

72-Hour Report
Sheep Fire – Major County, OK
Entrapment & Burnover Incident



THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE

Date of Report: 15 June 2020

Location: Approximately three miles southeast of Ames, OK (NW/4 Sec. 11-T20N-R9W)

Date of Occurrence: 06-13-2020

Time of Occurrence: Approximately 1700 hours

Mission: Wildland Fire Suppression – Initial Attack

Agency Involved: Rural Volunteer Fire Department

Number Injured: One

Number of Fatalities: None

Fire Weather Data at Time of Occurrence:

- Temperature: 97 degrees F
- Relative Humidity: 18%
- Wind Direction & Speed: Southwest @ 17 mph
- Maximum Wind Gusts: 27 mph
- 1-hour FDFM: 3%
- Live Herbaceous FM: 116%
- KBDI: 301

Wildland Fuels Involved: Cut and wind-rowed rye grass

Narrative: Two members of a Volunteer Fire Department (VFD #1) operating a Type 6 Engine responded to a request for assistance on the Sheep Fire at 1608 hours on 13 June 2020. After arriving at the incident the two firefighters discovered a problem with the pump motor on their engine which required a fifteen-minute repair time. VFD #1 began operations on the wildfire at approximately 1650 hours with one firefighter driving the apparatus and one firefighter operating the nozzle from a open-topped ‘cage’ between the vehicle cab and pumper unit.

VFD #1 made access to the west flank of the fire by driving south into a cut field from County Road E0540. As VFD #1 reached the flaming front it began direct attack, working in tandem by following a second Volunteer Fire Department (VFD #2). Both engines began spraying water on the flaming front, moving from north to south in the unburned fuel.

As both engines reached the southwest corner of the flaming front they turned around to proceed north and continue direct attack on the west flank. No anchor point was established or utilized as the both engines continued their operations.

At this point VFD #1 noticed flames coming out from under the engine (The assumption is that the cut rye grass had built-up under the engine and was ignited by the catalytic converter as the engine continued operations while driving over the rye grass wind rows). VFD #1 attempted to contact VFD #2 by radio for help but could not reach them. They also sprayed water at VFD #2 to catch their attention but this attempt also failed.

The Engine became disabled as the vehicle fire began to burn more intensely. Shortly after the vehicle became disabled the flaming front overtook the vehicle. Both firefighters from VFD #1 decided to abandon the vehicle. The firefighter in the cage attempted to get off the burning vehicle but the door hinge on the cage broke. He then crawled over the cab of the truck and hood of the vehicle to escape the flames. The heat was intense enough to melt the face shield of the respirator that he was wearing.

Both firefighters were taken to a local hospital where they were treated smoke inhalation and released. One firefighter continued to receive breathing treatments through the time of this report.

PPE in Use: Both firefighters were wearing wildland firefighting coveralls, boots, gloves, hardhat, and nomex flashover hood. One firefighter also wore a full-face particle respirator.

Fire shelters are not carried by this fire department.

