

Firefighters contain small blaze near Clearlake

Contributed by Elizabeth Larson
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CLEARLAKE – Fire crews were able to quickly contain a small wildland fire near San Joaquin Avenue in Clearlake Thursday afternoon.

The fire was reported at 1:27 p.m., said Justin Benguerel of Cal Fire's Emergency Command Center.

Captain Brice Trask of the Lake County Fire Protection District said the blaze was about five acres in size and originated on San Joaquin Avenue, burning up to the west end of Carter Lane.

Trask said his department sent 14 personnel to the blaze – including the chief, and assistant and battalion chiefs – along with one water tender and three engines.

Cal Fire dispatched two air tankers, one air attack, one helicopter, two fire crews consisting of 36 firefighters, one dozer and five fire engines with three firefighters each, Benguerel reported.

The fire didn't immediately threaten any homes, said Trask, but if it had burned about 600 yards farther it would have reached a number of residences.

Trask said the fire was contained quickly, by about 2 p.m., but crews had just returned to quarters at 6 p.m.

“We did mop up for quite awhile,” he said, which included knocking out fire hot spots.

The fire's cause is under investigation, Trask said.

Fire season is well under way, said Trask. Because of that, he reminded homeowners that it's important to keep 100 feet of defensible space – free from weeds, brush and other flammable materials – around their homes.

But be careful about when you're doing your mowing, Trask said.

One of the major causes of fires during hot and dry weather is using lawnmower or flail mowers, he said. When the blade hits a rock, it can cause a spark, which can then result in a blaze, Trask said.

That was the case in a small fire at Anderson Marsh State Park on Thursday afternoon, he said. While mowing, a maintenance worker set off a small blaze that, luckily, was quickly contained.

Trask advised not mowing after noon during the hot weather.

In other fire-related news, Trask said that insurance and workman's compensation investigators are looking at the Brown's RV blaze.

That fire was set off June 1, reportedly from a propane tank explosion. One person was injured but Trask said he couldn't report on the victim because of legal requirements.

“That's going to be under investigation for quite a while,” he said.

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