

# Informational Summary Report of Serious or Near Serious DFFM Injuries, Illnesses and Accidents



# GREEN SHEET

## Burn Injuries

March 16, 2018

Laguna Fire

AZ-A4S-180223

18-AZ-0004

A4S

## SUMMARY

At approximately 1100 in the morning, a crew member with the Department of Forestry and Fire Management (DFFM) Type II crew fell into a hot ash pit, when the ground gave way on a berm where the employee was flagging off and area of a previous burn injury. The employee suffered burn injuries that were evaluated, treated and the employee was released from the local emergency department.

## CONDITIONS

### **Weather:**

Temperature: 71° Fahrenheit

Relative Humidity: 18%

Winds: W/SW 5-10 mph

Visibility: Clear (Reported as 5 miles at Yuma Airport)

Fuel Type: Salt Cedar with berms of organic material and dirt (Photo 1)

Topography: Flat base in very fine agriculture soil. A mechanically constructed berm approximately 42" above base. The other side of the berm transitions down toward the river at approximately a 20% slope into additional ash pits

Fire Behavior: smoldering

## SEQUENCE OF EVENTS

At approximately 0745 all crews were present in the staging area/incident command post.

At approximately 0815 all crews were briefed for the day's activities. The brief included weather, potential hazards associated with the berms, and general safety regarding mop up operations adjacent to the Colorado River. The crew was assigned to the north end of the fire to conduct mop up operations along the berm adjacent to the Colorado River.

At approximately 0840 the crew conducted an individual crew safety brief and commenced with mop up operations.

At approximately 1024 an incident within an incident was declared for another crew member that fell into an ash pit suffering second-degree and third-degree burns. That employee was treated and rapidly transported off the scene.

At approximately 1045 the DFFM Safety Officer called the IC to receive and update on the incident within an incident. The Safety Officer requested the area of the incident within the incident be flagged off to preserve the scene for the investigation process.

At approximately 1100 a crew member from the DFFM Type II crew began flagging off the area of the incident within an incident. The employee was approximately 7' to the south of the location on the berm, the employee utilized hose line to cool the area and a tool to probe the area as the employee moved forward. The employee stepped through the berm into an ash pit. The employee had forward downhill momentum and "tucked and rolled" down the berm through the ash pit. There was a witness employee

present that saw the incident corroborating the injured employees account of events. The injured employee completed the flagging of the area.

At approximately 1120 the injured employee notified the IC of the incident. The injured employee was evaluated by the emergency medical technicians on Fish and Wildlife Engine 2162. The employee suffered first-degree burns to the right ear, right upper arm (triceps area), left arm lower arm, right thigh, right and left shin, and right calf. The injured employee was wearing full PPE at the time of the incident (photo 2 & 3). The employee opted not to be transported to the hospital at that time because he was the ranking crew member present. The other crew overhead accompanied the previously injured employee to the emergency department. The IC contacted dispatch and contacted the Safety Officer with the information.

At approximately 1230 a supervisory crew member arrived back to the incident for the hospital. The injured employee was directed to go to the hospital and was driven in a crew vehicle to the hospital. The employee was evaluated, treated, and released by the emergency room with first-degree and possibly a few second-degree burns to travel home with the crew.

At approximately 1500 the district manager and the safety officer arrived on scene at the incident. The district manager took command of the incident for the remainder of the operational period. The safety officer conducted interviews with individuals associated with the incident. Additionally, the safety officer took photographs, measurements, and did an overall scene assessment including PPE.

At approximately 1530 the injured employee met with the Safety Officer and was interviewed. The crew then was released to travel home.

## **INJURIES/DAMAGES**

The employee suffered first-degree burns to the right ear, right upper arm (triceps area), left arm lower arm, right thigh, right and left shin, and right calf

**\*\*Note** Employee suffered increased pain and blistering over the weekend was evaluated at the burn center 3/19/18. Burns reevaluated at primarily second-degree, the employee is being treated as an out-patient. No percentage has been assigned by the burn center.

## **SAFETY ISSUES CURRENTLY UNDER REVIEW/LESSONS LEARNED**

- Situational Awareness including understanding of special hazards such as berms built mechanically with agricultural tilled soil as a base verse a naturally developed berm. <https://www.wildfirelessons.net/search?executeSearch=true&SearchTerm=ash+pits&l=1>
- The employee was wearing proper PPE for tasks assigned.
- The employee utilizing a “tuck and roll” limited prolonged thermal exposure to any particular area and probably limited the amount of thermal insult to the employees’ body.

## PHOTOS/SITE DIAGRAMS/MAPS









