the structures along the ridge were threatened. Structure 1 ignited and the residential propane tank began to vent. DIV C determined personnel couldn't safely take refuge in the structure or the fire apparatus. Ultimately it was determined the apparatus couldn't be moved quickly enough to ensure a safe exit and all personnel at the structure exited the area on foot to a Temporary Refuge Area.

During this increased fire activity a CAL FIRE engine crew took refuge in Structure 2. When the fire front passed, all personnel exited the structure and drove from the fire area. There was minor damage to the state engine.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMMEDIATE CORRECTIVE ACTIONS

There were no immediate corrective actions identified at the time of this report. CAL FIRE has initiated a near miss review of this incident.