



For Immediate Release

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July 5, 2023

MOUNT VERNON— Exceptionally dry conditions and the use of illegal fireworks caused serious injuries and contributed to the loss of two Mount Vernon homes, a vehicle, and other property yesterday; as the Mount Vernon Fire Department worked tirelessly to respond to multiple incidents throughout the city.

The losses and injuries were sustained despite the Department's best efforts to staff additional personnel and to stage extra resources in anticipation of the increased risks.

A fine of \$355 for the possession or use of illegal fireworks within the city limits of Mount Vernon was approved by City Council in 2021. Still, many residents appeared undeterred as countless outlawed fireworks, including "mortars," "missiles," "skyrockets," and other explosives left numerous residents feeling frustrated by the thoughtless actions of those who broke the law and placed the safety and well-being of their neighbors' homes, property, and health in danger.

In all, the Fire Department reported responding to 33 calls for services yesterday. Here are a few of the incidents attended by the Mount Vernon Fire Department:

- 1. Brush Fire next to the Burlington Northern Rail track, South of Urban Ave - At 2:14 PM, the Fire Department swiftly responded to a brush fire near the Burlington Northern Rail track. The prompt action of the firefighters contained the fire, ensuring minimal damage and risk to nearby structures.**
- 2. Brush Fire in vacant lot along the West side of N 30th St - At 3:15 PM, a brush fire ignited in a vacant lot, threatening the fence line of the 911 dispatch property. The fire, caused by fireworks, burned approximately a quarter acre of tall grass before being quickly extinguished by the diligent efforts of the responding firefighters.**

- 3. Fire in a Residential Building, 1110 E. Montgomery St - A fire broke out at 3:42 PM in a residential building located at 1110 E. Montgomery St. The property, owned by Skagit Valley Hospital for on-call staff, was occupied by a hospital employee who discovered the fire and promptly evacuated the building. The fire, currently under investigation, resulted in the destruction of one parked vehicle in the driveway. Fortunately, there were no reported injuries or casualties.**
- 4. Fire in a Residential Building, 312 N. 21st St - At 11:02 PM, the Fire Department responded to a fire in a duplex property located at 312 N. 21st St. The property owner, who was in the backyard at the time, was alerted by a concerned citizen that his house was on fire. While attempting to extinguish the fire with a garden hose, the owner sustained second-degree burns to both arms and forehead. The cause and origin of the fire are still under investigation, with a suspicion of fireworks-related involvement. The owner was treated for his injuries and released at the scene.**
- 5. Brush Fire, 300 Hospital PKWY - At 11:37 PM, the Fire Department promptly extinguished a small tree fire located within two feet of a structure at 300 Hospital PKWY. The efficient response prevented any fire extension or damage to the building.**
- 6. Brush Fire, 1420 N. 18th St - At 11:54 PM, the Fire Department swiftly extinguished a small bush fire, approximately eight square feet in size, at 1420 N. 18th St. The incident was resolved without further complications.**

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N 21 St Fire, early stages of fire, photo retrieved form Skagit Breaking.



Photo from occupant of the Montgomery fire prior to Fire Department response.