



KENNEWICK FIRE DEPARTMENT

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MEDIA RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Date: May 5, 2023
Contact: Chad Michael, Fire Chief
Phone: 509-820-0460
KFD Inc. #s: 2304562

[Kennewick, WA] On Thursday, May 4, 2023, at 2:11 pm., fire crews from the Kennewick Fire Department (KFD) were dispatched to a reported natural vegetation fire inside of Columbia Park, on the north side of Paul Parish Dr., approximately 300 yards west of the golf course. While crews were in route to the fire, dispatch provided further information prompting the request of additional resources including a brush truck from Pasco and a water tender from Benton County Fire District 1.

Due to the potential of unauthorized homeless encampments, and the inability for ground personnel to safely search the area for any possible individuals who might be unable to escape the fire, Pasco Fire Department's fireboat was dispatched to look for persons potentially in need of assistance along the shoreline, and to provide additional information about the fire that was not visible to incident command on shore. A full sweep of the area by the fireboat determined no civilians were in need of rescue.

When the main body of the fire was out, crews stayed onsite and continued to ensure the area was fully extinguished. The total size of the fire is estimated to be approximately 3 acres. The cause of the fire has not yet been determined. No civilians or firefighters suffered injuries during this incident.

Smoke will likely be visible for the next couple of days as a result of the present ground fuels and the challenges associated with safely gaining access to them. The KFD encourages people to refrain from calling 911 regarding faint signs of leftover smoke. However, citizens should immediately call 911 if any active flames or visible fire is seen outside of the fire containment area.

The KFD also encourages everyone to stay out of the area due to the potential for extreme danger. Heat is still present around several stumps within the fire area, and trees can unexpectedly fall due to damage sustained from the fire. The City of Kennewick Parks Department has contracted a tree faller to remove several trees that are in danger of falling along the perimeter of the fire, and they will soon be posting notices in the fire area to warn citizens to stay out of the fire area.

Anyone with information that could be helpful in determining the exact cause of this fire is encouraged to contact KFD's Deputy Fire Marshal at (509) 585-4426, or by email at fireprevention@ci.kennewick.wa.us.

The KFD would like to remind everyone that natural vegetation dries out quickly in our region, especially with the winds when the temperatures begin to rise. Extreme caution should be exercised to help prevent wildfires from occurring.

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