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Disrupts alarm convention

Fire smokes Vegas hotel

LAS VEGAS, Nev. (AP) — A fire confined to a luxury suite on the fifth floor of Caesars Palace hotel-casino injured 16 people Wednesday and forced hundreds to flee the hotel's 12-story central tower, authorities said.

It was the third sizable fire hotel fire at the gambling resort city in less than five months.

Smoke poured from fifth floor windows, and breaking glass showered the ground as people raced out to the parking lot behind the luxury hotel.

Fleeing guests and hotel employees made their way past gamblers who continued to play blackjack, roll dice and pull slot machine handles in the casino, despite a strong smell of smoke, after the fire erupted at 10:05 a.m.

Ironically, a convention of burglar and fire alarm companies is being held at Caesars Palace this week.

"I was right across the hall when I heard the

(smoke) alarms going off," said maid Linda Holmes. "When I got down by the pool I saw all the flames coming out the windows."

Guests and employees later were allowed to return to all but the fifth floor of the hotel tower.

The cause of the fire that erupted in a five-room suite was not known immediately, said Clark County Fire Capt. Ralph Dinsman.

Nor was it known whether the suite was occupied at the time.

The blaze was in a portion of the 1,736-room hotel that had no sprinklers, but Caesars Palace is in the process of installing them in the area, he said. Fire alarms and smoke detectors in the area worked, according to Dinsman.

"We have 10 civilian injuries — most of these are minor — and six firefighters are injured. One is quite serious," Dinsman said.

Dinsman said he didn't know how many of the injured were hotel guests.

Coal miners reject pact, picket mines

From Associated Press Reports

Roving caravans of pickets closed non-union coal mines in West Virginia and eastern Kentucky on Wednesday, a day after United Mine Workers rank and filers soundly rejected a three-year contract endorsed by their president.

Striking miners were "flipping back and forth" between Kentucky and West Virginia, making short, surprise stops to set up picket lines, said Kentucky state Trooper Chuck Woodard.

"We have pickets but no problems," said West Virginia state police Cpl. J.G. Watson. "These miners are picketing everything."

The only violence reported after the vote was in eastern Kentucky, where a mine foreman's truck was riddled by bullets as it crossed a picket line Tuesday night, according to Woodard.

No violence was reported Wednesday, the sixth day of the nationwide coal strike.

UMW District 30 President Robert Carter acknowledged reports of picketing but said the union doesn't sanction pickets at non-union operations.

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