

Maple Rd fire

SUMMARY REPORT

BURN INJURIES

**CHERI HILL, FIRE FIGHTER I
HESPERIA STATION #5**

MAY 22, 1987

**CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FORESTRY AND FIRE PROTECTION
SAN BERNARDINO RANGER UNIT
REGION III**

**RECEIVED
JUN 12 1987**

**DEPARTMENT OF FORESTRY
HEALTH, SAFETY AND PHYSICAL
FITNESS OFFICE.**

FIRE ACADEMY

JUNE 1987

SYNOPSIS

Maple Fire

On May 22, 1987, at approximately 1227 hours, Firefighter I Cheri L. Hill of the Hesperia Station, San Bernardino Ranger Unit, received 2nd and 3rd degree burns while engaged in initial attack fire control operations on a vegetation fire near the town of Hesperia in San Bernardino County.

FIRELINE CONDITIONS

Weather:

1. Observed at fire location at approximately 1545 hrs.
Temp. 78°F (dry 75° - wet 54°)
Humidity - 24%

Fuel Moisture:

10 hr. dead: 5%
Live: Approx. 100%

Wind: 12 mph, steady gusts (sustained) to 17 S/W

Fuel: Desert complex Juniper/Joshua Tree overstory; understory of short annual grass, buckwheat buffalo grass, and creosote bush. Overstory crown closures of 15-20%; understory closure of 95%.

Topography:

N/E aspect of high desert area at elevation of 3520 feet - overall average slope of 2%. There are no marked variations in the topographic features throughout the fire area.

SEQUENCE OF EVENTS

CDF Engine 3585 was dispatched to a vegetation fire in the Oak Hills area near the town of Hesperia in San Bernardino County at approximately 1227 hours. The crew consisted of FAE Jeffrey Burns and FF I Cheri Hill.

At the time of arrival of Engine 3585, FAE Burns observed a fire of approximately 4-5 acres burning at a slow rate of spread with a wind speed of approximately 5 mph from the S/W. A mobile attack was begun, using a 1 1/2" hose equipped originally with a 5/8" straight tip - this tip was replaced with a 5/8" combination nozzle.

Prior to the time water was applied to the fire, both Engineer Burns and Firefighter Hill observed a rapid change in fire behavior, winds increasing to a speed of approximately 20 mph still from the S/W, and a flame length exceeding the height of the engine cab.

Firefighter Hill abandoned the nozzle and was entering the passenger side of engine while FAE Burns was backing the engine in a northerly direction. As Firefighter Hill entered the cab, the engine was overrun and became engulfed in fire. Engineer Burns advised ECC of this occurrence over the radio.

As the engine continued back to a position of safety and a greater advantage, along with a slackening of the winds accompanied by a decrease in fire intensity, another attack was attempted. This, in addition to a third attack was met with an occurrence of extreme fire behavior conditions almost simultaneous with the attack efforts.

FAE Burns continued out to the intersection with Mesquite Road where upon a fourth attack succeeded in stopping the forward spread of the left flank at that point.

It was at that time that Firefighter Hill felt discomfort and realized that she had suffered burns. In recreating the accident sequence of events, it is suspected that Firefighter Hill received her burn at the time of the first attack.

Firefighter Hill was treated at the scene, transported via San Bernardino Sheriff's Helicopter to San Bernardino County Hospital where she was treated and released. Increased discomfort was experienced and she was transported to Sherman Oaks Burn Unit the following day by helicopter.

SUMMARY OF INJURIES

Burned area 5-6%

Deep 2nd and 3rd degree burns to both upper arms

Deep 2nd degree burns on right side of face and on buttocks

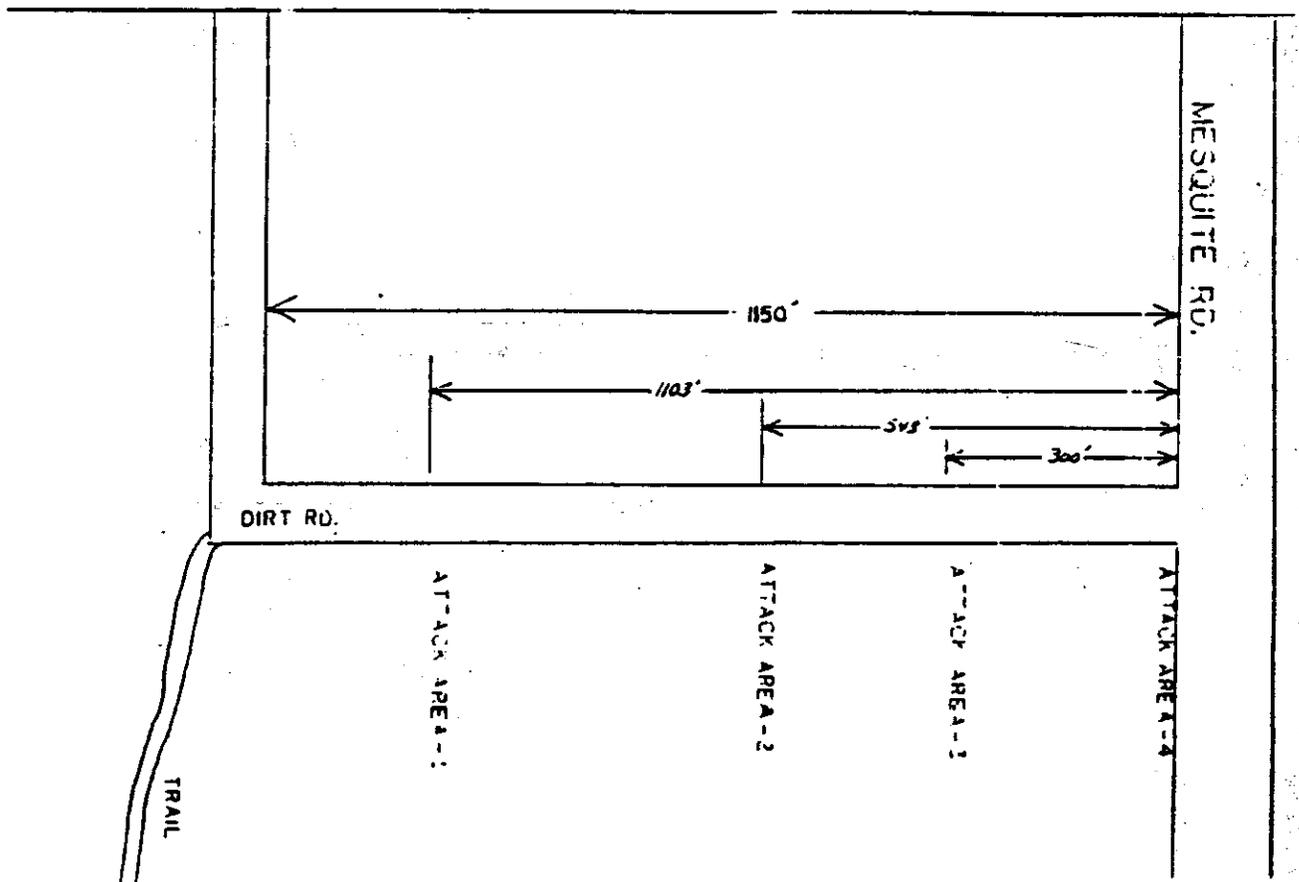
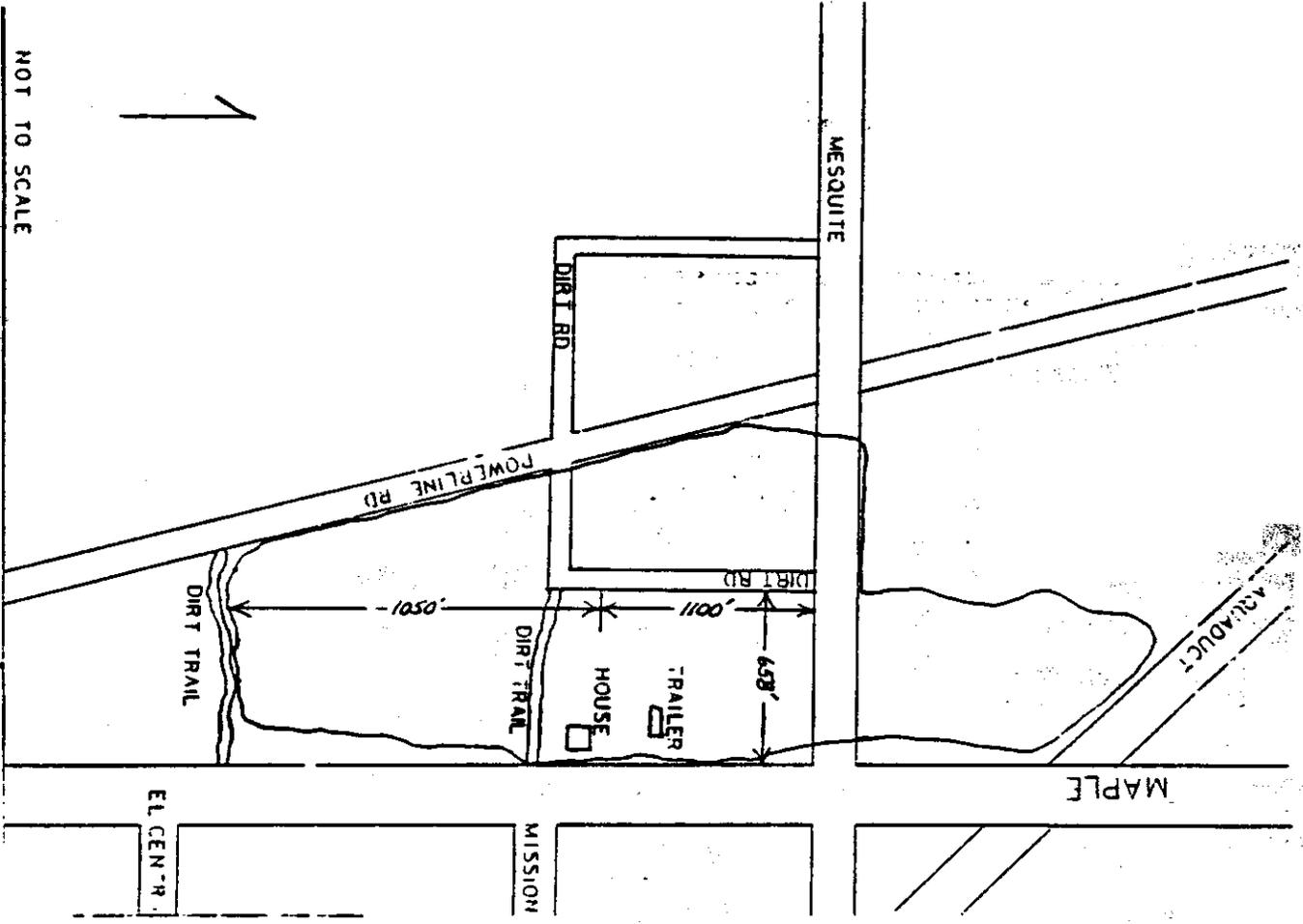
POST INCIDENT SUMMARY NOTES

1. Information received from U.S. Weather Service, Fire Weather Section, indicated that a marine layer was present in the area S/W of Cajon Pass. A temperature of 78°F on the desert and associated convective heating of the desert floor, in conjunction with the adjacent marine layer inversion, created a microclimate condition that pulled the marine influence into the desert basin. This activity accounts for the sudden increase in local wind speed for the site involved in the Maple Fire Incident.

The following information was developed considering the fire environment at the time of the blowup:

Rate of Spread	281 Ft/Min.
Intensity	2642 BTU/SEC/FT.
Flame Length	17 Feet

2. Firefighter Hill was wearing full protective clothing consisting of Nomex shirt and pants, helmet with face protection, goggles, and gloves at the time. Examination of the protective clothing and uniform failed to reveal any obvious burn damage.



NOT TO SCALE

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