

# **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**



#### **Firefighter Lower Extremity Burns**

**May 15, 2014**

**14-CA-MVU-010242**

#### **California Southern 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.

## SYNOPSIS

The following information is a preliminary summary of an incident involving personnel experiencing significant damage to wildland boots and in one case first and second degree burns to the feet.

## NARRATIVE

On Thursday May 15, 2014, fire personnel from a CAL FIRE strike team and local government agencies were engaged in direct attack on a flank on the Cocos fire in San Marcos. At approximately 1300 hour's winds increased, with an increase of fire activity; including some spotting. In order to improve the margin of safety personnel choose to enter the black and walk back to their engines. The engine crews traveled across a finger to shorten the walking distance to the engines. Within their walking path some areas had thick ash and some "jackpots" were also present. As the Firefighters approached the engines, some personnel noticed heat convecting through the soles of their boots. Once they returned to their engines the Firefighters observed their boot soles had delaminated, rendering the boots out of service. One Firefighter suffered first and second degree burns to his/her feet. The injured Firefighter was treated at the scene and transported to the University of California San Diego burn center where he/she was examined, treated and released.

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR REVIEW

- **Maintain situational awareness**
- **Limit exposure to conditions in which sustained heat may compromise safety equipment.**
- **If conditions allow follow the hoseline back to that anchor point rather than traversing through the black.**
- **Personnel should inspect all of their Personal Protective Equipment annually. Included in these inspections is the Wildland Boots. Refer to the 2014 Annual Focus on Safety for a full inspection guide and checklist.**



**Lookout**

**Communications**

**Escape Routes**

**Safety Zones**