

## Alterra Drive the scene of another fire

Contributed by Elizabeth Larson  
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LAKEPORT &dash; A fire that broke out Saturday afternoon in the Alterra Drive area of Lakeport had panicked residents fighting the blaze with water buckets and shovels alongside firefighters.

Alterra resident Tyler Elsa said he looked across the street and saw smoke coming from a field behind residences on the north side of Alterra Saturday afternoon.

Neighborhood residents, still shaken up by a fire that broke out in the area on June 23, grabbed shovels and buckets of water to try to contain the fire.

Elsa said he called 911 to ask for more help as the fire started burning toward a woman's house. By that time he said the first firefighters already had arrived on scene.

Captain Rick Bergem of Lakeport Fire Protection District said Sunday that the fire call came in about 4:15 p.m. Saturday.

Lakeport sent two engines and a water tender to the fire, said Bergem. In addition, Kelseyville Fire and Northshore Fire's Upper Lake station sent one engine each, with the US Forest Service sending an engine and water tender. About 15 firefighters responded.

Bergem said several neighborhood residents were using garden hoses to keep the fire off the fences lining Alterra.

Alterra Drive's water system has low pressure, said Elsa, which made it difficult to use hoses on the fire.

Firefighters didn't have issues with the neighborhood's low water pressure thanks to the water tenders, said Bergem.

The fire burned a pumphouse, partially damaged the garage of a home on Wright Lane and scorched about two acres of grass in an adjacent field and got into some trees in an old walnut orchard in the area, Bergem said. No other structures were in immediate danger.

Firefighters were at the scene until 6:30 p.m. mopping up, said Bergem.

Elsa said his neighbors' fast action was responsible for stopping the fire from doing more damage. Even children were out working to stop the fire, said Elsa.

The fire's cause is still under investigation, although it appears to have started in the field next to the homes, said Bergem. The field had been mowed but some cut grass hadn't been removed.

The June 23 fire on Alterra was caused by a man who was mowing a lot in the heat of the day, sparking the fire, adjacent to the neighborhood of about 30 homes.

That fire caused several homes to be evacuated while 36 firefighters from Lakeport, Northshore, Kelseyville, Lake County Fire Protection, the Forest Service and Cal Fire fought the blaze with 10 engines and air tankers, according to a report from Lakeport Fire Chief Ken Wells.

The 4.5-acre blaze destroyed a barn, one family's playhouse, neighborhood fences and some junker vehicles, as Lake County News previously reported.

Local and state fire officials have reported that equipment such as mowers are a leading cause of fires during the summer fire season.

Bergem said the fire season for Lakeport Fire has been "pretty quiet," with a lot of little incidents but no major fires so far.

E-mail Elizabeth Larson at [el Larson@lakeconews.com](mailto:el Larson@lakeconews.com).

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