

Fire Displaces Family

Firefighter Sustains Leg Injury

Portland Fire & Rescue responded to a residential fire in the East St. Johns Neighborhood. The crews were able to gain control of the fire and minimize the damages to exposure homes in 20 minutes. A family of three and their pets will be displaced with the assistance of Red Cross. During the early portions of the fire, a firefighter slipped on an icy slope and was cared for by crews on site while they battled the blaze. PF&R also transported the FF to the nearest hospital. The fire is under investigation.

PF&R arrived to fire showing on the back side of a 1 ½ story house with a possible basement. An offensive fire attack was directed to bring hoses forward and begin an interior fire attack. On this initial stretching of hose line, a member of PF&R slipped and sustained an injury to their leg



Photo courtesy of Portland Fire & Rescue

and an ambulance was requested due to the nature of the injury – this will be addressed later. With an injured team member unable to participate in the firefighting activities, the other fire attack firefighter was operating on the exterior, extinguishing fire. Additional companies continued to

arrive and were assigned by the command officer to perform the next task needed in the tactical operation: water supply, back up hose line, exposure control hose line, search, ventilation.

The crews stretched hose around the side of the structure to protect and exposure home as fire

activity had increased during the early portions of the fire. Searches confirmed all residents out of the home safely. A truck crew managed to cut a ventilation hole in the roof until roof activity was compromised due to the fire activity in the modified ½ story of the home. When enough firefighters had arrived on scene to perform the required work, the fire was extinguished. There were hose lines focused on exposures and being used on the interior of the entire first and second floor until all fire was extinguished.

The longer arrival times were due to the road conditions at the time of the incident. With the roads covered in an icy patina, PF&R emergency response rigs are ice breaking chains which allow the heavy fire engines and trucks to move on the roadways safely, but the chains limit the speed possible delaying our expected arrival to the addressed emergency.

All residents were safely out of the home along with their 2 dogs but will be displaced as the fire rendered the home untenable. Red Cross has been requested to assist in the temporary displacement. The fire is under investigation

with the investigator on scene interviewing the occupants and the first arriving companies.

On the initial fire attack by the first arriving engine, a member of the fire attack team slipped while stretching hose up the sloped property toward the house on fire. The firefighter was assisted to the fire engine and the third arriving engine company split their crew so 2 could provide on scene medical care of the injured firefighter and 2 become part of the firefighting cadre on scene. The PF&R medical team treated the firefighter for pain and splinted the injured area of the leg just above the ankle on scene. An ambulance was requested code 3 by the officer in command with an immediate recognition of the significance of the injury. The closest available ambulance coming from a hospital located 40 minutes away in the current weather and road conditions. In the end, with limited ambulance availability, the firefighter was taken to the hospital in a Portland Fire & Rescue Chief's rig. There was a well-orchestrated transfer plan of the firefighter to the chief's rig to minimize any discomfort in moving the firefighter.

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